



The voice for Canadians who care about cancer

Highlights of our advocacy work in 2019

Changing public policy is one of the most effective tools for preventing cancer and helping those living with and beyond cancer. That's why the Canadian Cancer Society works with government to bring about healthy public policies that will help prevent cancer and improve the lives of people living with cancer and their caregivers. Our advocacy work is making a difference. Here are some recent advocacy wins that demonstrate our dedication to preventing cancer and finding new and better ways to make life easier for Canadians living with cancer.

Nationwide successes

Canada becomes global leader in plain packaging

After three decades of advocacy work, we saw the implementation of the world's best tobacco plain packaging regulations in Canada. The regulations were adopted despite a fierce, multi-million dollar lobbying and advertising campaign by the tobacco industry to block them.

CCS named a top health influencer

As a result of extensive advocacy work this year, the Canadian Cancer Society was ranked #4 of the top 50 most active health lobbyists and was identified by Hill Times Research as one of 30 health influencers in Canada.

Improving palliative care for Canadians

We participated in the development of Canada's first-ever palliative care framework, making sure quality of life for people with cancer remains a priority. During Manitoba's election we successfully advocated for all parties to commit, at least in part, to our palliative care policy requests.

Parties commit to cancer control during the federal election

During the 2019 federal election, we urged parties to commit to making cancer a priority if elected. Because of our advocacy work, we saw our recommendations reflected in all major political party platforms. Importantly, the Liberal Party committed to extending the Employment Insurance Sickness Benefit from 15 to 26 weeks, in alignment with our request.

Greater protections for youth from harms of vaping

When evidence indicating that youth vaping is on the rise, we advocated for stronger restrictions to immediately curb this trend. In February 2019, Health Canada announced new measures for consultation to address youth vaping, including a proposal to restrict



vaping promotion. In the spring, Health Canada launched a consultation on other measures, including maximum nicotine levels, flavours and packaging. Changes are expected soon.

New Food Guide helps Canadians to make healthier choices

Canada's new Food Guide, which had not been updated in over 10 years, was released in January 2019. The new guide swaps out food groups for an emphasis on eating vegetables and fruits, whole grains and protein. The guide advises on foods to avoid and provides tips for healthy eating. These changes, in line with our recommendations, happened despite extensive lobbying by numerous commercial interests.

Nation-leading e-cigarette regulations

BC became the first province in Canada to introduce a limit to nicotine levels in e-cigarette products. Prince Edward Island became the first in Canada to raise the minimum age for the sales of tobacco/vaping products to 21. The bill also restricts e-cigarette sales to specialty stores – another first in Canada. In December, Nova Scotia became the first province to ban sales of flavoured e-cigarettes and juices.

Tougher restrictions on vaping and tobacco

Huge advancements to reduce youth vaping were seen across the country. Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories and the Yukon adopted legislation to ban sales to minors, prohibit use where smoking banned, prohibit sales where tobacco sales are banned, and prohibit retail promotion. In Ontario, retail advertising was banned, and a private member's bill was introduced to ban promotion of e-cigarettes, set maximum nicotine levels, restrict flavours, and limit the sale of e-cigarettes to specialty vape shops only.

Increase in tobacco taxes

Alberta increased tobacco taxes by \$5 per carton of 200 cigarettes, while BC increased tobacco taxes by \$4 per carton of 200 cigarettes. Higher tobacco taxes are the single most effective strategy to reduce smoking, especially among youth. Alberta has also announced plans for a tax on e-cigarettes in 2020.

A voice for cancer

In Ontario, we hosted an advocacy day at Queen's Park supported and attended by all major parties that allowed us to share our advocacy priorities and ensure MPPs are aware of the needs of Ontarians impacted by cancer. The Government of Quebec invited us to participate in two exclusive consultations: one on Quebec's first-ever caregiver policy and the other on regulatory measures for e-cigarettes. We hosted MHA/MLA events in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and PEI to highlight CCS's policy recommendations related to tobacco, vaping and medical transportation. In BC, we advocated on behalf of those living with cancer who need to travel for treatment and our recommendations were included in a Standing Committee on Finance report to the Minister of Finance.