



Canadian Police Association
44th General Election Questionnaire

Question 1: While all stakeholders, including front-line police personnel themselves, agree that more resources should be devoted to community and social agencies that help reduce the demand on Canada’s police services, some activists have called for police budgets to be drastically reduced (“defund the police”). These calls come at a time when police calls for service have continued to increase, and violent crime remains a significant concern to the public in many jurisdictions across Canada.

If elected, would your government endorse policies that would specifically “defund the police” in order to increase spending on other social programs?

Liberal Party of Canada:

All police services are committed to ensuring that the people that they are sworn to serve and protect are treated with dignity and with respect. The majority of our police officers perform their duties with integrity, professionalism and respect.

But we know that Indigenous peoples, Black Canadians and other racialized communities still face systemic barriers in Canada. We believe that every Canadian is entitled to bias-free and culturally competent policing. Trust in our policing services is critical to the safety of our communities.

We agree that we need to also work to address social and economic issues such as housing and employment to create opportunities for young Canadians. Everyone knows someone affected by mental health and it is crucial for us to continue to invest in this area. We need to ensure that mental health care is treated as a full and equal part of Canada’s universal public health care system.

But this issue is not a zero-sum game. We can have both culturally appropriate policing and necessary investments to address social determinants. They are not mutually exclusive. A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Establish a new federal transfer to provinces and territories—the Canada Mental Health Transfer—to assist jurisdictions to expand the delivery of high-quality, accessible, and free mental health services. Building on the principles of universality and accessibility in the Canada Health Act, this transfer will help establish standards in each province and territory, so that Canadians are able to expect services that are timely, universal, and culturally competent. This

will help each jurisdiction focus on and solve critical backlogs in service and provide help to those who need it, according to the unique needs in each region.

- Commit to permanent, ongoing funding for mental health services under the Canada Mental Health Transfer, with an initial investment of \$4.5 billion over 5 years. Including the existing bilateral agreement on mental health services signed in 2017, this would bring federal support for mental health services to \$2.5 billion per year by 2025-26. This is in addition to further investments we will make to support First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities with better access to trauma and mental health services.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of access to the Disability Tax Credit, CPP-Disability and other federal benefits and programs to ensure they are available to people experiencing mental health challenges.
- Include mental health as a specific element of occupational health and safety under the Canada Labour Code and require federally regulated employers to take preventative steps to address workplace stress and injury.
- Fully fund a national, three-digit mental health crisis and suicide prevention hotline.
- Work with partners to ensure timely access to perinatal mental health services.

This funding will mean more access to psychologists, therapists, social workers, counselors, and other community supports. It will mean the millions of Canadians who struggle with their mental health—many of whom often don't seek treatment—will be able to access the services they need.

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, 40% of people living with mental illness are arrested at least once in their lives. People facing mental health problems and illnesses need treatment, not to be criminalized.

Mental Health Courts are designed to address the needs of people before the criminal justice system who have mental health conditions and help them access the treatment and community supports they need to get better and avoid reoffending. A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Work with provinces and territories to help all Canadians have greater access to mental health courts and provide people suffering from mental health illnesses with a path to recovery.
- Expand access to culturally appropriate, trauma-informed mental health services for Indigenous peoples that access treatment through mental health courts.

Anti-Black racism and discrimination are a reality in Canada, and they are acutely felt in Canada's policing and criminal justice system. Black Canadians are significantly overrepresented in the federal prison system, accounting for 7.3% of the prison population when they represent only 3.5% of the greater population. The work of grassroots organizations like Black Lives Matters have raised their voices to bring global attention to this issue. Systemic racism, discrimination, and violence against Black Canadians will persist as long as inequality is not called out and addressed. A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Develop a Black Canadians Justice Strategy to address anti-black racism and discrimination in the criminal justice system.

Black Canadian communities often face racism and discrimination which can have negative impacts on their mental health. We are also funding community-based projects to develop culturally focused programming, capacity and knowledge to improve mental health supports for Black Canadians.

