



Today's BC Liberals

Question 1: Chronic Disease Management

Today's BC Liberals have taken strong action to make prescription medications more affordable. The *Pharmaceutical Services Act*, which came into force on May 31, 2012, has allowed us to reduce the price of generic drugs to 25 per cent of the brand name price as of April 1 this year, and will allow us to further reduce it to 20 per cent on April 1, 2014. Previously, generics cost 35 per cent of the brand-name price.

We also worked with other jurisdictions in Canada to lower the price for six widely-used generic drugs, which could produce savings of \$100 million for provincial and territorial drug plans once fully implemented.

We are proud of what is provided by our government. For example:

- B.C. provides 100 per cent coverage of psychiatric medications for those in need;
- PharmaCare provides 100 per cent coverage, with no deductible and no co-pay, for families on income assistance and people in residential care; and
- By ensuring no family pays more than four per cent of their income towards their prescription drug costs, PharmaCare protects B.C. residents from catastrophic drug costs.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to work to make prescription drugs more affordable for all British Columbians.

Question 2: PharmaCare Drug Reviews

Today's BC Liberals believe it is important to review new drugs in a speedy and thorough manner so that patients can access to the medication they need, and can be confident that it is safe.

The Ministry of Health has a rigorous drug review process, designed to ensure that drugs covered by Pharmacare provide maximum benefit and value.

Since 2003, B.C. and the rest of Canada have relied on the robust evidence-based process of the national Common Drug Review for the majority of drug submissions reviewed by the Ministry of Health.

Drugs not covered by the Common Drug Review are reviewed by contractors who are funded by the Ministry of Health. Clinical evidence reviews provided by these suppliers or by the CDR represent just one input in the entire drug review process.

The findings are also reviewed by BC's Drug Benefit Council, which is an independent advisory body made of 12 members.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to support BC's rigorous drug review process.

Question 3: Patient Input

Today's BC Liberals are committed to giving British Columbians a chance to share their perspectives on drug decisions that affect them. Patient input is an important part of the drug review process in BC.

For drugs that are under active consideration by Pharmacare, patients can give input if they answer "yes" to one of the following categories:

- Do you have the medical condition for which the drug would be used?
- Are you a caregiver to someone who has that medical condition?
- Does your patient group represent patients who have that medical condition AND have you registered with PharmaCare to give input?

For those who choose to participate, their privacy is fully protected. Their input is considered by the Drug Benefit Council, which is an independent advisory body.

This 12-member council makes recommendations to the Ministry of Health as to whether a drug should or should not be considered for coverage under the BC PharmaCare program.

Today's BC Liberals will continue to provide opportunities for the public to provide input on Pharmacare decisions.

Question 4: First Nations Health

Today's BC Liberals are committed to working to improve the health of BC's First Nations.

We have been working with First Nations through the First Nations Health Council and the First Nations Health Society, as well as with the federal government, for a number of years to improve the health and wellness of First Nations in B.C.

Last year, we appointed Dr. Evan Adams to the position of Deputy Provincial Health Officer. In this new role, Dr. Adams works alongside Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Perry Kendall, by providing independent direction on First Nations and Aboriginal health issues to the Ministry of Health, reporting to citizens on health issues affecting the general population, and setting out a path for the improvement of First Nations and Aboriginal health and wellness.

In December last year, we signed a Health Partnership Accord with the federal government and the B.C. First Nations Health Council, which re-affirms our long-term commitment and shared vision for a better, more responsive and integrated health system for First Nations in British Columbia.

Later this year, we expect to see the new First Nations Health Authority implemented.

Today's BC Liberals are committed to moving forward on the historic work of all partners in elevating health outcomes for B.C. First Nations.

