

SURVEY RESPONSE
CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Organization: ALS Society of Canada

Date: September 17th, 2021

ALS Society of Canada

Six years before becoming the Leader of Canada's Conservatives, Erin O'Toole participated in the Ice Bucket Challenge and added his voice to those raising awareness about ALS. He joined the Internet phenomenon in memory of Gerry Johnston, a business leader and former police officer from Durham, Ontario.

Many Canadians, including Mr. O'Toole, know someone who has been affected by this devastating terminal disease. That is why Canada's Conservatives stand with the ALS Society in your efforts to raise awareness and promote advocacy so that scientists can continue to research and help those who are suffering.

We know that it is only through awareness, advocacy, and understanding that the ALS community can promote research and help Canadians with the services they need. Continued research into slowing and stopping ALS is critical. We will also ensure that Health Canada includes the voices of patients and their families in its efforts to bring an end to the devastating effects of ALS.

Within Canada's Recovery Plan, we have a detailed plan to secure the future of Canada's universal healthcare system. We have attached the chapter of our plan addressing this important priority.

A Detailed Plan to Secure Healthcare

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the cracks in our healthcare system and reminded us all of the need to strengthen it. Canada's Conservatives believe that the federal government should pay its fair share. Under the last Conservative government, federal transfers to the provinces grew at six per cent per year. Unfortunately, in 2017, the Trudeau government cut this in half, putting lives at risk.

Canada's Conservatives will take immediate action to restore health funding and to tackle the urgent crises of mental health and addiction.

Secure, Predictable Funding

Canada's Conservatives will meet with the Premiers within the first 100 days of forming government to propose a new health agreement with the provinces and territories that boosts the annual growth rate of the Canada Health Transfer to at least six per cent. This will inject nearly \$60 billion into our healthcare system over the next 10 years.

Treating Mental Health as Health - the Canada Mental Health Action Plan

Mental health and addiction were serious problems long before COVID hit. After a year of lockdowns made them worse, these are crises that our government needs to address. Canadians are suffering and dying. It's time for real action - and a new approach.

Canada's Conservatives will introduce the *Canada Mental Health Action Plan* that will:

- Propose to the provinces that they partner with us by dedicating a significant portion of the stable, predictable health funding to mental health to ensure that an additional million Canadians can receive mental health treatment every year;
- Encourage employers to add mental health coverage to their employee benefit plans by offering a tax credit for 25% of the cost of additional mental health coverage for the first three years;
- Create a pilot program to provide \$150 million over three years in grants to non-profits and charities delivering mental health and wellness programming; and
- Create a nationwide three-digit suicide prevention hotline.

Supporting Canadians Suffering from Addiction

Canada's Conservatives will treat the opioid epidemic as the health issue that it is. We believe that law enforcement should focus on dealers and traffickers. The last thing that those suffering from addiction should have to worry about is being arrested. Any interaction the government has with them should focus on keeping them safe and helping them recover.

To help more Canadians recover from addiction, Canada's Conservatives will revise the federal government's substance abuse policy framework to make recovery its overarching goal. We will reorient the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy towards ensuring that everyone suffering from addiction has the opportunity to recover and to lead a drug-free life and that all

policies that fall under the Strategy have the reduction of harm and promotion of recovery as their objectives. To realize this goal, we will:

- Invest \$325 million over the next three years to create 1,000 residential drug treatment beds and build 50 recovery community centres across the country.
 - This will give spaces to those who suffer from addiction, their families, and those who have recovered where they can get the help they need and support each other.
- Support innovative approaches to address the crises of mental health challenges and addiction, such as land-based treatment programs developed and managed by Indigenous communities as part of a plan to enhance the delivery of culturally appropriate addictions treatment and prevention services in First Nations communities with high needs.
- Partner with the provinces to ensure that Naloxone kits are available for free across Canada.

Supporting Canadians Who Are Suffering

Canada's Conservatives believe that the Government of Canada should have appealed the Quebec Superior Court decision on Medical Assistance in Dying. Instead, the Trudeau government passed a vague law with no safeguards that devalues human life.

When it comes to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID), Conservatives will:

- Reinstating the ten-day waiting period to make sure somebody does not make this decision at their lowest point.
- Restore the requirement for two fully independent witnesses to ensure that a vulnerable person is not being forced or coerced.
- Require that any discussion of MAID only occur if raised by the patient and prevent healthcare workers from suggesting it to someone who is not seeking it. Canadians living with disabilities report regularly being in situations where MAID is suggested to or pushed on them and report how this undermines their sense of security in healthcare environments.
- Repealing the Bill C-7 provision allowing MAID for those with mental health challenges.
- Require any patient receiving MAID to be informed/reminded immediately before receiving it and given the opportunity to withdraw consent.
- Protect the right of patients to choose to receive care in a MAID-free environment.
- Require healthcare practitioners approving MAID requests (MAID assessors) to examine and consult directly with the patient before approving the request (with allowances made for virtually-enabled examination where required).
- Require MAID assessors to complete MAID assessor training to ensure full awareness of and compliance with laws and best practices around MAID.

A Conservative government will also invest in palliative care. To help Canada become a place where all Canadians who suffer are offered relief, we will double the direct federal investments in palliative care. The Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association has estimated that under 30 percent of Canadians who need it have access to palliative care services.