As mentioned, the majority of our police officers perform their duties with integrity, professionalism and respect. However, when misconduct does occur, we cannot defend the indefensible. We will also continue to bring real consequences for RCMP members who break the law and show bias in their policing to ensure we do right by our communities. There is a lot more work to do, and Minister Blair is continuing to work with agencies, expert stakeholders and individuals with lived experience of racism to make the RCMP a more equitable and diverse agency.

Conservative Party of Canada:

Canada's Conservatives would never support any measures to "defund the police." We recognize the important role that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), provincial, and municipal police services across Canada play in keeping communities safe and combating violent crime.

The need for police and all emergency services has been clearly demonstrated through the last year and a half. Our frontline and emergency personnel have answered the call to serve Canadians in this emergency in new and unexpected ways. They have done incredible work in very difficult circumstances. Canada's Conservatives will always stand alongside our fine men and women in uniform. We sincerely thank them for their service to our country and to their communities.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

Every Canadian deserves to feel secure in the knowledge that their streets, homes, businesses and communities are safe. New Democrats know that building a sense of community safety is not just about the absence of crime – it's about making sure that everyone matters, that we address the root causes of crime, and that the justice system treats everyone fairly.

Police accountability is another important part of making our communities safer. It's past time to put in place robust and independent civilian oversight of the RCMP. We will also launch a review of the RCMP's budget and the RCMP Act in order to ensure accountability of the RCMP to the public. A New Democrat government will release all use-of-force incidents by the RCMP and prioritize new investment in non-police interventions such as mental health and addiction supports.

Question 2: Research from the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment indicates that first responders such as police, paramedics, firefighters and 911 operators are much more likely to develop mental health issues than the general population because of the work they do on a daily basis. While work continues to reduce the stigma with respect to mental health issues within the first responder community,

more resources are needed to enhance research into effective treatment options for the specific needs of this sector.

If elected, would your government maintain, or increase these resources, and what steps will your party take towards ensuring that the research not only focuses on identifying the root causes, but also transitions towards finding effective treatment or prevention options that will have an impact on the lives of those who are suffering from mental illness within the first responder community?

Liberal Party of Canada:

Every day, police officers put their safety at risk to protect our communities, putting them disproportionately at risk of post-traumatic stress injuries. The government is committed to supporting the mental health and resilience of police and other public safety officers so they can continue to serve Canadians.

We're investing \$20 million in a national research consortium between the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment (CIPSRT) to address the incidence of post-traumatic stress injuries among public safety officers. We invested a further \$10 million for Public Safety Canada to work with CIPSRT to develop an Internet-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy pilot as a means of providing greater access to care and treatment for public safety personnel across Canada. This will help address barriers to obtaining access to mental health supports for public safety personnel in rural and remote areas. We are also investing \$10 million toward a longitudinal study of the mental health of RCMP recruits that will help develop appropriate mental wellness and remedial strategies for the Force and other emergency response organizations.

We stand with the women and men who risk their lives to keep us safe and with their families when tragedy strikes. In recognition of their sacrifice, we established the Memorial Grant Program for First Responders to provide a one-time tax-free \$300,000 payment to the families of police officers, firefighters and paramedics who lose their lives as a direct result of their duties.

We're investing in RCMP officers' mental health. Budget 2018 invests \$21.4 million over five years for the RCMP to support the mental health needs of its officers. Budget 2021 invests \$100 million over three years to support innovative mental health interventions for first responders and Canadians disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, as well as \$50 million over two years to support a trauma and PTSD stream of mental health programming for populations at high risk of experiencing COVID-19 trauma.

Additionally, Prime Minister Trudeau mandated Minister Blair to implement a comprehensive plan to make the RCMP a safe, healthy and supportive work environment for all employees and to address toxic workplace cultures, systemic discrimination and harassment. The government is strongly committed to whatever action is necessary to help RCMP members, trainees and employees feel safe and respected amongst their colleagues and supervisors. Work will occur to make the new Independent Centre for Harassment Resolution fully external to ensure there can be no conflicts of interest while reviewing complaints.

