



Childhood
Cancer Canada



Ac²orn

ADVOCACY FOR
CANADIAN CHILDHOOD
ONCOLOGY RESEARCH NETWORK

Your Voice Matters!

As a health care provider treating and caring for children, adolescents and young adults with cancer your voice can make an important difference.

Elections are a key opportunity to shape the future of healthcare, research, and policies that matter to you and your community. As a voter, you have the power to bring attention to important issues—like childhood, adolescent, and young adult (CAYA) cancer—by participating in the electoral process and engaging with candidates. Here’s how you can get involved:

These **draft letters may be sent to your local candidates** to provide your perspective on this important policy topic as a voter and HCP.

Take them and adapt them with your own experience and professional insights before sharing them with candidates via email, at community events, or during town hall meetings / candidate forums. Your personalized message will not only underscore the urgency of these issues but also position you as a trusted expert and advocate for pediatric cancer. This proactive approach will encourage candidates to integrate these vital concerns into their platforms and prioritize the health and future of young Canadians affected by cancer.

By using simple, common messages, we can ensure the voices of the wider community resonate together.

This Elections Canada site <https://www.elections.ca/scripts/vis/FindED?L=e&PAGEID=20> can help you find your local candidates.

Version 1: Emphasizing the Urgent Need for Action

[Your Name]

position

[Children's Hospital Name]

[City, Province]

[Date]

[Candidate's Name]

[Party]

[Address]

[City, Province]

Dear [Candidate's Name],

As a [title] working with children and families affected by cancer, I am writing to urge you to prioritize pediatric cancer in the upcoming election. Children and young adults face unique challenges when diagnosed with cancer, yet their needs are often overlooked in national health



policy. The treatments currently available to children are outdated, and the research and funding dedicated to pediatric cancer are woefully insufficient.

While cancer research funding in Canada exceeds \$520 million annually, only a fraction of that is directed toward pediatric cancer, leaving children without the same advancements and therapies that adults benefit from. Treatments like proton radiation and CAR T-cell therapy, which can significantly improve outcomes and reduce long-term side effects, are not widely available to young Canadians.

I ask that you champion the following priorities:

1. **Sustained Research Funding** – We need long-term, sustainable investment in pediatric cancer research and clinical trials to ensure that children have access to the most effective and least harmful treatments.
2. **Better Treatments & Access** – Advocate for the federal government to support and prioritize the adoption of evidence supported medicines and complex therapies such as proton radiation therapy, and ensure they are available across Canada.
3. **Dedicated Strategies** – Push for the creation of a national childhood cancer strategy, with clear goals and measurable targets that address the unique needs of children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer.

By focusing on these critical areas, we can ensure that no child is left behind in the fight against cancer.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Version 2: Emphasizing Research and Access to Cutting-Edge Treatments

[Your Name]
position
[Children's Hospital Name]
[City, Province]
[Date]

[Candidate's Name]
[Party]
[Address]
[City, Province]

Dear [Candidate's Name],

As a [title], I see the devastating impact that cancer has on children and their families. While adults benefit from advancements in cancer research and treatment, children continue to face outdated, harsh therapies that often result in lifelong health complications. These challenges demand that pediatric cancer be given a higher priority in federal health policy.

Since 2000, Health Canada has approved over 1,000 cancer drug indications for adults, but only around 12 for pediatric use. The lack of access to modern, effective treatments like proton radiation therapy and CAR T-cell therapy means that many children do not receive the best possible care.

I ask that you advocate for the following:

1. **Sustained Research Funding** – Long-term, sustainable funding is needed for pediatric cancer research and clinical trials, to ensure children can benefit from new, safer treatments.
2. **Better Treatments & Access** – Advocate for the federal government to support and prioritize the adoption of evidence supported medicines and complex therapies such as proton radiation therapy, and ensure they are available across Canada.
3. **Dedicated Strategies** – We need a national childhood cancer strategy with clear targets and measurable goals to address the unique needs of young cancer patients and improve their care outcomes.

As a [title], I implore you to make pediatric cancer a priority in the upcoming election. Children deserve the best possible care and treatment to give them the best chance at a healthy future.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Version 3: Focusing on the Lack of Focus and the Need for Systemic Change

[Your Name]
position
[Children's Hospital Name]
[City, Province]
[Date]

[Candidate's Name]
[Party]
[Address]
[City, Province]

Dear [Candidate's Name],

I am writing to you as a [title] dedicated to the care of children and young adults battling cancer. It is clear to me that the current federal health policies fail to adequately address the unique needs of young cancer patients. Each year, over 1,500 Canadian children are diagnosed with cancer, but the treatments and research funding directed toward pediatric cancer are grossly insufficient.

