

Briefing Note

The Federal New Democratic Party 2019 electoral platform

September 20th, 2019

SUBJECT:

The federal NDP revealed its platform for the 2019 federal election. This briefing note highlights some of the critical points of direct relevance to the ACCH membership.

Link to the NDP electoral website: <https://www.ndp.ca/commitments>

Full list of commitments: https://action.ndp.ca/page/-/2019/Q2/2019-06-19_Commitments-Doc_EN.pdf

BACKGROUND:

A general federal election is taking place in Canada on October 21st, 2019. ACCH is seeking to keep its members informed of the various parties' positions on topics of relevance.

SUMMARY:

The NDP's platform covers a wide range of elements. This briefing note focuses on commitments which are of interest to the ACCH membership.

- Strengthening Medicare:
 - o Expansion of Medicare to include universal drug coverage (Pharmacare)
 - o Include mental health, eye care, hearing care.
 - o Closing the gaps in services across provinces
 - Ensuring access to abortion in all regions of the country.
 - Reduce wait time, increase access to primary care
 - o Continue supporting health research
- Opioid Crisis
 - o Declare a public health emergency
 - o Commit all levels to end the stigma and discrimination associated with drug addiction.
 - o Support overdose prevention sites.

- Expand access to treatment on demand
- Investigate the role of drug companies in the opioid crisis and seek compensation where warranted.
- Tackling poverty:
 - Enshrining the right to housing in law and establishing a goal of ending homelessness within a decade.
 - Creation of 500,000 affordable housing units
 - Adopting a 'Housing First' approach
 - Conduct a national basic income pilot project
 - Creating a federal universal childcare program.
- Commitments to reconciliation
 - Developing a National Action Plan for Reconciliation
 - Replacing consultation with a standard of free, prior, and informed consent for Indigenous communities affected by government policies.
 - Recognize Metis self-determination
 - Establish a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
 - Implement First Nations, Métis, and Inuit housing strategies, co-developed with indigenous communities
 - Investments to lift all drinking water advisories by 2021.
 - Ensuring safe public transportation by expanding transport in rural and remote areas.
 - Improve access to addiction and mental health, including an evidence-based action plan to prevent suicide.
 - Establishing a plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and LGBTQI2S+ people.
 - Working to end systemic discrimination against Indigenous peoples in the justice system.
 - Increasing the discretion of judges during sentencing
 - ensuring bail programs are culturally appropriate
 - bolstering funding for community justice programs that focus on healing
 - restorative justice rather than incarceration

- upholding the use of Gladue principles in court proceedings.
 - Providing the necessary resources for Indigenous policing while taking steps to end discriminatory policing practices like carding.
- Increase funding for legal aid

ANALYSIS:

- The platform supports overdose prevention sites but does not explicitly mention supervised consumption sites.
- While details are sparse, a universal pharmacare program could benefit many individuals who access the services of the ACCH membership.
- The platform has very few specific commitments and is mostly presenting the direction the NDP government would take.
 - This briefing note will be updated as more details are made available

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The ACCH will remain non-partisan within the election campaign to promote good working relationships with any future government.
- The ACCH and its members should remain aware of the political parties' policies on topics which relate to their activities.
- Members should have discussions on topics of interest with their local candidates where policies might impact their programming.
- ACCH will strive to remain informed of further details of each party's commitments as they are made available.