Conservative Party of Canada:

Members of the RCMP understand the struggle with mental health more than most. The dangerous and psychologically-damaging situations that officers are often placed in has severe and long-term consequences. Canada's Conservatives have a robust plan to treat mental health as the health priority it is.

A Conservative government will introduce the Canada Mental Health Action Plan. Conservatives will increase health transfers to the provinces and we will propose to the provinces that they partner with us to dedicate a significant portion of those transfers to mental health. This will ensure that an additional million Canadians can receive mental health treatment every year.

We will also encourage employers to add mental health coverage to their employee benefit plans by offering a tax credit for 25 per cent of the cost of additional mental health coverage for the first three years. We will create a pilot program to provide \$150 million over three years in grants to nonprofits and charities delivering mental health and wellness programming. Finally, we will create a nationwide three-digit suicide prevention hotline, so Canadians always have access to help when and where they need it.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

New Democrats recognize that first responders are often exposed to traumatic situations that can have long-term impacts on their mental health and wellbeing. We are committed to ensuring that our first responders have access to timely and appropriate mental health services as part of our broader strategy to see mental health care included in Canada's universal health care system. Every Canadian should have access to head-to-toe health care, which should be widely accessible and available at no cost for those who need it.

The long-term path to providing public coverage for these services will require strong federal re-investment in our health system, with the knowledge that investing in preventative health services will ultimately save money and give Canadians the care they need to live healthy, full lives.

Question 3: The Canadian criminal justice system is a complex and interconnected process where action, or inaction, in one area can have unintended and negative consequences in another. The need to effectively target repeat offenders is significant because, as front line law enforcement officers know all too well, a defining reality of our justice system is that a disproportionately small number of offenders are responsible for a disproportionately large number of offences. Operationally targeting such offenders produces significant positive public safety results.

If elected, would your government consider introducing legislation to create a new Criminal Code offence of breaching conditional release, allowing the creation of an accurate record of an offender's breach of conditions, which currently does not exist, and would you require the reporting of a conditional release breach to supervising authorities, such as the Parole Board of Canada? Further, would your government take steps to review the purposes and principles of sentencing to ensure that Canadians continue to have confidence in the administration of justice?

Liberal Party of Canada:

As with all criminal justice policies, our Government will be guided by evidence. Research has demonstrated that a gradual, structured and supervised release process represents an effective means of facilitating successful reintegration and contributing to public safety. We are open to discussions on improving information sharing and record-keeping of offenders' histories during this period.

To keep Canadian communities safe, the Correctional Service of Canada strives to gradually release and safely reintegrate federal offenders through structured community supervision and works with criminal justice partners to ensure that all Canadians can live in safe communities.

CSC and community agencies providing supervision liaise with police services to ensure the appropriate monitoring of offenders. If an offender fails to report to the Parole Officer, does not return to the residential facility, or gives any indication of an increased level of risk, the following steps could be taken: warrants of suspension, apprehension and recommitment are issued by CSC and police are notified. Upon execution of the warrant, the offender is held in provincial custody until full re-assessment of risk can be completed.

If the risk to the public is assessed to be manageable, the suspension may be cancelled by CSC or the PBC. Additional (or modified) special conditions may be imposed to manage the offender's risk. If the risk is assessed as unmanageable, the offender's release may be revoked. He or she will serve the remaining portion of his or her sentence until his or her new Statutory Release date.

Conservative Party of Canada:

The current parole board system is broken and is badly in need of reform. It is paramount that we remove political decision-making from it, and move toward a system that is data-driven and governed by experts. The tragic murder of Marylène Levesque clearly demonstrated the flaws in this program and the necessity to take immediate action to fix it. Lives are needlessly being put at risk and reform is critical to ensure public safety. Conservatives will consult with stakeholders and consider options to ensure that violent offenders serve their sentences and that conditions set by the parole board put public safety first.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

New Democrats support efforts to reduce recidivism and to improve the parole system. We are committed to increasing confidence in our justice system through ensuring that everyone is treated fairly. We will uphold community-based and restorative justice approaches and will allow trial judges to have greater discretion in sentencing. As a part of restorative justice, we would ensure that victims also have a voice in decisions that have the potential to raise questions about their safety.