Since 2000, there have been over 1,000 cancer drug approvals for adults, but only around 12 for pediatric indications. This disparity means that children with cancer have fewer treatment options, and the options available to them are often less advanced. Therapies like proton radiation and CAR

T-cell therapy have been shown to significantly improve outcomes for young patients, yet they are not widely accessible in Canada.

To address these gaps, I recommend the following:

1. **Sustained Research Funding** – We must commit to long-term, sustainable funding for pediatric cancer research and clinical trials to ensure that we develop better treatments for children.
2. **Better Treatments & Access** – Advocate for the federal government to support and prioritize the adoption of evidence supported medicines and complex therapies such as proton radiation therapy, and ensure they are available across Canada..
3. **Dedicated Strategies** – Canada needs a national childhood cancer strategy that includes clear, measurable targets to improve treatment access and care for children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer.

The lack of focus on childhood cancer in Canada’s healthcare system is unacceptable. I urge you to ensure that the next government addresses this disparity and provides the care and support that young cancer patients deserve.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Version 4: Focusing on the Need for a Coordinated National Approach

[Your Name]
position
[Children's Hospital Name]
[City, Province]
[Date]

[Candidate's Name]
[Party]
[Address]
[City, Province]

Dear [Candidate's Name],

As a [title], I have dedicated my career to helping children and families navigate the challenges of cancer. Unfortunately, pediatric cancer is still largely ignored by federal healthcare policy. Cancer in children is distinct from adult cancer in several important ways, and yet children are often treated with adult-based therapies that cause severe long-term side effects.

Canada spends billions of dollars on cancer research, but only a small fraction is directed toward pediatric cancer. As a result, many children in Canada still do not have access to cutting-edge

treatments like proton radiation and CAR T-cell therapy, which can significantly improve outcomes and reduce harmful side effects.

I urge you to advocate for the following changes:

1. **Sustained Research Funding** – The federal government must commit to long-term, sustainable funding for pediatric cancer research to ensure that treatments are developed that are specifically designed for children.
2. **Better Treatments & Access** – Advocate for the federal government to support and prioritize the adoption of evidence supported medicines and complex therapies such as proton radiation therapy, and ensure they are available across Canada..
3. **Dedicated Strategies** – It is imperative that Canada develops a national childhood cancer strategy, with clear goals and measurable targets, to address the unique needs of young cancer patients across the country.

Canada must do better for its children. I ask that you work to ensure that pediatric cancer is given the priority it deserves.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Version 5: Emphasizing the Impact on Families and Long-Term Health

[Your Name]
position
[Children's Hospital Name]
[City, Province]
[Date]

[Candidate's Name]
[Party]
[Address]
[City, Province]

Dear [Candidate's Name],

I write to you as a [title] who has seen firsthand the profound impact cancer has on children and their families. Cancer is the leading disease-related cause of death for Canadian children, and those who survive often face lifelong health complications due to treatments that were not designed for their growing bodies. Despite the advancements in cancer treatment for adults, children are still being left behind.

Canada's current approach to pediatric cancer is inadequate. We have made tremendous strides in adult cancer research, but the same cannot be said for children. There are still far too few pediatric

cancer drug approvals, and treatments like proton radiation and CAR T-cell therapy remain out of reach for many young Canadians.

I urge you to prioritize pediatric cancer in the upcoming election by supporting the following actions:

1. **Sustained Research Funding** – Long-term, sustainable funding is essential to support pediatric cancer research and clinical trials, ensuring that children receive treatments that are both effective and specifically designed for them.
2. **Better Treatments & Access** – Advocate for the federal government to support and prioritize the adoption of evidence supported medicines and complex therapies such as proton radiation therapy, and ensure they are available across Canada..
3. **Dedicated Strategies** – Canada needs a national childhood cancer strategy, with measurable targets and clear goals, to address the unique needs of children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer.

As a [title], I believe that we can and must do better for our youngest patients. I trust that you will make pediatric cancer a priority in the next federal government's healthcare agenda.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]