



Marie Adèle Davis, Executive Director
Canadian Paediatric Society
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Ottawa, ON
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September 29, 2025

Dear Ms. Davis,

Thank you for reaching out to me on behalf of the Canadian Paediatric Society. I always look forward to the opportunity to share our plan for getting a better deal for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. I hope that the answers below, drawn from that plan, will satisfactorily answer your questions.

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

New Democrats believe that when children and youth get the best head start in life, they have fewer physical and mental health concerns later in life. Not only does that reduce healthcare costs in the decades to come, but most importantly, it also boosts life quality and satisfaction. That is why the NL NDP is committing to recruiting more child psychologists in the public system, to help reduce wait times and backlogs for assessments and treatment. As a temporary measure while we recruit more psychologists into the public system, an NL NDP government will also pay for all those enrolled under the Medical Care Plan (MCP) to have up to three visits per year with a psychologist in private practice. To access the free sessions, children and youth would have to receive a referral from a primary healthcare provider.

What will your party do to better support and retain health care providers and improve access to timely, appropriate and affordable healthcare for children and youth?

As part of the NL Cares plan for healthcare, we have a whole suite of policies that will allow us to recruit up to 1,000 more healthcare professionals of all stripes into the public system. Among other actions, an NL NDP government pledges the following:

- Give frontline employees a seat at the table when the decisions being made affect how they work;
- Pay students in healthcare fields for internships they perform in the public sector, making these programs more attractive to and financially feasible for potential applicants;
- Create 20 new seats at the Medical School;
- Implement support and mentorship systems for new health profession graduates;
- Restore the full-time recruiter position in the Medical School for physicians, and hiring two new ones specifically devoted to nursing schools;

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- Merge the new recruiters and those in the regions of NLHS into a single Office for Medical Professional Recruitment, so that they avoid duplicating effort and work together on common goals while sharing expertise and resources;
- Start recruitment initiatives early, by building relationships with medical and nursing students in their first year;
- Make it a priority to recruit allied health professionals and others to reduce workloads;
- Make primary care more accessible in rural and remote areas by expanding the nurse travel locum program province-wide; and
- Reduce paperwork for physicians by banning employers from requiring a note from the doctor for short-term illnesses.

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

Many forget this, but the NDP under Ed Broadbent introduced a motion in the House of Commons way back in 1988 that committed the government to eradicating child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. While the House voted unanimously in favour, we are still here today fighting against this scourge. That is just not good enough for New Democrats.

Our fully costed plan to get a better deal for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians contains a number of measures that will help families make ends meet and reduce child poverty rates:

- Eliminating the provincial portion of HST off children's clothing, footwear, and car seats;
- Raising the minimum wage to \$22 per hour over four years;
- Taking the provincial portion of HST off all forms of home energy;
- Building 1,000 new, publicly owned and deeply affordable housing units per year;
- Bringing in rent stabilization policies and banning no-fault evictions, to protect tenants from predatory landlords; and
- Making \$10 per day child care more accessible by attracting more early childhood educators with paid sick days, pensions, and the working conditions they deserve.

What will your party do to reduce the impacts of climate change on the mental and physical health and well-being of children and youth?

We hear more and more news stories that highlight how concerned children and youth are about the future of our planet. What our children and youth need is reassurance that their leaders are taking the climate crisis seriously with actionable, concrete measures to fight the problem.

The NL NDP provides just that kind of leadership. While we aim to expand resources in our healthcare system, and especially mental health, we also provide solid climate leadership that is proactive and effective. We pledge to:

- Uphold strong environmental protections on any new resource projects;
- Provide an extra \$15 million each year to fund climate-resilient infrastructure to help municipalities adapt to the changing climate;



- Create a task force that will design a regional public transit plan, to combat climate change, reduce reliance on cars, and improve accessibility for people who cannot drive; and
- End taxpayer-funded subsidies to already-profitable oil companies for expanding production.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to share with you and your members our plan to improve the health and well-being of children and youth across Newfoundland and Labrador. We believe that if we want a happy and healthy population, we need to invest heavily in the early years of life, since these are the most formative. The NL NDP stands ready to deliver.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Dinn".

Jim Dinn
Leader, NL NDP
Candidate for St. John's Centre