Question 4: Recently, public attention has been focused on the increased gun violence that has hit the City of Toronto. While previous governments have made investments into specialized police units to target firearms offences, guns are still too accessible for criminals to use in the commission of offences.

If elected, what specific action will your government take to increase sentences for offenders who use illegally obtained firearms, particularly in cases where there are breaches of release or parole conditions for repeat offenders?

Liberal Party of Canada:

Our communities should be safe and peaceful places to live and raise children, but American-style gun violence is rising. 2019 saw the rate of firearm-related offences rise for the fifth straight year, and the homicide rate was the highest in a decade, with 40% of homicides involving firearms. That is why, in May 2020, we took action to put a ban on the use, sale, or import of assault weapons most used in mass shootings and implement a buyback program for owners.

At the same time, we are investing in prevention efforts and are providing \$250 million directly to municipalities and Indigenous communities to give at-risk youth the opportunity to be engaged in activities to stop the spread of gang activity.

Conservatives have committed to repeal this ban with the support of the gun lobby, which would resume the proliferation of assault-style firearms in Canada. Liberals believe even stronger action is needed to get weapons designed for mass casualties off our streets and out of our communities.

A re-elected Liberal government will:

- Toughen our laws on banned assault weapons by making it mandatory for owners to either sell the firearm back to the government for destruction and fair compensation or have it rendered fully and permanently inoperable at government expense.
- Crack down on high-capacity magazines and require that long gun magazines capable of holding more than 5 rounds be permanently altered so that they can never hold more than 5 rounds
- Ban the sale or transfer of magazines that could hold more than a legal number of bullets, regardless of how they were intended to be used by the manufacturer.
- Set aside a minimum of \$1 billion to support provinces or territories who implement a ban on handguns across their jurisdiction, to keep our cities and communities safe.

We would also continue to combat gender-based violence and fight gun smuggling with measures we have introduced such as:

- Lifetime background checks to prevent those with a history of abuse against their spouse or partner from obtaining a firearms license.
- “Red flag” laws that would allow immediate removal of firearms if that person is a threat to themselves or others, particularly to their spouse or partner.
- Increased maximum penalties for firearms trafficking and smuggling from 10 to 14 years imprisonment.
- Enhancing the capacity of the RCMP and the Canada Border Services Agency to combat the illegal importation of firearms.

Conservatives do not support these reasonable and important measures and will weaken protections that currently keep Canadians safe.

Conservative Party of Canada:

Canada’s Conservatives recognize the extreme danger posed by illegal firearms. We will take steps to keep them out of the hands of criminals and make punishment more severe.

Canada’s Conservatives will go after gun smugglers by cracking down on “straw purchasing” of firearms. We will amend the Firearms Act so that an individual who, on three separate

occasions during a calendar year, transfers a firearm for financial consideration must have a firearms business license. We will also amend the Criminal Code to add the number of firearms transferred, whether financial consideration was exchanged, and the amount of monetary consideration as aggravating factors on sentencing.

We will amend the Criminal Code provisions on unauthorized importing so that it is an aggravating factor on sentencing if more than one firearm is imported not under the authority of the Firearms Act. We will also introduce a mandatory minimum penalty of three years where the unauthorized importing occurs for financial consideration. We will empower the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and RCMP, working closely with American authorities in the United States, to target smuggling operations before illegal firearms reach the border. This would include improving and expanding the RCMP contribution to the Integrated Border Enforcement Teams.

Canada's Conservatives will also take action against criminal use of firearms. We will amend the Criminal Code provisions on possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose to make it an aggravating factor on sentencing. This would include instances where an individual commits the offence while the subject of a prohibition order under the Firearms Act and had previously been convicted of an offence under that section. It would also apply if previously convicted of an offence against the person while in possession of a firearm. The offence will carry a sentence from two to ten years.

