

ELECTION 2016

Election Forum 2016 Questions

1. Issue: Community Based Health Services

Background:

People with dementia and the family members who support them want the person they care for to have the opportunity to live in their home and community of choice for as long as possible.

It is known that providing care to a person with Alzheimer's disease or dementia is the fifth most common care giving responsibility. While caregivers find their role meaningful, they also find it demanding.

- 32% of caregivers of people with dementia spend greater than 10 hours per week providing assistance.
- 55% of caregivers indicate that they are worried or anxious and 51% indicate that they are tired.

Family caregivers of people with dementia express their concern about the quality of care delivered by the health services continuum. They have concerns about the adequacy of the range of services provided to Manitobans and the lack of consistency in service delivery across our province.

In order to meet the societal and personal goal of aging in place, people with dementia and their family care partners need services that are compassionate, skilled and accessible in their community.

Question:

What is your party's plan for improving care and services to community dwelling people with dementia and their family care partners?

2. Issue: Health Workforce

Background:

Care of people with dementia requires a workforce with a broad range of skills that include diagnostic ability; care related to the frailty that aging may bring; intervention if behavioural symptoms related to dementia present; psychosocial, spiritual and recreational support and engagement. Also, care delivery principles and standards that recognize the priority of knowing the uniqueness of the person ahead of focusing on care tasks leads to respectful and dignified person-centred care.

Question:

What is your party's plan to ensure that people with dementia, whether they are living in the community, supportive housing or long-term care settings or being cared for in acute care are cared for by a workforce that is knowledgeable, compassionate and person-centred?

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3. Need for Additional Personal Care Homes

Background:

A March 8, 2016 a CBC report indicated panelled seniors are taking up hospital beds in every RHA in Manitoba: 61 in Winnipeg, 116 in Southern Health, 229 in Prairie Mountain and 14 in the Northern Regional Health Authority.

According to a 2012 Manitoba Centre for Health Policy study, Manitoba will need 5,100 new PCH beds (in long term care, supportive housing and in expanded Home Care) by 2036 in order to meet the needs of that generation of seniors.

Question:

Given the current pressure that the lack of adequate long term care spaces is placing on acute care services and the projected need for additional long term care services, what is your parties' plan for addressing this pressing need? Is your party committed to developing personal care homes that incorporate best practices in built environments and models of care that promote quality of life through person-centered care?

4. Issue: Funding of Personal Care Home Infrastructure and Services

Background:

Currently PCH owners and operators are struggling to balance budgets as the costs of required care supplies are rising without corresponding increases in allocations. Allocations for supplies have not been adjusted in 10 years and capital allocations have not changed in 40 years.

Question:

In light of the financial challenges facing PCH providers, please tell us the strategies your party is planning to address funding of personal care home infrastructure and services.

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5. Issue: Information about the Health Services and System Navigation

Background:

Understanding and navigating the health care system is not an easy matter. The range of elder care options, characteristics of service, cost of service and the criteria for accessing each service are often confusing to the public. Families often find themselves both financially and emotionally challenged as they must work through decisions about their choice of a living and care site at a time when their energies are stretched due to their caregiving roles.

Question:

What communication and education strategies has your party considered to meet the information needs of Manitobans so that they can be better informed about options and how to access and navigate the health care system?

6. Issue: Supportive Housing

Background:

Supportive housing services are a care option for a person who can no longer manage in their own home but are not requiring personal care home services. Currently the majority of supportive housing spaces are in Winnipeg, leaving rural areas under served.

Question:

Is your party prepared to review the current availability of supportive housing and to prepare a plan for establishing supportive housing in more rural communities?

Background:

Some older adults who have a very limited income and who would benefit from supportive housing services find the costs challenging. This is especially true of couples, where one spouse requires more care and the other spouse can live safely in their home.

However, the average cost to the resident to live in Supportive Housing is just slightly higher than the average cost a personal care home resident would pay. The difference for couples is that there is an appeal process related to personal care home fees (that couples can apply for).

The cost to the province to have a resident in Supportive Housing is approximately 1/3 of the cost of that of a person living in a personal care home.

Question:

What plans does your party have to look at creative ways to ensure Supportive Housing is affordable, especially for couples. For example: increasing the number of subsidies, and/or rent geared to income supportive housing spaces; looking at challenges couples face, covering pharmacare for Supportive Housing clients (as is done in Personal Care Homes).