

HAVE YOUR SAY FOR A NATIONAL PUBLIC DRUG PLAN



Fill out the online questionnaire at:
<https://www.letstalkhealth.ca/pharmacare>

Have your say and tell your friends and family.
Deadline: September 28, 2018

The federal government has set up an Advisory Council to look at putting in place a pharmacare plan for Canada. What this Council recommends will decide the kind of plan we get and who will be covered. The Council is asking everyone for opinions on what to do.

There are very different ideas of what a drug plan should look like. To create a fair, healthy and affordable plan, this is what we need:

Universal

A national drug plan should cover everyone equally. Right now there are 113,000 private plans and 70 public plans that cover people differently, depending where they work and where they live. Instead, federal funding and oversight should enable provinces and territories to provide equal coverage to everyone across the country, much like doctors and hospitals.

Public

Public health care provides better health care at lower cost than for-profit private health systems. Our current patchwork of private and public plans is failing us. A national drug plan should be publicly funded by government, following the same principle as the provision of doctors and hospitals under the Canada Health Act.

Accessible

A drug plan must be accessible to everyone. This means the elimination of co-pays for prescription drugs, because those who can't afford the co-pays don't get the drugs they need. One in ten people living in Canada are unable to take the drugs prescribed for them, because they can't afford either the entire cost or the co-pays required by public and work-based plans. People living in Canada pay over one-quarter of the total cost of drugs out of their own pockets. We don't pay to see a doctor or go to a hospital, and drugs are just as essential.

Affordable

A national plan covering everyone would be less expensive than our patchwork of many different private and public plans. A Canada-wide plan would allow effective bargaining for lower prices with pharmaceutical companies, backed by the power of access to the whole population. This system is used effectively in many countries to obtain much lower prices for drugs than we pay in Canada. Plus, we'd no longer be paying insurance companies the cost to administer thousands of different plans or their profits to do so.

Independent, Safe & Effective

The list of drugs to be covered (the formulary) must be decided independently from the financial interests of pharmaceutical companies. Now, these companies influence both the approval of new drugs and the prescribing practices of doctors. They also produce and promote drugs that offer no improvement over drugs already in use, but are more expensive. This influence leads to ineffective drugs, the waste of money, over-prescribing and harmful side effects. The evaluation and approval of drugs and the guidelines for prescribing them must be independent of pharmaceutical companies to ensure that drugs are safe, effective and prescribed appropriately.