Conservatives will further amend the Criminal Code provisions on the unauthorized possession of a firearm. Amendments would impose a mandatory minimum sentence of two years if the person was the subject of a prohibition order at the time of the events giving rise to the conviction or had been previously convicted of an offence involving a firearm.

Finally, we will partner with the Ontario Provincial Police to expand the Firearms Tracing and Enforcement database nationally. We would also take steps to ensure that all guns used in a crime are submitted for testing and analysis and inclusion in this database.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

Too many lives have been lost in Canadian cities to rising gun crime. We will work to keep assault weapons and illegal handguns off our streets and to tackle gun smuggling and organized crime. As part of this effort, we will strengthen measures at our borders to prevent the flow of illegal guns. We will also implement a mandatory buyback program for assault-style rifles.

To help protect our communities against gangs, New Democrats will make sure that communities have access to funding for anti-gang projects that help deter at-risk youth from joining gangs. We'll address radicalization by focusing on preventing youth from falling prey to violent extremism, including through support for community-led initiatives. And we will build on the principles of restorative justice to ensure victims have access to services such as legal counsel and a voice in decisions that have the potential to raise questions about their safety.

Question 5: Police personnel on parental leave are frequently and routinely subpoenaed during that leave to testify in criminal matters stemming from prior police duties. The practice of numerous police services in those instances was to have the day of the court

appearance added to the end of the parental leave, extending it by the amount of time lost for the officer to prepare for and attend court as required.

A few years ago, Employment Insurance (EI) conducted an examination of this practice and essentially concluded it was a contravention of the EI provisions with respect to applicable earnings. Even though the compensation was provided in time only to make up for the leave lost, EI took the position that it amounted to additional employer provided earnings that were then subject to claw back from the EI payments as income.

Therefore, if the member claims the court appearance in time compensation from the Police Service employer, it is considered as applicable earnings and deducted from his/her EI parental leave benefit. There is no longer any ability to provide additional time at the termination of the parental leave for police officers in recognition of the time lost to court appearance. Essentially the officers appear in court, lose days off their parental leave that cannot be recouped. This disproportionately affects female members of our police services, and needs to be addressed quickly to promote greater gender equity and healthy workplace initiatives in policing.

If elected, would your government propose an amendment to the Act and/or regulations governing Employment Insurance to ensure that if a police officer on parental leave is subpoenaed to court because of prior police duties, that any compensatory time provided in recognition of that would not be unnecessarily clawed back by EI?

Liberal Party of Canada:

A re-elected Liberal government will move forward with a stronger and more inclusive EI system that addresses gaps made obvious during COVID-19. Based on the input received from consultations on the future of EI that are currently underway, we will bring forward a vision for a new and modern EI system that covers all workers, including workers in seasonal employment, and which is simpler and more responsive for both workers and employers.

A re-elected Liberal government will also keep pursuing policies to build a fairer and more equal Canada. We all have a role to play – as partners and allies – in achieving gender equality and building a world where women and girls can do anything and be anything. Only by working together will we make gender equality a reality.

Conservative Party of Canada:

Canada's employment insurance (EI) system is outdated and does not recognize the flexibility needed in our modern economy. Conservatives have committed to reviewing and reforming how our EI system works and moving it toward one that addresses a number of issues such as bereavement leave, critical illnesses, and regional economic downturn. The issue you have brought forward is clearly an important one. A Conservative government would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue further and address any other gaps currently experienced by our men and women in uniform.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

We agree that this practice is unfair and should be corrected.

Question 6: Police officers are, appropriately, subject to the most rigorous oversight regime of any profession in Canada, and while incidences involving use-of-force are extremely rare (less than 1% of interactions, according to Canadian statistics), there are occasionally cases where police personnel have been held accountable for what the courts have deemed unlawful uses-of-force.

