

Where they stand on healthcare: A review of the party platforms

1. Strengthen services in *non-profit* hospitals and clinics: reduce wait times within the public system. Stop for-profit privatization of clinical (medical) and support services in hospitals.

Liberal - Yes. Campaigning against for-profit privatization of hospital clinical services. Promise to further reduce wait-times for ER and surgeries in the public non-profit hospital system. No promise to stop privatization of support services.

New Democratic Party -Yes. \$50 million to reduce ER wait times in the public system. Committed to stopping for-profit privatization of clinical services. No promise to stop privatization of support services.

Progressive Conservative -No. Campaigning for bringing in U.S. style for-profit hospitals and surgical clinics rather than improving supply of services in public non-profit hospitals.

2. Stop the privatized P3 hospitals ("P3" refers to Private Public Partnership hospitals which are a giant step towards fully private US style hospitals. The P3s involve deals with multinational for-profit bankers and hospital companies that stretch for 20 - 60 years. We oppose these privatized P3 hospitals because they cost more in profits and excess interest, taking funding away from doctors, nurses, beds and services. Though they don't include privatized doctors and nurses immediately, they will undoubtedly lead to further privatization of this sort down the road.)

Liberal - Not in platform. However, McGuinty moved ahead with privatized P3 hospitals even though he promised not to in the last election. Now, more than 30 hospitals have been announced of which it appears that 12 may be the privatized P3s with 20 year private financing deals with privatization of services and lands.

New Democratic Party - Yes. Oppose privatized P3 hospitals.

Progressive Conservative - No. The Harris/Eves government brought the first privatized P3 hospitals to Ontario. The PCs support privatized P3 hospitals with no limits on the amount of privatization, including doctors' and nurses' services.

3. Enact a minimum 3.5 hour average standard of nursing and personal support care for Nursing Homes (Long-Term Care Facilities) to protect residents and staff from inadequate levels of care, neglect, accident and injury.

Liberal - Not in platform. The McGuinty government promised to bring in a regulation to set a care standard, but failed to do so. Instead they brought in another consultation process just before the election.

New Democratic Party - Yes. Support 3.5 hours minimum standard.

Progressive Conservative - No. Not in platform. The Mike Harris government actually *removed* regulations providing a guaranteed standard of care for nursing home residents.

4. Recruit and retain more health care staff to fix shortages and reduce wait times.

Liberal -Pledge to create doctors for 500,000 more Ontarians, create 100 more medical school spaces and accredit more internationally trained MDs, hire 9,000 nurses, ensure that 70% of all nurses work full time.

New Democratic Party - \$400 million for new "front-line" MDs and nurses. Increase number of doctors by certifying internationally-trained MDs.

Progressive Conservative - Pledge to increase number of doctors through increasing med school enrollment, incentives for retention and recognition of foreign credentials. Ensure that 70% of all nurses are full time by 2010.

5. Protect and expand public - non-profit homecare, community health centres & long-term care facilities

Liberal - Just before the election, McGuinty announced \$700 million to expand home support services to allow seniors to age at home. No promise to stop privatization of homecare nor to stop the for-profit takeover of our nursing home sector.

New Democratic Party - Expand homecare and home support services. \$400 million increase for "long-term care guarantee" plus \$150 million for 2,000 new LTC beds. \$230 million for homecare. Oppose privatization of homecare.

Progressive Conservative - \$100 million increase for LTC, \$100 million homecare. No promise to stop privatization in any of these. \$50 million for "chronic disease management programs".

6. Keep our community hospitals vibrant: make a clear commitment to keep our local hospitals's services *at* or *above* current service levels; protect local hospitals and services.

Liberal - Not in platform. However, McGuinty has promoted centralization of hospital services - moving services out of local communities, with a promise not to actually close any rural hospitals. Target \$100 million to hospitals in fast-growth areas (such as 905 area).

New Democratic Party - Not in platform.

Progressive Conservative - Not in platform. The party is promoting centralization of hospital services - moving services out of local communities. Not clear how far they intend to go. Promise "catch up" funding for high growth and underserved areas.

7. Ensure stable and sufficient funding to provide for our communities' healthcare needs.

Liberal - Pledge \$8.7 billion investment, based on continuing Health Tax as is, and maintaining general financial direction with some more tax breaks for business.

New Democratic Party - Pledge \$9.5 billion, cutting health tax for middle and low income people, increasing taxes at the highest income bracket and closing tax giveaways to corporations.

Progressive Conservative - Pledge \$8.5 billion. Financial plan involves cutting Health Tax and finding money by significant cuts to other public services.

8. Support primary care reform (this means moving family doctors into teams with nurse practitioners and other health professionals under non-profit governance). This will increase and improve access to front line healthcare.

Liberal - Pledge 50 more "Family Health Teams"- a modified version of the full primary care teams and 25 nurse-led clinics. McGuinty increased funding for and expanded access to Community Health Centres and midwifery across Ontario. No mention of limits on for-profit incorporation of doctors.

New Democratic Party - Not in platform.

Progressive Conservative - Bring more health professionals into "family health teams." No mention of limits on for-profit incorporation of doctors.

