

NDP response: HealthCareCAN

1. What will your party do to strengthen and sustain Canada's health research sector moving forward, and how will the sector factor into your plan for Canada's economic recovery?

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for Canada to re-establish itself as a global leader in innovative health research. New Democrats agree that consistent, long-term federal funding is necessary to protect our country from future health crises. It will also create many high-quality jobs and economic opportunities for Canadians. We plan to invest accordingly.

A New Democratic government will work with hospitals, health care organizations, health research institutes, health professionals, and patients to ensure that public research on critical health issues flourishes across the country – and that we maximize the benefits of these investments.

New Democrats believe that the federal government must support better integration between health care provision and health research. We recognize that academic health sciences centres are independent entities and believe they should be allowed to compete on equal footing with other sectors for funding.

2. Does your party support the implementation of a national health workforce planning strategy and how would your party work with provinces, territories, regulators, and other stakeholders to implement such a strategy?

The enormous stress placed on our public health care system from years of federal underfunding has become painfully evident throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Decades of neglect and cuts have contributed to a critical health care workforce shortage across Canada. Frontline health care workers are burnt out, struggling to keep up with the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic and exhausted by attacks on their wages and workplaces.

A New Democrat government will create an annual \$250 million Critical Shortages Fund to address current shortages of nurses and health care workers across Canada. We will ensure that the provinces and territories also commit new funding specifically to support health care workers. The federal fund would help train and hire 2,000 nurses right away.

We will work with the provinces and territories to accurately identify existing and coming gaps in health human resources and develop a strategy to recruit and retain the doctors, nurses and other health professionals Canadians need. New Democrats will also work with the provinces and territories to implement violence prevention strategies to ensure a safe working environment for every health care worker in Canada.