

# Ontario Health Coalition

## Federal Election 2025

### Political Party Records on Health Care & Questions for Candidates

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Updated April 17, 2025

#### QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES:

#### Uphold & Enforce the Canada Health Act

The Canada Health Act bans extra-billing and user fees for patients for medically needed physician and hospital care – and those services when provided in free standing clinics (such as private surgical clinics) or by other health professionals (such as Nurse Practitioners) where the provinces allow them. The federal government is supposed to uphold the Act and claw back funding from provinces that do not stop such charges to patients. [What will you do to stop private clinics that are charging patients for surgeries and diagnostic tests? Will you advocate to speed up the enforcement of the Canada Health Act to ensure public funding for Nurse Practitioner led clinics and teams that are charging patients for access to primary care? What will you do to stop virtual care \(online\) companies that are charging patients for access to primary care?](#)

#### Expand Medicare to Cover Safe & Effective Drugs (Pharmacare)

The expansion of public health care to cover drugs is many decades overdue. The first phase of “pharmacare” that has been brought in by the federal government covers diabetes medications and contraceptives. This is a good first step. The program needs to be expanded so that we have national bulk buying of drugs (to lower the cost) and coverage for safe and effective medications. [What is your commitment to expanding pharmacare? Will you cover all safe and effective needed medications along the same lines and according to the principles of Public Medicare in Canada \(equitable universal coverage, without user fees and under a public insurance program not a for-profit insurance program\), and when?](#)

#### Provide Dental Care Coverage

The new dental care program covers people under age 18 and over 64. It is to be expanded to people over 55 years old on May 1, and subsequently to people between 18 and 55. See the schedule [here](#). [Will you commit to keeping the new dental care program for seniors and children and expanding it to the rest of Canadians as planned?](#)

#### End For-Profit Health & Seniors' Care

More than 4,000 people died of COVID-19 in Ontario's long-term care homes. Others died of malnutrition, dehydration, terrible neglect and inadequate care. The death rates in for-profit long-term care homes were five times higher than those in publicly-owned long-term care homes. For-profit clinics charge patients illegal user fees and extra-billing charges for medically needed surgeries and diagnostic tests in violation of our Medicare protection laws. Public tax dollars should go to care not profit. [Will you commit to tying federal dollars to expanding and improving public and non-profit health care not to expanding for-profit corporations?](#)

A good brief tracker of the political party promises on health & a whole range of other issues is here:

<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/features/2025/federal-party-platforms/#federal-election-health-care>

## Political Party recent records on our key health care issues

### Liberal Party

#### Uphold & Enforce the Canada Health Act

- After a long delay, the Minister of Health released a [letter to the provinces](#) that will require provinces to publicly fund Nurse Practitioner clinics that are charging patients for formerly provided by doctors and stop them from charging patients for services. However, it does not take effect until April 1, 2026. This long delay is unacceptable. In addition, they have paid lip service to stopping surgical clinics from charging out-of-province patients for elective surgeries but are not doing anything beyond monitoring it. They have not enforced the prohibition against user charges for the array of corporations that are charging patients for primary care through what is called virtual care (online platforms and apps).

#### Expand Medicare to Cover Safe & Effective Drugs (Pharmacare)

They brought in the first phase of national pharmacare to cover diabetes medication and contraceptives. This includes insulin, metformin, and other medications. They are negotiating agreements with the provinces to implement this. See [here](#) for details. The issue is whether or not they are going to expand pharmacare to cover other classes of drugs (as was the intent). In the French language debate April 16, Mark Carney said a definitive no to any new programs. Earlier, on April 1, he said he is committed to keeping what is in place but any expansion would be considered “in the context of decisions around a range of... priorities”. Canadians have already waited for decades. Meanwhile we are paying the second highest pharmaceutical prices in the world (next to the U.S.). Pharmacare would actually be less expensive overall (replacing private for-profit and non-profit plans and creating a national formulary with bulk buying for safe and effective drugs).

#### Provide Dental Care Coverage

They brought in a new dental care program for Canadians under 18 and over 64 whose family net incomes are less than \$90,000 per year. See [here](#) for details. The program is supposed to expand to cover people age 55 and over May 1 and people between the ages of 18 and 54 thereafter. Like with pharmacare, the issue is whether that expansion is going to be cancelled or not. It appears to be in grave doubt now. (See Mark Carney’s statements in the paragraph above.)

#### End For-Profit Health & Seniors’ Care

The federal government [announced](#) \$2.4 billion from 2023–26 for home care and \$3 billion from 2023-27 for long-term care but there are no strings to direct funding to public and non-profit care.

### Conservative Party

#### Uphold & Enforce the Canada Health Act

[As an MP in 2012](#) Poilievre voted to cut [\\$43.5 billion in health-care transfers to the provinces](#). To date, he has not made any commitment on stopping private clinics that are extra-billing patients.

#### Expand Medicare to Cover Safe & Effective Drugs (Pharmacare)

Pierre Poilievre voted against Pharmacare when it was brought in [supporting the continuation of private \(and for-profit\) insurance](#). In 2024, he [vowed to scrap the new public pharmacare program](#).

In the election campaign he has changed his tune saying he will [keep the existing program \(coverage for diabetes drugs and contraceptives\) in place](#) but has not committed to expanding it.

### **Provide Dental Care Coverage**

Similarly, Poilievre voted against dental care coverage when it was brought in. In the election campaign he has changed his tune saying he will keep the existing program in place (coverage for people under 18 & over age 64) but has not committed to expanding it.

**End For-Profit Health & Seniors' Care** No commitment on this.

## **New Democratic Party**

### **Uphold & Enforce the Canada Health Act**

The NDP is committed to upholding and enforcing the Canada Health Act. They have specifically spoken out against provinces that are violating the Act and allowing private clinics to extra-bill patients and charge user fees.

### **Expand Medicare to Cover Safe & Effective Drugs (Pharmacare)**

The NDP made bringing in pharmacare a key commitment in [the Supply and Confidence Agreement](#) with the Liberals. In plain language, this means they agreed to support the minority Liberal government in exchange for a commitment to bring in a Canada Pharmacare Act by the end of 2023 and then tasking the National Drug Agency to develop a national formulary of essential medicines and bulk purchasing plan by the end of the agreement. They plan on delivering full public pharmacare within four years, starting with 100 of the most prescribed medications, such as pain medication, antibiotics and antipsychotics.

### **Provide Dental Care Coverage**

They have committed to keeping and expanding the dental care program.

### **End For-Profit Health & Seniors' Care**

They have called for national standards in long-term care and made a (non-binding) motion in the House of Commons to call for for-profit chain Revera owned by a Crown pension fund to be turned into a public entity and to transition for-profit long-term care to non-profit by 2030. They pledge to ban U.S. companies from buying Canadian health-care businesses. We could not find any concrete commitment to tie federal funding for long-term care expansion to non-profit and public ownership.

## **Green Party**

### **Uphold & Enforce the Canada Health Act**

They promise to uphold and expand Public Medicare (no specifics).

### **Expand Medicare to Cover Safe & Effective Drugs (Pharmacare)**

They promise to keep pharmacare and expand it to all prescription medication.

### **Provide Dental Care Coverage**

They pledge to keep the dental care program and expand it to cover all Canadians.

### **End For-Profit Health & Seniors' Care**

They promise to ensure that all new federal health dollars go to public non-profit care.