

SURVEY RESPONSE
CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Organization: Quality End-of-Life Care Coalition of Canada (QELCCC)

Date: September 16th, 2021

Federal Election 2021 Priorities

Thank you for writing to share the coalition's priorities in this election.

We would like to thank the coalition and its members for ensuring that professional and compassionate care is provided to Canadians when they approach the end of their lives. Our frontline workers have shown incredible dedication and selflessness in their attention to patients and their families in times of transition and uncertainty.

We further recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has not made the job any easier. Our frontline staff have had to operate under trying circumstances and make difficult decisions in the care of their patients. We, as a society, owe a debt of gratitude to our frontline heroes throughout this extraordinary period.

In response to your letter, we are pleased to share our plan to secure better health care for all Canadians. Our plan includes support for Canadians in palliative care and long-term care, as well as improvements to Canada's bereavement programs.

Support for Palliative Care

The Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association has estimated that about 30 per cent of Canadians who need it have access to palliative care services.

Canada's Conservatives have long supported the implementation of the Framework on Palliative Care in Canada. It was Conservative MP Marilyn Gladu who sponsored and passed [Private Member's Bill C-377](#) to ensure that a framework was adopted and put into place.

However, support for palliative care at the federal level has not lived up to the aspirations contained in the framework.

To help Canada become a place where all Canadians who suffer are offered relief, we will double the direct federal investments in palliative care. We will also encourage community organizations to expand their provision of palliative and long-term care. This is key to closing the gap in palliative care for Canadian patients.

Fixing Long-Term Care

COVID-19 has been devastating for Canada's seniors and has shown for all to see the failures within our long-term care system. With an aging population and Canadians living longer, we have had shortages of long-term care beds and deteriorating facilities for years. COVID has shown us how deadly those shortages, and the overcrowding they bring, can be.

Canada's Conservatives have a plan to improve the quality of long-term care across the country.

We will invite the provinces to work with us to develop a set of best practices for long-term care homes. Like the National Building Code, this will provide guidance for provinces without intruding on their jurisdiction. However, we will work with all those provincial governments who want to commit to this important project and encourage all provinces to incorporate the results into provincial law.

This initiative will provide a great platform for your coalition to advocate for the embedding of palliative care into national long-term care standards.

In the meantime, we will help our most vulnerable seniors receive the care they need by devoting \$3 billion of infrastructure funding over the next three years to renovate long-term care homes in all provinces and territories across Canada. This investment will improve the care that residents receive by bringing homes up to modern design standards. We will also encourage partnerships with private non-profits that have historically provided a significant amount of long-term care.

To address staffing shortages, a Conservative government will use the federal levers at its disposal to attract and retain more personal support workers to care for our seniors. We will provide priority in immigration programs to those who can work in long-term care or home care. We will also promote these careers through immigration and refugee settlement programs.

Canada's Conservatives will further provide stronger protection for seniors in long-term care homes. We will amend the Criminal Code provisions on failing to provide the necessities of life to make clear that the operator of a licensed care facility shall be presumed to have a legal duty to the residents of that facility. Those who shamelessly abandon or neglect our seniors need to be held accountable.

Support for Grieving Families

The death of a child is particularly devastating for a parent. However, Canada's bereavement policies do not currently recognize this as they treat the death of a child the same as the death of another immediate family member.

Every year, thousands of parents in Canada experience the loss of a child, including from miscarriages or stillbirths.

Canada's Conservatives will end the stigma around these situations and compassionately reform current EI parental leave benefits and bereavement leave.

We will ensure that parents are not abruptly cut off from their EI parental benefits following the death of a child, as is the current practice. We will provide up to eight weeks of paid leave from employment in the event of a child's death.

To support parents who have experienced the trauma of a stillbirth, we will provide up to eight weeks of paid leave from employment. For parents who have experienced the trauma of miscarriage, we will provide three days of paid bereavement leave.

Conservatives believe that families deserve a compassionate government that will support them in their grief and during times of unimaginable loss.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to share your coalition's priorities in this election.

Canada's Conservatives will be a true partner in improving end-of-life care. Together, we can create a more compassionate Canada.