

Response from the Liberal Party of Canada (via email):

***What steps will your party take to ensure Canadians have equitable and affordable access to a broad range of treatments wherever they live in Canada? Will your party ensure that patients are at the table as Canada moves towards the development of national pharmacare?***

Liberals believe that no Canadian should have to choose between paying for prescriptions and putting food on the table. Addressing the high cost of prescription drugs is among our top priorities. Over the past four years, this government has done more than any other in a generation to make medications and treatments more affordable and accessible for all Canadians.

Building on this, a re-elected Liberal government will take the next step and work with provinces and territories to implement national universal pharmacare so all Canadians can afford the a broad range of medications and treatments they need at an affordable price. In this work we will be guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare, and we will work with patients and experts to get this right.

This will be accompanied by the establishment of the Canada Drug Agency to make drug purchasing more effective and efficient and the implementation of an evidence-based national formulary, developed in collaboration with provinces, territories and other stakeholders. It will build on the significant steps we've already taken to lower drug prices, including strengthening the Patented Medicines Prices Review Board (which will save Canadians over \$13 billion in the next 10 years), devoting over a billion dollars towards high cost drugs for Canadians with rare diseases and joining the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance.

***Will your party ease the burden on people with arthritis by removing the taxes on medical cannabis, and provide improved care by enabling access through pharmacies?***

We are committed to ensuring that Canadians have access to a medical regime for cannabis that meets their unique needs, and one that is affordable. That's why, over the course of the past four years, we've maintained a separate medicinal system, advanced medical research to better understand the therapeutic role of cannabis and helped give consumers a path to be reimbursed for tax when a product is approved as a formal medication. Going forward, we will work with provinces and territories, who control three quarters of this tax regime, in the context of the next joint review of the excise tax framework to ensure the needs of Canadians are being met and that we have a stable and well functioning system.

***What actions will your party take to reduce wait times for joint replacement surgery? Will you increase the Canada Health Transfer to help address joint replacement wait times across the country?***

In addition to new investments made in our first mandate to improve mental health and home care, we will continue to ensure that our health care system is well equipped to meet the expectations of Canadians and makes smart investments in areas that make Canadians healthier and improves their quality of life.

A re-elected Liberal government will strengthen the public health care system so that every Canadian can count on access to a family doctor or primary health care team, and the important gateway they provide for testing and treatment. We will also make sure every Canadian can get mental health services when they need them, and has access to affordable prescription drugs. We will do this, working in partnership with the provinces and territories to strengthen Medicare, reduce wait times, and improve health outcomes for all.

We will invest an additional down payment of \$6 billion over the next four years to support these efforts, tied to clear outcomes, negotiated in collaboration with provinces and territories and which Canadians will be able to see transparently reported and tracked.