



July 17, 2023

Re: Manitoba Health Professional Associations Coalition Questionnaire

1. What and who do you see as part of the publicly funded health system across Manitoba?

RESPONSE: We are proud of Manitoba's public health care system and believe it needs to be strengthened and supported. For many years under Brian Pallister and Heather Stefanson's PCs cuts and privatization have eroded our public health care system. Most worryingly, we have seen repeated violations of the Canada Health Act, the cornerstone of our public health care system. We believe a different approach is needed.

Manitoba's publicly funded health care system includes a diversity of health workers and professionals providing care to patients work within our hospitals, health centers and community clinics. We believe in expanding support for public health care and working with community partners and agencies to make that a reality.

2. How will you invest in preventative care and coordinating services impacting all the social determinants to optimize health and improve the wellness of all Manitobans?

RESPONSE: Manitoba needs to find ways to invest more of our health dollars towards community based primary and preventative health care, to help Manitobans stay healthier longer, and to help them avoid becoming sick and requiring more costly and complex hospital interventions, for as long as possible.

Funding supports need to encourage and incentivize expanded patient access to multi-disciplinary teams of professionals in community clinics, to take pressure off of our hospital emergency rooms.

In terms of addressing the social determinants of health, and as an immediate first step, the Manitoba NDP is committed to implementing a universal school nutrition programmer students in schools, so that we can feed hungry kids and set them on the right path towards more education, a good job, and a healthy life. This is too important to be left to chance, and an NDP government is ready to step up and make it happen.

Additionally, the Manitoba NDP would implement universal coverage for prescription contraceptives if elected. We know that marginalized and financially struggling communities are regularly without birth control coverage. Many young Manitoban women and others face barriers to accessing birth control, putting them at higher risk of unplanned pregnancy. Removing barriers will give Manitobans greater control of their lives, improve their health outcomes and reduce overall costs to the health care system. Under the Manitoba

NDP's plan, the provincial government would cover the full cost of dozens of commonly used birth-control methods, including oral contraceptives, copper and hormonal intrauterine devices (IUDs), hormonal injections and the morning-after pill.

3. How would you address retention and recruitment in the health system? Any additional supports for rural and remote areas?

RESPONSE: For the past seven years, first under Brian Pallister and now Heather Stefanson the PC government has shown disrespect to all professionals working in our health care system – freezing wages, delaying contract negotiations, disregarding professional advice and expertise in favour of their agenda of cuts, and privatization – instead of working in partnership to improve health care.

That needs to change, because addressing the staffing crises in health care, including recruitment and retention, is fundamental to fixing what the PCs have broken, and rebuilding our health workforce will take working together. We need a different approach that starts to respect the immense and dedicated work our health care providers do every day in health care.

People are the foundation of our health care system and professionals deserve fair compensation, respect for work/life balance and stable predictable funding for the health care services they provide to Manitobans.

The Manitoba NDP will ensure there is proper support for training programs, to address staff shortages and vacancies, as well as meet the demands of a growing population.

On May 1st, the Manitoba NDP unveiled our five-point plan to start to fix rural health care. It includes incentives and the restoration of recruitment funds which were eliminated under the PCs. It also includes more staff to keep rural health centres open by offering additional incentives to allied health professionals, nurses and nurse practitioners to work in rural communities. We believe a similar approach is needed in Northern and remote areas across our province as well.

4. How would you involve health professionals in decision making for changes that impact the health system, and which professionals would you involve?

RESPONSE: Manitobans can't trust the PC's to fix the health care system that they've broken.

For seven years, under Brian Pallister and now Premier Stefanson, the PCs have refused to listen to the advice and warnings of health professionals while they pursued an agenda of health care cuts. PC decisions to reorganize the health care system was always about cutting funding, and the creation of Shared Health has left a vacuum of accountability and transparency for the responsible for the disorganized state of health care today.

The Manitoba NDP is committed to working in collaboration with all front line health care workers, health professional bodies, and will establish regular tables and discussions to work proactively and in an ongoing way on the issues facing your professions and the patients you serve.

5. What is the action plan for the continued movement of professions into the Regulated Health Professions Act?

RESPONSE: The Manitoba NDP believes that our province needs to accelerate the movement of professions into the Regulated Health Professions Act, and we will work in collaboration with those professions that have been left waiting since the legislation was passed to establish and prioritize timelines to complete this important work and bring everyone on board.

Yours Truly,

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF MANITOBA