

Alberta Liberal Action Plan for Health Care

Address health workforce shortages

- Train enough nurses, doctors and other health professionals to meet Alberta's need.
- Explore new ways of funding physicians, creating multidisciplinary health care teams and encouraging better workforce tracking.

Reduce wait times

- Create specialized surgical centres within the public system.
- Implement a province-wide Community Health Centre model, providing more flexible access to physicians, encouraging more efficient use of other health professionals, and reducing emergency room overcrowding.
- Increase acute care capacity to reduce overcrowding, by constructing new hospitals in southeast Calgary, Grande Prairie and elsewhere, and devise long-term plans to open more beds in Edmonton and rural centres.
- Provide prompt and equal access to medically necessary MRI and CT scans.

Manage health system costs

- Implement a public pharmacare program to reduce costs and ensure equal access to medications.
- Conduct an independent and open review of regionalization including the role of the Department of Health and Wellness.
- Establish predictable funding levels, adjusted annually to reflect population growth, inflation, and aging.
- Ensure adequate funding for rural health services to reflect the special challenges and higher costs of delivering those services in sparsely populated regions.
- Create stable funding and long-term planning to accommodate an aging population.
- Bring the WCB back to using the public health care system so that the financial benefits of treating WCB clients flow back to taxpayers.

Keep Albertans healthier

- Conduct a Health Impact Assessment on all major government policy and funding decisions, to examine their effect on a range of factors that influence the health of our society.
- Establish a Community Wellness Fund of approximately \$200 million per year, using taxes from tobacco sales, to support wellness and lifestyle initiatives and to expand Family and Community Support Services.

Improve continuing care

- Legislate clear, measurable, resident-focused standards, province-wide, including standards for staff-to-resident ratios.
- Implement competitive wages, permanent positions, increased staffing levels and appropriate staff mixes, and establish training standards.
- Establish a Continuing Care Commissioner, accountable to the Legislature.
- Establish autonomous resident and family councils in all homes.
- Ensure that stimulating activities and therapies are readily available.
- Legislate a Resident's Bill of Rights.

- Fund the creation and operation of an independent Advocacy Centre for Dependent Adults.
- Legislate a minimum level of care per day for those in continuing care.
- Partner with colleges, universities and professional associations to recruit and train people for careers in continuing care.
- Ensure that all contracts between Regional Health Authorities and facilities are made public.
- Commit to immediate short term, accountable funding.
- Concentrate funding in front-line resident care.

Other policies

- Eliminate health care premiums.
- Elect Regional Health Authority boards.
- Increase support for home care programs.
- Publicly fund midwifery services.
- Provide palliative care as a core health service, without patient charges.
- Restore stable funding and long-term planning for mental health, with an emphasis on community support.