



August 7, 2021

Angus Campbell

Wayves Magazine

Via email: AngCam59@gmail.com

Dear Angus,

I am pleased to respond to our questionnaire as follows:

Gay Men's Health Questionnaire

- 1. It is my understanding that your party supports paying for the cost of PreP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) medicine used to prevent someone getting HIV.**

If your party forms government, when will you implement this policy?

What I will say is that the PC Party of Nova Scotia deeply cares about the quality of life Nova Scotians have, as well as, is always interested in investments that save the healthcare system in the long run. Our commitment to Nova Scotians is when we form government, we will review the formulary that decides what drugs are covered and which are not. We need to make sure that the formulary meets the needs of Nova Scotians.

- 2. prideHealth, which is managed by NS Health and the IWK, "works to improve access to health services which are safe, coordinated, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate." Since its revival a decade ago it has been frequently understaffed and their voice mail currently states that there is only one employee fulfilling both the coordinator and navigator roles. It is unclear whether either of these positions is full-time.**

What would your party do to ensure that people from my community are better, and continuously, served by prideHealth?

The PC Hope for Health and Universal Mental Health plans which will knock down the barriers that have traditionally prevented underserved and marginalized communities from accessing care. Hope for Health plan is a blueprint of reform that was launched in early February. It targets six areas long overdue for a healthcare reform across the province:

- Access to Care
- Recruitment & Retention
- Prevention & Education
- System Modernization
- Addressing Chronic Illness
- Local Decision-Making

- 3. Continuing Care includes Long Term Care (LTC) and Home Care. Continuing Care Assistants (CCAs) are necessary for both but there appears to be a focus on recruitment for LTC. Most Nova Scotians want to remain in their homes as long as possible but will require varying levels of care given by their family/friend caregivers and other home supports**

What is your party proposing to recruit CCAs?

The PC plan to recruit CCAs contained in our Dignity for our Seniors plan, unveiled a year ago.

Our plan says to address the current and future increased demands on our system, we must increase the number of staff in our long-term care properties and focus on training more healthcare workers, with a heavy emphasis on CCAs.

To reach the recommended levels of staffing care, we would require an additional 600 nurses (a combination of RNs and LPNs) and 1,400 CCAs.

To attract more CCAs, the training has to be accessible. A PC government would reinstate the CCA training grant that was cancelled in 2013. This grant funds 50% of the tuition costs of the CCA program (50% of roughly \$9,000). More is required but this will help some people pursue this career without struggling to finance it. The size of the program would be increased to 1,000 students. A two-year commitment to stay in Nova Scotia following the training would be required. The Province would work with the training programs to establish in-facility training as a part of the education to minimize the disconnect between the training and the actual job.

In the past, some long-term care properties were able to host their own accredited training programs. These programs offered free training with a return of service and an experience-based component. Offering free, practical training will increase the number of individuals who train and work in this field. A PC government would resume appropriate staffed and accredited CCA training programs hosted by long-term care properties.

What is your policy for supporting unpaid caregivers looking after someone at home?

The PC Party values the support unpaid caregivers provide to their loved ones and recognize they help Nova Scotian stay in their homes longer.

A PC government will continue the Caregiver Benefit Program and reassess it to see if it could be more effective.

A PC government is willing to examine any idea in order to improve access to health care for Nova Scotians.

4. How do you feel Public Health and the provincial government have handled the COVID-19 pandemic?

What would your party have done differently, and in the case of the Liberals, do you see any areas for improvement?

Nova Scotians did the hard work that got Nova Scotia through the worst of the pandemic. By listening to Dr. Strang and Public Health, we were able to be relatively successful. The PC Party recognizes that many Nova Scotians sacrificed and experienced hardship during the pandemic and we are grateful for everything Nova Scotians did.

The most obvious area for improvement is the long-term care system, specifically Northwood. The reports that followed the deaths of residents show a facility that was simply overwhelmed and unprepared for the strain COVID-19 put on the staff, administrator and residents.

For three years, Northwood sent a proposal to the Liberal government asking for increased funding so they could make much needed improvements. For three years in a row, the proposals were rejected. It is unfortunate it took the deaths of so many seniors to shine a light on the need for upgrades, modernization and increased respect in the long-term care system.

5. COVID-19 follow up

Just over 76% of Nova Scotians have received vaccinations (66% have received both doses).

If your party is elected, how will you encourage all eligible Nova Scotians to get vaccinated such that we can protect one another?

What do you say to anti-vaxxers?

The PC Party has always been a proponent of vaccinations against COVID-19. In fact, we advocated for a faster, more robust roll out from the beginning. A PC government would continue to follow the advice of Public Health and use public education to encourage all Nova Scotians to get vaccinated and the importance vaccines are to keeping our communities safe.

Sincerely,



Cameron MacKeen
Campaign Co-Chair
PC Party of Nova Scotia