



Bring Back Jobs!

Better Health Access for Better Health Outcomes Backgrounder

There's something fundamentally wrong with the way health care is delivered in Newfoundland and Labrador right now. 90,000 people do not have access to a family doctor.

Without access, people are not getting timely care. Problems that could be caught early are turning into major health issues that lead to worse outcomes and tragic suffering for people. We need to be seeing and treating people sooner.

Every resident of the province should have access to a family doctor. Our new health care team model will provide residents with access to family doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, occupational therapists and dieticians.

- We commit to take the advice of the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association to create a province-wide program of primary health care teams. In health care teams, patients will receive comprehensive care and physicians will be able to practice in teams, providing greater care. We will implement health care teams where nurse practitioners, registered nurses and other providers can be connected and integrated with family doctors in team structures.
- Our goal is to reduce the proportion of unattached patients in the province to 5 per cent. *OR Our goal is to ensure 95% of individuals in this province have access to a health care team.*
- Health care teams will offer after-hour and weekend clinics and virtual care, increasing access to health care for many.
- To assist with the implementation of health care teams, we will ensure all health care professionals are able to practice at their full scope of professional practice and will modernize the medical fee structures so they are flexible enough to cover innovative arrangements for service delivery by multidisciplinary health care teams.

To support access to health care, to support health care teams in supporting patients, and to empower patients to be their own advocates:

- Primary health care teams will be supported with electronic medical records. We will ensure these teams will be able to use of the Electronic Medical Record to improve the flow of information among health care providers.
- We will ensure patients have better access to their own medical record by working with the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI).
- We will maximize the implementation of electronic tools to remind patients of appointments, thereby reducing the large volume of missed appointments.

A PC Government knows that a key part of providing better access to health care is to ensure we have an adequate number of compassionate and skilled health care professionals to provide care.

- Our goal is to retain 75 per cent of Memorial medical graduates who pursue family medicine. We will work with communities, doctors, and the NLMA to focus on the recruitment of family doctors.
- We will develop a more robust retention structure for graduating physicians of the Memorial University Medical School and provide attractive reimbursement/taxation packages for those who choose to practice in the province, particularly in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.
- We will work collaboratively with the Newfoundland and Labrador Nurse Practitioner Association to create new full-time permanent positions for nurse practitioners in communities needing them.

A PC government will utilize virtual care to make accessing health care as easy as possible for patients.

- We will further expand the use of virtual care technologies that allow patients to access appropriate care in any region of the province. A person's postal code should not determine their access to care or quality of care.
- We will ensure supports are in place to help those who do not use technology to continue to access appropriate care in-person.