

## Questionnaire for political parties

# CANCER: AN ELECTION ISSUE

## Palliative Care



Eight out of 10 people seeking palliative care are cancer patients. Quality palliative care provides patients and their families with the care they need in the setting of their choice. It benefits not only patients and their families, but is an efficient use of healthcare dollars. The Canadian Cancer Society believes everyone should have guaranteed access to timely quality palliative care regardless of where they live.

A new Canadian Cancer Society [report](#) has found that critically ill Canadians are falling through the cracks when it comes to palliative care. The report found that in the absence of other options, large numbers of patients are turning to emergency wards and intensive care units.

Currently in Saskatchewan, access to and quality of palliative care varies greatly between rural and urban communities. In spite of the reality that all health regions receive funding for palliative care, the services provided together with the knowledge and skill level of care providers varies greatly from region to region. The Saskatchewan Hospice Palliative Care Association is currently striving to address this situation by providing palliative care education through the “Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative and End-of-Life Care” education. More than 125 physicians and nurses accessed this learning opportunity in 2015, but there are hundreds more who would benefit greatly from training in palliative care approaches.

In addition to training, a comprehensive and integrated palliative care strategy is needed for our province. This strategy should address earlier and more equitable access to palliative care, expert symptom and pain management and the integration of appropriate levels of care in appropriate settings.

The need for solutions is becoming more urgent with Canada facing a 40% increase in new cancer cases in the next 15 years. For a patient seeking to relieve the pain and symptoms associated with cancer, palliative care must be available to ensure that physician-assisted death does not become a default option.

**If elected, how will you ensure that every person with a life-altering critical illness has access to timely, quality palliative care regardless of where they live in the province?** (Please feel free to provide comments on separate attachment, if necessary. All documents returned will be scanned and uploaded to [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca).)

As a cancer survivor, Mr. Swenson definitely understands the stresses families are subjected to as well as the need for timely and quality care.

Our commitment to eliminate the health districts and their expensive bureaucracies should guarantee more money for direct care in all facets of health care. Palliative care is sadly lacking in most of the rural health care systems.

## Cancer Prevention



Smoking is responsible for 30% of cancer deaths. Saskatchewan has 153,000 smokers and for each person who quits smoking or dies, the tobacco industry needs youth to become addicted. The tobacco industry has developed new tactics (flavours, menthol capsules, etc) to build a fresh customer base. The average age that Saskatchewan youth start smoking is 14.

In addition, smoking costs the Saskatchewan economy \$1.1 billion annually in direct and indirect costs. A report card released by leading health organizations in November gave the Saskatchewan Government a D+ for its efforts to reduce tobacco use in the province.

If your party is elected, will you commit to the following legislative measures? Please circle Yes or No

- |   |                                      |                          |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) A ban on the sale of flavoured tobacco products including menthol          | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| b) Regulations regarding the sale, promotion and use of electronic cigarettes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| c) Prohibit the sale of tobacco in post-secondary institutions                | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| d) Prohibit the use of water pipes (hookah) anywhere smoking is prohibited    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| e) Ban smoking on outdoor patios of restaurants and bars                      | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| f) Ban smoking on playgrounds and parks where children play                   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |

According to the Ministry of Health, Saskatchewan spends approximately \$450,000 per year on tobacco control. Based on tobacco tax revenue of \$270 million, this amounts to less than ¼ of one percent, the lowest per capita amount of any province or territory.

If your party wins, will you commit to increased funding for programs and policies to reduce tobacco use in the province?

Yes.

**IMPORTANT:** Please email your responses to [kkarasin@sk.cancer.ca](mailto:kkarasin@sk.cancer.ca) and/or [dziegler@sk.cancer.ca](mailto:dziegler@sk.cancer.ca)  
You can also fax your responses to 306-569-2133