

Health Policy (Adopted 27 October 2018)**PREAMBLE:**

In government and in all our public participation, the Green Party of Nova Scotia (“the Green Party”) intends to develop and support policy in Health, Education, Environment, Economics, and all areas that will underpin the Clean, Green and healthy lifestyles that are important to Nova Scotians.

This document represents the Green Party’s policies in the area of Health.

This document was last modified in October 2018, and was last reviewed in October 2018.

The Green Party will:

1. Support and promote community health and safety initiatives and projects.
2. Introduce and support programs that promote healthy active lifestyles for all ages.
3. Consult with stakeholders to develop a hospital plan that delivers timely, equitable and efficient care.
4. Improve the delivery of mental health services and insure that all regions of the province have access to the services.
5. **Substance Abuse:**
 - a. Improve drug and alcohol rehabilitation services.
 - b. Treat substance abuse as a health rather than criminal matter.
6. Focus on the recruitment and retention of doctors, nurses, technicians and other health care professionals.
7. Increase funding for staffing and support so that more hospital beds are made available.
8. **Healthy Environment:** The Green Party of Nova Scotia recognises that the overuse and misuse of chemicals, the overuse of fossil fuels and the poor handling and under-regulation of industrial and human waste are factors that impact the health of our population.
 - a. Develop and implement plans that reduce the incidence of illness caused by unhealthy or unsafe environmental practices or habits.
 - b. Commence a province-wide health strategy to develop and implement plans that reduce the incidence caused by unsafe or unhealthy environmental practice.
9. **Healthy Lifestyles:**
 - a. Ensure all Nova Scotians have ready access to current information and appropriate assistance to strive for and maintain a healthy lifestyle, considerate of individual circumstances;
 - b. Develop strategies to minimize the misuse of drugs and alcohol, including education programs and regulation.
 - c. Expand programs that discourage smoking.
 - d. Introduce legislation to further restrict the advertising of tobacco products.
 - e. Improve drug and alcohol rehabilitation services.

- f. Improve and expand public education programs on sexually transmitted diseases, focusing on youth and high-risk groups.
10. **Community Participation:**
- a. **Priorities:** review health priorities and set new ones using ongoing, open processes that promote community participation, with renewed emphasis on rural health services and education.
 - b. **Hospitals:** Pursue a transparent and inclusive consultation process to develop a Hospital Plan, which would deliver timely, equitable and efficient acute care.
 - c. **Recruiting and Retaining Professionals:** Focus on the recruitment, education and retention of doctors, nurses, technicians and other health care professionals by offering incentives, student loan repayment and other strategies.
 - d. **Beds:** Increase funding for staffing and support so that more hospital beds are made available.
 - e. **Waiting Periods:** Waiting periods for medical tests, surgery and many treatments are often very long and in some cases the waits are increasing. This will be investigated and addressed.
11. The long-term answers for our public health care system may exist in other jurisdictions. We support investigating those models of successful single-tiered, publicly funded, universal public health care systems that do not have chronic waitlist problems.
12. Investigating less invasive and less costly alternative therapies.
13. **Infants and young children:** Improve and strengthen prenatal nutrition and education, and support for prospective parents and parents of young children, stressing healthy diet and activity as critical in the prevention of many illnesses.
14. **Mental Health:** improve service delivery in mental health and addiction services by facilitating effective and mutually respectful formal partnerships between government and community sectors.
15. **Alternative Therapies:** improve access to quality evidence-based alternative health care by developing an independent and accountable regulatory system of alternative therapies.
16. **Workforce:** strengthen the health workforce by improving efficiency in recruiting, providing attractive career structures and conditions which retain nurses, doctors and allied professionals to the public system, including the reduction of student debt load for those professionals agreeing to remain and work in Nova Scotia for a determined length of time.
- a. Improve access to multi-disciplinary training and education in both rural and urban areas.
 - b. Support the inclusion of Midwives and Nurse Practitioners and Home Health Care Professionals as part of Nova Scotia's health care professional services, and provision for secondary and tertiary providers to bill MSI directly.
17. **Dental Health:** Introduce MSI coverage of dental care for all.
18. **Indigenous Health:** ensure that all Indigenous people have processes for determining their own health priorities.
19. **Disability Sector:**

- a. Develop a charter of rights for Nova Scotians with disabilities and their caregivers that clarifies provincial responsibilities in the provision of services.
 - b. Improve flexibility in funding options for people with disability and their caregivers.
 - c. Expand the home support and home care programs and assisted living services to support people with chronic care needs.
 - d. Develop a strategy for Lyme disease while working with and investigating procedures and diagnosis being successfully used in other jurisdictions.
 - e. Develop research and regulatory support mechanisms for patients with environmental illnesses and extreme sensitivities.
20. **E-health/Technology:** promote the use of accessible information technology to improve communication and reduce costs whilst ensuring privacy and confidentiality.
21. **Elder Care:**
- a. Assess and improve our programs for elder care, focusing on at-home caregiver support and on financial and respite consideration for families that care for elderly or infirm family members.
 - b. Immediately begin measures to increase the number of available spaces in nursing homes.
 - c. Prioritise seniors' care in their preferred communities.
 - d. Spouses and partners should, if they chose, be accommodated in the same facility, and if suitable, the same room.
22. **Cannabis:** The Green Party of Nova Scotia favours regulated independent cannabis dispensaries with knowledgeable staff serving medical patients.
23. **In Government:** develop and support policy in Education, Environment, Economics, and all areas that will underpin the Clean, Green and healthy lifestyles that are important to Nova Scotians.