



Association Canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités  
Canadian Association of Retired Teachers

# SENIORS' ISSUES FOR THE 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION



ENDORSED BY





## Seniors' Issues Information

2019 is a federal election year.

ACER-CART would like to thank ARTA for its outstanding work in preparing this booklet and sharing it with retired teachers across Canada.

The ARTA, guided by its constitutional responsibility to provide information to its members on matters of importance to their well-being, has prepared this package of information on a variety of issues that may, and perhaps should, come to the fore during the lead up to the election.

ACER-CART wants to ensure that each political party and its candidates are fully engaged in communication with seniors, ACER-CART is committed to providing appropriate support to its member associations and their retired teachers to engage the candidates and their political parties.

Hopefully, you will use this information to visit the nominated candidates of each political party in your riding and focus their attention on the critical issues facing seniors now and in the future. The questions could also be used at all candidates' meetings.

Each issue has facts and questions to help you prepare for your visit. You may select only one or two issues important to you to talk about with the candidate.

Use the same issue(s) for the candidate of each political party so you can compare responses.

Unless the next federal government is prepared to show leadership in these areas, an increasing number of retirees will experience a crisis for which they are ill prepared.

The next elected Government of Canada must be committed to providing leadership and support to the provinces and territories so that Canada can realize a truly national approach to addressing the realities of seniors throughout the country.



## Pharmacare

### Key message

**All Canadians should have access to a universal, national comprehensive pharmacare program.**

### Issue 1

All Canadians should have access to the medications they need. A universal, public, comprehensive, accessible and portable national pharmacare program would cut costs and lead to a healthier population. It would also allow for better monitoring of medications and reduce the burden on other parts of the health care system.

### Facts

- Canadians pay the second highest prices for prescription drugs.
- One in four Canadians can't afford to fill their prescriptions
- Canada is the only country in the world with universal health care that doesn't cover prescription drugs
- Canadians would save between \$5 and \$11 billion dollars with a universal pharmacare plan by leveraging purchasing power through a national plan.

### Questions

1. Will your party support the creation of a national Pharmacare formulary?
2. Will you party support the purchase of prescription drugs in bulk through a national plan?
3. Will your Party support a universal Pharmacare Plan with the Government as Single Payer?

### Issue 2

All Canadians should have access to the medications they need regardless of age or where they live.

### Facts

- There are a multitude of drug formularies in Canada which means that Canadians are currently covered differently depending on their age, province of residence and income.
- Drug formularies are currently influenced by pharmaceutical interests rather than scientific research that assures efficacy and safety.

### Questions

1. How will your party ensure a comprehensive, quality, evidence-based formulary so that Canadians can access the medications they need to maintain and improve their health?



## National Seniors Strategy

### Key message

**Canada needs a National Seniors Strategy that optimizes health, financial security and social inclusion, so all Canadians can age with dignity.**

Older Canadians should be able to:

- Stay healthy, active and independent for as long as possible
- Have access to quality care closer to home
- Have supports for their formal and informal caregivers

### Issue

Older Canadians are the fastest growing segment of our population, but gaps in the Canadian healthcare and social policies create barriers to seniors' independence, and the essential role they play in vibrant healthy communities and the economy.

### Facts

- Canadians are living longer and our healthcare system is not keeping up with this shifting demographic.
- Shortfalls in long-term and home care resources force seniors to stay in hospital longer than needed. The need for increased numbers of community care and personal support care workers is apparent.
- Standards of care are inconsistent across the country. Many Canadians don't have access to a primary care giver and with one Geriatrician to 15,000 adults, Canada is unprepared to meet the growing need for geriatric expertise.
- More than 8 million Canadians provide care to a family member or friend, contributing an estimated \$25 billion in unpaid labour - often at a cost to personal finances, physical and mental health. Women are disproportionately impacted by gaps in elder care
- Social isolation, elder abuse and lack of age friendly strategies can deteriorate quality of life, and lead to poor health outcomes, higher social costs and loss of vital economic and social

contributions of older populations.

- Canadians believe in supportive and palliative care in or close to home.
- While healthcare delivery is a provincial responsibility, the federal government has an opportunity to provide leadership and establish a national vision for aging in Canada

Tackling these issues independently will not give us the desired results. A coordinated National Seniors Strategy that addresses the social determinants of health, with dedicated funding and accountable goals, will provide the blueprint for an integrated continuum of care.

### Questions

1. How will your party implement a National Seniors Strategy that addresses healthcare infrastructure, care-giver support, long term care and age-friendly communities?
2. How will your party ensure that quality, safe and adequately funded home, community and long-term care are available to meet the needs of our aging population?
3. What will your party do to establish national standards of care for home and long-term care?
4. How will your party recognize and support unpaid caregivers and the vital role they play in our healthcare system?
5. How will your party support the need for increased numbers of healthcare and support professionals to address the growing need for geriatric expertise in Canada?