



ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

ELECTION 2019

The provincial election is a short period when candidates from across the province vie for us to cast a vote of confidence for them to represent our best interests and make important decisions for our province over the next four years.

It's a time when promises are made, ideas for new policies and programs are tested, and new windows for funding open.

MSPEI wants to ensure important health-care issues are at the top of minds during this campaign. We want to help candidates and voters have a clear understanding of some of our health-care system's greatest challenges and potential solutions, through the eyes and experiences of physicians.

As a physician, you may be turned to as a credible

advisor, problem solver and expert when it comes to delivering health care in PEI. You may be interested in stepping into that leadership role to initiate conversations during this election. These conversations will also help you make an informed vote. This Physicians' Advocacy Toolkit was created to support you in having those conversations.

MSPEI's role during the election is to raise issues and propose solutions that will improve patient care and support the profession. The Society is non-partisan and will not favour one party platform over another. We are focused on building strong long-term government relationships so we can work shoulder-to-shoulder with government to create a better health-care system.

MSPEI SETS POLICY DIRECTION

MSPEI's Health Policy Task Force has developed *Doctors' Prescription for Improving PEI's Health-care System* to outline the profession's top recommendations to bring forward meaningful improvements to our health-care system.

You can support MSPEI in championing these health-care conversations by meeting with your local candidates.

The priorities were developed based on physicians' experiences working within the health-care system and input from a 2019 MSPEI Membership Survey.

This policy document names four priorities:

1. **Integrate physicians into the decision-making processes** so they can help problem solve, design, implement and be accountable for the future of our health-care system.
2. **Implement primary care models that provide quality care** that is accessible and sustainable.
3. **Show more leadership in health-care innovation**, starting with creating one electronic health record for every Islander.
4. **Develop and implement a physician resource plan.**

Become familiar with MSPEI's *Doctors' Prescription for Improving PEI's Health-care System* and share it with your local candidates.

KEY MESSAGES

1 PEI doctors want to work collaboratively with the government and make the health-care system better. **It is time to change how we design, plan and manage our health-care system.** More of the same will not work.

2 Doctors want to see Islanders have improved access to their family physician and primary care teams. **We need to rethink how we provide primary care and doctors want to be at the core of making those improvements.**

3 PEI could be leaders in health-care innovation, yet we are falling behind. **We need to start with changing how we manage patient information.** An electronic information management system is the foundation to better, safer and more accessible patient care.

4 No patient should wait unnecessarily to see a physician. **We need a PEI Physician Resource Plan, so we have a clear view of how many doctors are needed.** Doctors want to be part of the recruitment process.



HEALTH POLICY TASK FORCE

THE FOLLOWING PHYSICIANS were instrumental in creating the *Doctors' Prescription for Improving PEI's Health-care System* and are MSPEI's champions of our election advocacy work. If you would like to learn more about their work or to seek support before you meet with your candidate, please contact one of them.

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YOUR VOICE MATTERS

As a physician, you are seen as an expert in your field of medicine and about the health-care system in general. Politicians sometimes turn to the expertise of those working on the ground to help them understand issues and develop policies. If they are

not asking for your opinion, we want them to.

There are many ways in which you can participate in the health-care discussion during the election – or year-round – to educate your local candidates and government representatives on health-care issues.



MEET WITH YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATES

Request to meet with your local candidates to ask them questions about their platform. Use that face-to-face opportunity to share with him/her your thoughts on what could be done to advance issues important to you. You can use MSPEI's document to guide that discussion.



PHONE YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATE

Busy schedules may make a face-to-face meeting difficult. A quick phone conversation to introduce yourself to your local candidate, identify your position and ask him/her questions about those issues, will help you become more informed on their positions.



USE SOCIAL MEDIA

If you use social media, make a point to follow your candidates and political leaders. Engage with them when they are talking about health care, using MSPEI position statement, guide the discussion to the issues that are important to the profession. Follow @MSPEI_Docs (Facebook and Twitter) and share our content.



WRITE A LETTER

While dialogue is ideal, writing a letter on your views can also be an effective means to ensure each candidate is made aware of issues important to you. In your letter try to illustrate the impact your experiences have on you and your patients, and when possible make concrete suggestions for improvements. Demonstrate you can be part of that solution.

PRESENTING YOUR VIEWS

Candidates are busy during an election. Use your time effectively. Be clear and concise when meeting. Think through what you would like to discuss and what message you want your candidate to carry throughout the election.

Present yourself in a way that demonstrates credibility and professionalism; as someone who can be trusted and who could be called upon to provide advice as future health-care decisions are made.

A few tips to keep in mind:

- Be prepared. Know what you want to say and consider jotting down a few key messages in advance.
- Consider bringing a document with you to leave behind to reinforce what you

presented. (MSPEI has a prepared a one-page document for you, if helpful. Visit: mspei.org.)

- Be professional and reasonable in presenting your thoughts.
- Avoid placing blame, focus on positive ways to move forward.
- Illustrate your points through a story. Give real-life examples of how the issue is impacting you and most importantly your patients.
- Be curious. Listen and ask thoughtful questions.
- Consider this the first of many conversations; begin building a relationship.
- If in disagreement, be respectful in presenting your viewpoint.



CONTACT YOUR CANDIDATE

Visit each Party's website to learn about their platform or to find a candidate.

Green www.greenparty.pe.ca/nominees

Liberals www.liberalpei.ca/our-team/mlas

NDP www.ndppei.ca

Progressive Conservative
www.peipc.ca