



## Good Health and Good Care

Vibrant communities depend on healthy, engaged citizens, and take care of those in need. Green health policy takes a community view, encompassing illness prevention, timely access to health services, and compassionate care for those unable to live independently.

# 3 Good Health and Good Care

## A. Prevent illness and protect public health

The government must act to protect individual health and public safety threatened by illnesses such as Lyme disease, and by extreme weather and sea level rise caused by climate change.

### A Green Government would:

- ✔ Make the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the province's top doctor responsible for public health, an **independent arm of the Department of Health**, reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly; and restore the staff and resources that were removed from the Office by the Liberal government.
- ✔ Ask the Chief Medical Officer of Health to establish protocols, based on international best practices, for the **diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease.**

- ✔ Establish a **20 cents/litre tax on sugar-sweetened beverages** and direct the revenue to healthy school food and child wellness programs.
- ✔ **Support walking and cycling lifestyles** by building active transportation infrastructure in communities,<sup>2</sup> and providing cycling education in elementary school.
- ✔ **Reduce public and occupational exposure to harmful chemicals**, including phasing out the release of cancer-causing pollutants by industries.



<sup>2</sup> With funding from the Canada-New Brunswick Infrastructure Bilateral Agreement  
<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/prog/agreements-ententes/2018/2018-nb-eng.html>

## B. Access to health care

Health care is not a business, and the public health system should not be run like one - or by one. Instead, it should be organized to meet citizens' health needs effectively, with decisions about providing care made at the community level.

### A Green Government would:

- ✔ Increase to **nine percent** the proportion of the Department of Health's budget dedicated to **providing mental health and addiction services**.<sup>3</sup>
- ✔ Cancel the contract with the private company Medavie for managing our extra-mural health services, and **return management responsibilities to Horizon and Vitalité**.
- ✔ Place our **ambulance services under public management** and initiate a public inquiry into how they can be improved.
- ✔ **Give hospitals the authority to make decisions** about how best to provide timely access and care to patients and enable all staff to collaborate to implement them.
- ✔ **Create 40 new nurse practitioner positions**, and allow nurse practitioners and pharmacists to bill Medicare for health services to reduce wait times for primary health care.
- ✔ Eliminate the **government-imposed caps** on Medicare billing numbers, so more doctors can open practices in regions where there is a demand for their service.
- ✔ Add **eight new community health-care centres** staffed by collaborative family health care teams, including mental health professionals and nurse practitioners.
- ✔ Integrate **midwives** into each of New Brunswick's health regions.
- ✔ Enable optometrists to work to their **full scope of practice** to prescribe glaucoma treatment, for example.

<sup>3</sup> <https://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CMHA-Ontario-PreBudget-2017-FINAL.pdf>

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## C. Compassionate, Respectful Care

A growing number of citizens require various levels of public assistance to live in dignity. Most are elderly; others are living with a disability. We need a flexible, multi-faceted system that matches need with the appropriate type of care, and is not profit-driven. We also need a reliable, professional workforce to provide this care.

### A Green Government would:

- ✔ Increase training requirements and salaries for **home-care workers**, and improve standards for in-home care.
- ✔ Ensure existing **not-for-profit nursing homes** have the “**right of first refusal**” to provide additional nursing home beds in the communities they serve.
- ✔ Increase the hours of care for nursing home residents from **3.1 hours per day to 3.5 hours per day**, based on the positive results of the Department of Social Development’s 2010 pilot project.
- ✔ Use the **special-care home model** to establish dedicated facilities, staffed with appropriately trained personnel, for autistic adults who are unable to care for themselves.
- ✔ Ensure people with a disability are able to have **access to affordable housing** with the supports they require to live successfully.
- ✔ Explore **alternate housing models for rural seniors** who find it difficult to remain in their family homes but do not require nursing home assistance.
- ✔ Enable homeowners on fixed incomes to remain in their homes by **de-linking property assessment from the real estate market**. Assessments will increase based on actual improvements made, or when a house is sold.
- ✔ Establish a public inquiry into the **adequacy of retirement income for all New Brunswickers**, and reverse the changes made to the pensions of retired teachers, nurses and public servants.



Our Pathway for Change

## D. Protecting New Brunswickers from Climate Change

In a July 14, 2018, *Brunswick News* article, David Phillips, senior climatologist with Environment and Climate Change Canada, stated, “What we need to do is accept the reality that our climate has changed and it’s going to change even more in the future. It’s not going to be our grandparents’ weather anymore.” Five big New Brunswick climate-driven calamities cost the public purse \$186 million over the past ten years.

### A Green Government would:

- ✔ Immediately implement the recommendations of the **2016 Select Committee on Climate Change** to address the risks and impacts of climate change.
- ✔ **Maintain intact forests, wetlands, salt marshes and flood plains** as buffers against climate change impacts such as flooding and sea level rise.
- ✔ Investigate each **significant flood event** to identify factors that may have aggravated it, and incorporate learning into ongoing adaptation plans.

4 See <https://www.gnb.ca/legis/Climate-Climatiques/SelectCommitteeClimateChange.pdf>.