

Strengthening child and youth mental health

What will your party do to improve timely access to publicly funded mental health services for children and youth?

The Green Party believes all Islanders should have access to healthcare when they need it, where they need it. The Green platform includes a number of commitments to support publicly funded mental health services for children and youth, including:

- Adding counselling positions to family clinics and emergency rooms across PEI;
- Reopening the Psychiatric Urgent Care Clinics (PUCCs);
- Provide Islanders with comprehensive and timely mental health and addiction services, including
 - Finally starting construction of the new mental health hospital,
 - Increasing the number of counsellors in school,
 - Expanding access to counselling services; and
 - Including mental health services as a part of patient medical homes and neighbourhoods.
- Finally deliver midwifery and improve supports for new mothers.

Prioritizing paediatric healthcare

How will your party reduce pressures on the paediatric healthcare system across the province and build capacity across the spectrum of care?

The Green Party recognizes the strain that has been placed on the paediatric healthcare system in recent years. In particular, we note the strain that respiratory illnesses have placed on local hospitals and paediatric hospitals that Islanders rely on such as the I.W.K.

A Green government would better integrate public health into the education system, including the expansion of vaccine clinics in schools and improved health education in the K-12 curriculum, and would promote improved ventilation which will reduce illness and improve health and educational outcomes.

A Green government would also expand our capacity to provide care by expanding our use of nurse practitioners, integrate physician assistants into the healthcare system, open medical homes and collaborative practices, improve incentives to attract physicians to rural areas, finally deliver midwifery and improve supports for new mothers, and expand access to virtual care.

Tackling childhood poverty

What will your party do to reduce rates of childhood poverty and food insecurity across the province?

The Green Party recognizes that childhood poverty and food insecurity are preventable policy failures, and is proud to have sponsored and passed legislation in 2021 setting out targets for the elimination of childhood poverty and food insecurity on PEI.

The best way we can address childhood poverty and food insecurity is to make sure Islanders have more food in their pockets to afford the basic necessities of life. The Green platform includes commitments to:

- Introduce tax breaks for lower and middle income earners in PEI and create a more equitable tax system for all Islanders, including:
 - Indexing tax brackets to ensure our tax system reflects increases to the cost of living;
 - Creating a refundable tax credit for lower- and middle-income workers to complement the Canada Workers Benefit. This will help 32,000 Islanders.
- Raise the Low-Income Tax Reduction threshold to \$25,000, helping 11,000 additional Islanders;
- Immediately increase the minimum wage to \$15.20 to ensure our minimum wage keeps pace with inflation, and increase the minimum wage by at least \$1 per year thereafter until it reaches a living wage;
- Reduce childcare costs to \$10/day, increase the number of childcare spaces, and negotiate with the federal government to further reduce the cost of childcare on Prince Edward Island;
- Increase social assistance rates and index them to inflation;
- Increase the Assured Income Allowance for Islanders living with a disability;
- Expand income thresholds for accessing government programs;
- Create a basic income pilot, as recommended by the Special Committee on Poverty in PEI. Strongly advocate for financial support from the federal government to create a full universal basic income;
- Prepare a comprehensive poverty elimination strategy in consultation with the community and Islanders affected by poverty, pursuant to the *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act*, which would include specific actions to further reduce poverty;
- Give more money to Island food banks who are facing record numbers of clients;
- Reduce drug costs by investing \$18 million into provincial pharmacare programs and eliminating unnecessary fees; and
- Support children and youth as they age out of care.

Improving sexual and reproductive health care

Will your party commit to expanding sexual and reproductive healthcare, including through universal access to no-cost contraceptives?

Yes, the Green Party supports the expansion of sexual and reproductive healthcare. Part of our \$18 million investment into provincial pharmacare programs would include providing universal access to no-cost contraceptives.

We would also:

- Conduct awareness and education campaigns highlighting the prevalence and impacts of endometriosis for both healthcare practitioners and the general public;
- Create guidelines for diagnosing endometriosis;
- Compile a list of resources and treatments available to those who are diagnosed with endometriosis on PEI; and
- Improve data collection on endometriosis and enhance support for Islanders with endometriosis to participate in clinical trials.