



# Government Relations Report

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By the time you are reading this the election writ will have been dropped and all political parties, their leaders, candidates and volunteers will be in full campaign mode.

Canadians will go to the polls on October 21, 2019 and elect their member of parliament (MP). While the Liberal and Conservative parties are within a point or two of each other in the most recent polls, those in the know are predicting that a minority Liberal government is a likely scenario, with the balance of power held by either the New Democratic Party or the Green Party. The same would be true of the balance of power if it turns out to be a Conservative minority. Speaking of the Green Party, they are experiencing a rise in popularity and running close behind the New Democratic Party. Time will tell who the winners are.

As a not-for-profit organization working at the federal level the CAND must be nonpartisan at all times, not just during an election, to ensure it is able to work with all MPs regardless of which political party they represent or which party forms the government. However, the same restriction does not apply to you as individual NDs.

This election is an excellent opportunity for NDs to engage with their local candidates, educating them on who you are, what you do and the healthcare role NDs play in making a positive impact on patient health. This can be accomplished by joining a local campaign, meeting with all party candidates or simply asking questions of those who come knocking at your door. Candidates want to meet as many constituents as they can in the lead up to voting day and that includes you. While the economy and affordability are the main ballot platform for all parties this election Canadians identified health as second only to climate change as being top of mind. As a profession that has solutions to many of the healthcare issues faced by Canadians, solutions, which have the potential of lowering the cost of our healthcare system, candidates need to hear from you.

Although where you call home often affects how you see the issues, and how you might vote, it is important that you have at least a general understanding of each party's platform. This may help guide your decision of who to vote for in your riding, but more importantly, it will ensure you are able to ask relevant questions of any candidate regardless of their party affiliation. Details of the

election platforms for the main parties can be found on-line. There are also several options if you are interested in keeping up to date on polling data: Canada Poll Tracker at [newsinteractives.cbc.ca](http://newsinteractives.cbc.ca) and [338canada.com](http://338canada.com) are perhaps the most commonly referenced by the politicians and media.

In preparation for the campaign the CAND has worked with its government relations experts, Hill+Knowlton, preparing a list of questions for party leaders. The questionnaire is intended to create awareness and solicit support for the CAND and its membership. It consists of a short list of questions which will create an awareness of NDs, and provide the CAND with insight into the parties' viewpoints. We will share the responses with members as they are received. We will also be publishing one or two thought leadership pieces during the election lead up centered on some of our key issues, such as improving Veterans' health and the ability for NDs to authorize cannabis for medical purposes. Hill+Knowlton has prepared a list of key candidates and ridings to target. The CAND will be reaching out to NDs in those target ridings over the course of the campaign.

To assist our members in engaging with candidates we have developed a 'leave behind' document. Our objective is to create a broader awareness with key messages for local NDs and your patients to use in engaging in discussions with local candidates and campaign teams. Keep in mind that patients are your best advocates! While local campaign workers are discouraged from talking policy at the doorstep, policy discussions are as a matter of course reported back to the local campaign, which filters up to regional campaign teams. In addition to the leave behind document we have created a congratulatory letter that can be sent to successful candidates following the election, both are available for download on the members' only section of the CAND website.

The CAND often hears from members who are interested in engaging with their local politicians. With the forthcoming election on everyone's mind, now is a great time for NDs to get involved with their local candidates, ask the right questions, and find out where politicians stand on issues affecting NDs and the broader healthcare realm. We encourage you to get involved and shape history. Please get out into your community, and by all means get in touch with the CAND with any questions. 🍁