

Thank you for taking the time to reach out to the Alberta NDP during such a critical election. The Alberta NDP have long been supporters of teachers and educators in our province and we greatly appreciate the work you've done for children and youth.

After working a lifetime to secure a better future for Albertans, we believe all retired teachers should be able to age in dignity and have access to high-quality healthcare, as well as the supports they need to stay healthy at home.

Below are more detailed responses to your questions: please don't hesitate to reach out if you need more information.

1. What is your party's commitment to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Coverage for Seniors Benefit?

In 2019, the UCP cut benefits to vulnerable Albertans including the Seniors Benefit, Income Supports and AISH payments. We will increase benefits to where they should be if they had kept pace with the cost of living, and then index to inflation going forward.

As part of a broader suite measures to bring down the cost of living for seniors, we will also:

- Make the shingles vaccine (Shingrix) free to eligible seniors who want it.
- Make essential medicines more affordable by reversing the UCP cuts to the Seniors Drug Benefit: we will restore coverage for spouses and dependents.
- Make seniors' driver medical exams free, reversing the decision by the UCP to make seniors pay between \$85-150 for exams.
- And perhaps most importantly, we will commit that no Albertan will ever pay to see a family doctor.

2. What are your party's plans to improve access to safe and affordable revenue-neutral, assisted-living facilities?

We are committed to making life more affordable and housing is foundational to making this a reality. Seniors must have spaces that allow them to live and age in dignity. We will build more seniors housing: both independent, self-contained housing and housing in communal settings, such as lodges, to give seniors choices.

We will also increase access to affordable housing, rental assistance, and social housing for low-income Albertans, including seniors. Our social housing policies support non-profit and co-op housing providers.

3. What are your party's plans to enhance the availability of resources to provide health care for seniors in Alberta? (i.e., geriatricians, virtual care)

Alberta's seniors should feel confident that they can access healthcare when they need it. Today, 800,000 Albertans do not have access to a family doctor for preventative healthcare, including many of our seniors. Senior care is a foundational part of our Family Health Teams plan to give every Albertan access to a family doctor and a multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals, including nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, and more. Community navigators will help patients navigate healthcare and continuing care with less stress and achieve better outcomes.

4. How would you make ageing in place and/or Home Care a more accessible and viable solution for our senior population?

We know how important it is to help seniors stay healthy at home. The Alberta NDP government will:

- Increase capacity for homecare clients by 20,000 over the next four years.
- Increase funding for community programs that give seniors more help at home with things like snow shovelling, yard care, transportation and meal preparation.
- Expand the Seniors Home and Adaptation Repair Program so seniors can make the renovations they need to stay comfortable in their homes.

5. How do you ensure the federal money provided for health care is used to improve publicly accessible health and not to benefit private health care?

The Alberta NDP will protect and expand public healthcare.

Over the past four years, the UCP has severely underfunded our health system, and the gaps are showing. Roughly 800,000 Albertans are without a family doctor, wait times for surgeries, EMS services, and ER care are too long. Danielle Smith and her Deputy Premier Nathan Neudorf want Albertans to pay for family doctors and ER care, and have mused about selling off public hospitals.

The Alberta NDP will strengthen public healthcare: we will make sure you never have to pay to see a family doctor, and stop the UCP's privatization of surgeries. Access to universal public healthcare is your right, which is why we will introduce the *Public Health Care Delivery Standards Act* to bring stability to healthcare and ensure greater accountability and transparency regarding public healthcare in the province.

6. Specify essential programs and identify the funding your party will put in place to support all seniors in Alberta.

Attached please find a news release and backgrounder from May 8 that outlines our senior-specific funding and programs. We are also committed to cutting auto insurance and electricity bills to help Albertans, including seniors.

7. What is your party's position to ensure that there are appropriate programs (tax and wellness initiatives) in place for seniors so they can continue to maintain an active and affordable lifestyle in retirement?

The Alberta NDP is committed to reversing the UCP's de-indexing of the senior's benefit. We will reindex this benefit, which will ensure low-income seniors get adequate amounts of money each month. As well, we will not increase personal income taxes, we will not create a provincial savings tax, and we will not make you pay out of pocket for your healthcare. The savings from these policies will ensure you have more money to spend on the things that matter to you.

8. With an ever-changing and growing senior demographic, how does your party view the role of the Alberta Office of the Seniors' Advocate now, and how do you see it evolving to meet the needs of seniors in Alberta in the future?

We will re-establish the office of the Seniors' Advocate and make it independent. We were proud to create this position to give seniors a strong voice in government - only to see it dismantled by the UCP. The presence of an independent Seniors' Advocate was directly linked to better health outcomes for seniors in British Columbia during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we will make sure an advocate is in place for Alberta's seniors.

9. Would your government use Section 19 of the AIMCo Act to direct AIMCo to make certain types of investments using Teachers' pension plan assets?

Many Alberta seniors have questions about Danielle Smith's plan to risk their pensions by withdrawing from the Canada Pension Plan. So far, the UCP has forced 84,000 current and retired teachers to move their pension investments from the Alberta Teachers Retirement Fund (ATRF) to AIMCo. To add insult to injury, the UCP imposed their investment management agreement by ministerial order, removing teachers' control over their pension investments. To put it mildly, Albertans have a right to be concerned.

The Alberta NDP is committed to revoking section 19 of the AIMCo Act. The finance minister should not have the power to enforce what kinds of investments are being made with your hard-earned retirement savings. Pension investments are not political toys. They are not about any one government's political priorities: they are about Albertans' retirement security.

10. Would your government support clients of AIMCo, including ATRF, having the option to choose asset managers other than AIMCo?

The Alberta NDP wants AIMCo to work well. To do this, we will ensure current and retired teachers, and other public sector pension plan holders, have a seat on the AIMCO Board of Directors. We hope governance reforms will lead to the ATRF wanting to stay with AIMCo. However, if investment performance at AIMCo remains unsatisfactory, we will allow them to leave. Our goal is to make sure you have an excellent pension plan that works for you - the Alberta NDP will not support measures that get in the way of that.

11. Do you support the transition of Albertans contributing to an Alberta Pension Plan (APP) versus the current Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) and if so, why?

No. The Alberta NDP is steadfastly committed to keeping your pensions safe, which means keeping them in the CPP. The Alberta Pension Plan, which has been a priority of Danielle Smith and the UCP, is risky and would allow the UCP to gamble with Albertan's hard-earned pensions. Retirement security is fundamental for millions of Albertans and we have no interest in jeopardizing it.

12. Does your party have any other policy positions that you feel would be of interest to Alberta seniors?

We look forward to building a better future with you and all Albertans. Thank you for your time and consideration of our responses, and we hope to have your support in this election.