Sections 220 and 236 of the Criminal Code of Canada provide for mandatory minimum sentences of four years when an individual is convicted of manslaughter or criminal negligence causing death, where a firearm has been used in the commission of the offence. While the original goal of these minimum sentences was to act as a deterrent with respect to the proliferation of firearms, unfortunately these minimum sentences fail to take into account the unique nature of the duties of police personnel, who are required to carry a firearm as part of their regulation uniform, and can deploy that firearm as part of the recognized use-of-force continuum.

Because police officers are expected, in the course of their duties, to intervene in numerous operations where the risk of physical and psychological harm is present, both for the officers themselves, and the public in general, we believe it is important to draft a sentencing framework that allows judges to have the discretion necessary during sentencing, to recognize the unique circumstances faced by police personnel, particularly with respect to firearms. These incidents are dynamic and unfold quickly requiring officers to make split second decisions where even a momentary lapse of judgment could mean the difference between a successful intervention and one subject to review.

If elected, will your government draft a new sentencing framework with respect to Sections 220 and 236 of the Criminal Code of Canada to recognize that police personnel are authorized, and at times required, to use their firearms in the course of their duties, and to exempt officers from the mandatory minimum sentences prescribed in the current Criminal Code of Canada, giving the judiciary the discretion to recognize that even in circumstances where police officers are being held accountable, that the officers themselves may have been acting in good faith as they discharged their duties?

Liberal Party of Canada:

While we do not presently anticipate revising the sentencing regime for Sections 220 and 236 of the Criminal Code, we welcome dialogue with the CPA to better understand the circumstances that motivate this request.

We understand that, at times, officers may need to use force, including lethal force, to carry out their duties and protect the community.

Under Section 25 of the Criminal Code, officers may use potentially lethal force if they reasonably believe that it is necessary to protect themselves or others from being killed or grievously injured. An officer is only criminally responsible and subject to the sentencing regime in the Criminal Code, including for offences under Section 220-236, if they use excessive or unreasonable force.

We recognize that police officers often need to make quick decisions in challenging and dangerous situations. That is why courts do not hold officers to a standard of perfection or require them to use only the least force necessary.

Section 25 of the Criminal Code ensures that officers will not be convicted or sentenced for reasonably using force. While it is important that officers who discharge their duties in good faith are protected, Canadians expect those who use excessive or unreasonable force to be held accountable. However, we remain open to further dialogue on this issue.

More broadly, in the last Parliament, we introduced Bill C-22, which would repeal mandatory minimum penalties of imprisonment (MMPs) that contribute to higher rates of imprisonment and disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples and Black Canadians. Repealing certain MMPs would restore the ability of a judge to impose appropriate sentences that respond to the facts of the case before them. This moves away from the one-size-fits-all approach, which has not deterred crime but has resulted in unfair outcomes and a less effective criminal justice system, as well as longer and more complex trials.

C-22 would repeal MMPs for 14 of the 67 offences covering a broad range of conduct punishable by MMPs under the current Criminal Code.

Repealing certain MMPs will help ensure that a person found guilty of an offence is sentenced appropriately. Sentencing judges must still impose a sentence that is proportionate to the degree of responsibility of the offender and the seriousness of the offence, taking into account all aggravating and mitigating factors. Repealing MMPs provides sentencing judges with the flexibility to impose just punishments, including terms of imprisonment that are lower or higher than the MMPs that would be repealed.

Conservative Party of Canada:

Conservatives recognize the difficult decisions that officers are forced to make in high-stress, dangerous situations. Our officers on the front lines do heroic work in keeping our communities safe and we thank them for their steadfast commitment to public safety. A Conservative government will be open to consultation on potential reforms to the criminal justice system and sentencing process.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

Over a decade in government, the Conservatives made the wrong choices in criminal law that deepened inequality, led to the heavily clogged court system that we have today, and failed to make our communities any safer.

A New Democrat government will restore the independence of the judiciary by reducing reliance on mandatory minimums and allowing trial judges to have greater discretion in sentencing.

