

CNA 2018 PARTY PLATFORM QUESTIONNAIRE

Leading up to the June 2018 election, the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), the national professional voice representing over 139,000 registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) in Canada, many of whom work in Ontario, is calling on parties to include CNA's cost-effective solutions for improving health and health care in their respective platforms.

CNA's recommendations are found in our pre-budget submission that was submitted to the Ontario government's standing committee on finance and economic affairs on January 19, 2018.¹ CNA made a presentation on its submission before the committee on January 17.²

1. What will you and your party do to *educate* the public on the harms of non-medical cannabis use and *support* additional education for Ontario's nurses?

CNA's recommendation: Involve Ontario's nurses in a five-year, \$48-million public education campaign to reduce the harms of non-medical cannabis use

- ▶ An effective public education campaign would be strengthened through input from Ontario's nurses, as they have unique and important insights into behaviours and beliefs around health.
- ▶ Involving the province's nurses in the development of a public education campaign will make it more on target and impactful.

CNA's recommendation: Make a one-time investment of \$600,000 to increase Ontario nurses' level of education about cannabis use to support their role as key sources of public information

- ▶ A December 2017 Nanos survey conducted for CNA³ found that 87 per cent of Ontarians support nurses providing education on the risks and harms of cannabis use.
- ▶ A September 2017 CNA survey found that 46 per cent of nurses in Ontario identified knowledge gaps about the risks and harms associated with non-medical cannabis use.⁴
- ▶ New funding for education would reduce knowledge gaps around areas such as cannabis use during pregnancy and the risks associated with cannabis use and mental health (32.7 per cent and 11.5 per cent of nurses, respectively, reported lack of knowledge in these areas).

2. What will you and your party do to stem the opioid crisis?

CNA's recommendation: Invest in Ontario's harm reduction efforts by hiring more nurses to staff existing and future supervised injection and overdose prevention sites

- ▶ A portion of the \$222 million slated to fight Ontario's opioid crisis can be used to hire nurses to staff these sites.
- ▶ Funds would be earmarked for nurses who work in partnership with other harm reduction staff to counsel patients in urban and rural communities.
- ▶ Ensuring highly-skilled nurses are on staff in these sites will improve the effectiveness of these services.

CNA's recommendation: Add nurses as key players in Ontario's naloxone program

- ▶ Ontario's naloxone program currently involves pharmacists and harm reduction workers.

- ▶ Since nurses are experts in relational care and patient education, they should be given primary responsibility for providing naloxone to people being discharged from hospital with high-dose opioids (e.g., orthopaedic patients, oncology patients, post-trauma surgery patients), those discharged from emergency or inpatient departments who may be at risk for overdose (e.g., persons seeking care for cellulitis secondary to injection drug use), or those being discharged following an overdose.

3. What will you and your party do to support people in Indigenous communities recovering from opioid addiction and PTSD?

CNA's recommendation: Make an investment of \$750,000 to support rollout of a technology system that enables clients, nurses and counsellors to support people recovering from opioid addiction and PTSD

- ▶ Ontario is home to more than one-fifth of the national Indigenous population.⁵ It faces an urgent imperative to offer services to stem the public health emergencies caused by opioids and PTSD.
- ▶ CNA and the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association (CINA) urge the next government to invest in testing TryCycle in select Indigenous communities in Ontario where there is a need for immediate, innovative solutions to improve access to care and a need for better client/caregiver liaisons to prevent overdoses and deaths from opioid use and suicides due to PTSD.

4. What will you and your party do support Ontario's NPs?

The Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario recommends:

- ▶ Investments in professional equalization to ensure equal pay for equal work for *all* nurse practitioners working across *all* sectors. This includes NPs working in long-term care, community support and mental health.
- ▶ The extension of the Medical Liability Protection Reimbursement Program to provide NPs the same professional liability protection subsidy mechanism used by physicians.
- ▶ Development of a truly integrated funding structure for health care, based on quality outcomes, that will stop organizations such as public health units and hospitals from replacing NPs with physicians and physician assistants solely for budgetary reasons. This practice puts NP jobs at risk and increases cost to taxpayers.

5. What is your party's health-care plan and how can RNs and NPs help deliver it?

This questionnaire has been submitted to the leaders of the major provincial parties. Responses will be shared with CNA's members in Ontario and posted on its website at cna-aiic.ca. Parties can send their responses by 5 p.m. ET, May 11, 2018, to the e-mail address below.

Contact:

David Granovsky, Lead Government Relations
 Canadian Nurses Association
 Telephone: 613-237-2159 or 1-800-361-8404, ext. 525,
 E-mail: dgranovsky@cna-aiic.ca

¹ https://cna-aiic.ca/~media/cna/page-content/pdf-en/pre-budget-submission-to-ontario-government_jan-2018_e.pdf?la=en

² http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/committee-proceedings/committee_transcripts_details.do?locale=en&Date=2018-01-17&ParlCommID=8997&DocumentID=34388

³ https://cna-aiic.ca/~media/cna/page-content/pdf-en/canadian-nurses-ontario-omni-summary_dec-2017.pdf?la=en

⁴ https://cna-aiic.ca/~media/cna/page-content/pdf-en/ontario-nurses-knowledge-of-non-medical-cannabis-use_dec-2017.pdf?la=en

⁵ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-656-x/89-656-x2016007-eng.htm>