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**RE: Progressive Conservative Party Position on Your Questions Regarding Cancer Treatment Programs**

Thank you for providing us with your program suggestions. We value input from those closest to the challenges we face. We are committed to ensuring effective, timely health care for the citizens of our province.

Cancer is a serious healthcare issue that affects New Brunswickers of all ages. When we take office, we will be faced with several challenges which we must deal with as effectively as possible.

Many people do not have a family doctor and those who do often endure significant wait time to get an appointment. Consequently, far too many people are forced to seek treatment in our emergency rooms; a very expensive option for the people of New Brunswick. We also face the longest surgical wait times in the country. These factors lead to longer lead times to diagnosis and treatment, more complications and treatment challenges and longer recovery. With cancer, specifically, we understand early diagnosis and treatment yields better outcomes.

We are convinced that the quality of our health services can be greatly enhanced by addressing the underlying issues of our healthcare systems. As such, we are committed to working with the Regional Health Authorities to establish measurable service standards and targets. Furthermore, we will expand and enhance primary access to include pharmacists, nurse practitioners and extra-mural services to ensure that personal health problems can be addressed more quickly and effectively.

A priority of our government will be to identify and assess the impact of health programs that are preventive in nature or provide less invasive treatments in a more effective manner. You have identified several ways to do so. We understand and agree that tobacco usage is a clear cause of cancer and understand the need to act to reduce it's use; particularly among young people. We also agree that there are potential benefits to both patient and overall health objectives through the provision of take-home cancer medication. We will carefully assess your suggestions as part of our commitment to provide better health care.

Additionally, the programs you have suggested - aids to navigation, at-home service delivery, preventive measures and palliative care strategies - clearly demonstrate the type of innovative solutions our province needs and will be key priorities in a PC Government. We will work tirelessly to create a manageable, measurable health care system that improves outcomes for the people of New Brunswick, increases access and reduces wait times.

Thank you for your questions and for your commitment to holding your government accountable for healthcare outcomes in New Brunswick. We look forward to working with you as we address these challenges and thank you in advance for your participation in this important undertaking.

Sincerely,  
Team Higgs

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