New Democrats also believe that in order to make our communities safer, we need to hold police accountable for excessive use-of-force. We are committed to putting an end to police violence and will implement a federal use-of-force standard with a zero-tolerance policy for inappropriate use-of-force. We will overhaul federal police training to ensure that every officer receives robust and ongoing de-escalation, implicit-bias and cross-cultural training throughout

their career. New Democrats will also increase investments in non-police interventions, such as mental health and addiction supports.

Question 7: As you are aware, Canada is suffering the effects of an opioid epidemic, which has resulted in supervised consumption sites opening in cities across the country. While these sites have been successful in reducing the number of drug overdoses, there is conflicting research regarding their effectiveness in diverting those suffering from addiction into the necessary counselling and treatment programs.

Some public health officers have suggested Canada adopt a complete policy of drug decriminalization, in order to reduce stigma and to encourage those who are addicted to seek treatment, despite the fact that many jurisdictions already operate under a de-facto system of drug decriminalization, where local law enforcement has de-prioritized any enforcement around simple possession.

If elected, will your government consider any policies related to further drug decriminalization, or will you consider alternate policies, specifically related to providing a strictly regulated safe supply of harmful drugs, with the proviso that any who participate in this program follow rigorous counselling, treatment policies, and a zero-tolerance approach to criminal behaviour while participating?

Liberal Party of Canada:

We will continue to take an evidence-based approach to problematic substance use and work with all orders of government to support innovative approaches so that Canadians have access to the care and support they need.

To save lives, we need a whole-of-society approach to the opioid epidemic, in particular, that addresses the main causes and supports people who use drugs with the respect and dignity they deserve. We will:

- Introduce a comprehensive strategy to address problematic substance use to end the opioids crisis.
- Invest \$25 million for public education to reduce the stigma associated with problematic substance use.
- Invest \$500 million to support the provinces and territories in providing access to a full-range of evidence-based treatment, recognizing that successful treatment is not determined by long-term abstinence.
- Support provinces and territories in creating standards for substance use treatment programs so that Canadians can access quality and evidence-based support when they need it most.
- Support the many lower-risk and first-time offenders by reforming the Criminal Code to repeal relevant mandatory minimum penalties and requiring police and Crown prosecutors to consider diverting individuals out of the criminal justice system.

Conservative Party of Canada

The opioid crisis is one of the biggest challenges facing our country. Canada's Conservatives will treat the opioid epidemic as the health issue that it is. We believe that law enforcement should focus on dealers and traffickers. The last thing that those suffering from addiction should

have to worry about is being arrested. Any interaction the government has with them should focus on keeping them safe and helping them recover.

To help more Canadians recover from addiction, Canada's Conservatives will revise the federal government's substance abuse policy framework to make recovery its overarching goal. We will reorient the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy towards ensuring that everyone suffering from addiction has the opportunity to recover and to lead a drug-free life. We will ensure that all policies that fall under the Strategy have the reduction of harm and promotion of recovery as their objectives.

To realize this goal, we will invest \$325 million over the next three years to create 1,000 residential drug treatment beds and build 50 recovery community centres across the country. This will give spaces to those who suffer from addiction, their families, and those who have recovered where they can get the help they need and support each other. We will further partner with the provinces to ensure that Naloxone kits are available for free across Canada.

We will also support innovative approaches to address the crises of mental health challenges and addiction, such as land-based treatment programs developed and managed by Indigenous communities as part of a plan to enhance the delivery of culturally appropriate addictions treatment and prevention services in First Nations communities with high needs.

New Democratic Party of Canada:

New Democrats believe that there is much more we can do to save lives and support those struggling with opioids. In government, we will declare a public health emergency and commit to working with all levels of government, health experts and Canadians to end the criminalization and stigma of drug addiction, so that people struggling with addiction can get the help they need without fear of arrest, while getting tough on the real criminals - those who traffic in and profit from illegal drugs. We'll work with the provinces and health professionals to create a safe supply of medically regulated alternatives to toxic street drugs, support overdose prevention sites and expand access to treatment on demand for people struggling with addiction. We will also launch an investigation into the role drug companies may have played in fueling the opioid crisis and seek meaningful financial compensation from them for the public costs of this crisis.