

Alberta Division

MENTAL HEALTH QUESTIONS FOR POLITICAL CANDIDATES

If you were elected, would you support . . .

1	An increased emphasis and funding for community mental health services and supports, including those required as a prerequisite for issuing CTOs under Bill 31?
2	Increased funding for programs for mental health education and promotion to promote mental health (including youth, seniors, in the workplace, etc.) and increase understanding (and reduce stigma) relating to mental illness?
3	More specific measures to create sustainability for the not-for-profit sector?
4	A strong priority for affordable housing, with a “Housing First” (as opposed to temporary shelters) philosophy to address homelessness in Alberta?
5	The formation of an arms-length foundation in Alberta to focus on promotion of, and preventive measures relating to, physical and mental health, as being proposed by Health Vision 2020?

RESPONSES

ALBERTA GREENS						
Candidate	Riding	1	2	3	4	5
• Argan, Glen	Edmonton-Mill Creek	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
• Ashmore, Larry	Foothills-Rockyview	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Brown, Jennifer	Bonnyville-Cold Lake	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Cunin, Dan	Banff-Cochrane	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Haddow, Kate	Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

• Kennedy, Valerie	Edmonton-Whitemud	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Maw, Sean	Calgary-Varsity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• McGillivray, Mark	Calgary-Egmont	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Ripley, Jennifer	Rocky Mountain House	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Tschetter, Rueben	Red Deer-North	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Total Alberta Greens responses: 10

ALBERTA LIBERALS						
Candidate	Riding	1	2	3	4	5
• "ON BEHALF OF ALL ALBERTA LIBERAL CANDIDATES"	ALL RIDINGS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Elsalhy, Mo	Edmonton-McClung	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Total Alberta Liberals responses: 83

ALBERTA NDP						
Candidate	Riding	1	2	3	4	5
• "ON BEHALF OF ALL ALBERTA NDP CANDIDATES"	ALL RIDINGS	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
• Anderson, Collin	Calgary-North West	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Arnott, Diana	Medicine Hat	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Bullwinkle, Erica	Edmonton-Riverview	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
• McKibben, Sherry	Edmonton-Gold Bar	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Moore, James	Lethbridge-West	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y*
• Peacock, Neil	Grande Prairie-Smoky	?	Y	Y	Y	?
• Sadik, Sid	Edmonton-Decore	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

* Not arms-length

Total Alberta NDP responses: 83

ALBERTA PCs						
Candidate	Riding	1	2	3	4	5
• Allred, Ken	St. Albert *					
• DeLong, Alana	Calgary-Bow	Y	Y	Y	Y	?
• Fawcett, Kyle	Calgary-North Hill	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Hancock, Dave	Edmonton-Whitemud	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• Hayden, Jack	Drumheller-Stettler	Y	Y	Y	Y	?
• Redford, Alison	Calgary-Elbow *					
• Stelmach, Ed	Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville *					

* See official Alberta PCs response (below).

Total Alberta PC responses: 83

ALBERTA SOCIAL CREDIT						
Candidate	Riding	1	2	3	4	5
• Skowronski, Len	Calgary-Bow	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Total Alberta Social Credit responses: 1

WILDROSE ALLIANCE						
Candidate	Riding	1	2	3	4	5
• Rabb, Clint	Medicine Hat	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Total Wildrose Alliance responses: 1

Overall total responses: 261

Official Party Positions *(in response to the questionnaire)*

• **Alberta Liberals**

Question 1:

“The Alberta Liberals would restore stable funding and long-term planning to mental health. This would include a community-based system of treatment and support, with renewed emphasis on income and employment support,

appropriate housing and adequate crisis response – including sufficient emergency psychiatric beds and related placements.”

Question 2:

“Yes. Please see above.” [Question 1]

Question 3:

“The Alberta Liberal platform, *It's Time*, includes a commitment to address the current staffing crisis to ensure that human services workers in the not-for-profit sector receive the same wages and benefits as their government counterparts.”

Question 4:

“The Alberta Liberals have released a comprehensive affordable housing policy, which includes initiatives to address homelessness. This includes introducing Permanent Supportive Housing, which provides the chronically homeless with stable housing options combined with support and clinical services. We have committed \$40 million to the Permanent Supportive Housing initiative.”

Question 5:

“The Alberta Liberals wholeheartedly agree that health promotion activities are an essential part of a high quality of life and a sustainable health system. The Alberta Liberals are committed to establishing a \$200 million a year fund aimed at improving health and wellness. Having a source of sustainable, predictable funding is key.”

- **Alberta PCs**

Question 1:

“Alberta leads the country in delivery of mental health services and supports. For example, Alberta is the only province to have a comprehensive mental health plan guiding the provision of mental health services by health regions, professional associations, client organizations and government.

As part of the provincial mental health plan, the Progressive Conservative government has recently launched a number of programs to support community mental health services and supports. The Mental Health Innovation Fund provides \$75 million over three years to expand mental health services, including improved community support capacity.

A Progressive Conservative government will work with the regional health authorities to ensure that the appropriate resources are in place before a CTO is issued. However, while community treatment orders are an important tool that will help to encourage compliance with prescribed treatment, they should be viewed as an extreme measure. Our immediate priority is to ensure availability of the support services required for Albertans suffering from serious mental illness to lead full, independent and productive lives. In a well-functioning mental health system, CTOs should rarely be necessary.”

Question 2:

“The Progressive Conservative government has already launched the Mental Health Innovation Fund for exactly this purpose. The fund finances 30 programs across the province ranging from outreach programs to day treatment and crisis intervention services. The programs are intended to help health professionals develop a better understanding of mental illness and to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

For instance, the fund supports two mobile multi-disciplinary teams based in Lloydminster and Camrose who respond to immediate mental health crises. The teams work with individual clients, their support systems and community agencies to stabilize the client, minimize the risk of harm to self and others, and ensure follow through treatment takes place.

The Progressive Conservative government also designated \$12 million to support three new suicide prevention initiatives on Active Postvention, Community Help, and Intentional Overdoses.”

Question 3:

“Charitable and religious groups can apply and receive licenses to conduct the gaming activities, which means they can fundraise through activities such as bingos, casinos, raffles and pull tickets. About a quarter of a billion dollars was raised through charitable gaming in the last fiscal year, which was invested back into Alberta communities.

As well, the progressive Conservative government implemented a Community Spirit Program for Charitable Giving to encourage Albertans to donate more through tax credits for private charitable donations. As of January 1, 2007, the Alberta Progressive Conservative government raised the charitable tax credit for eligible annual donations above \$20 by 60 per cent. The details of a donor-drive program will be announced in Budget 2008. The program will be available to all eligible non-profit organizations and Canada Revenue Agency-registered charities that provide direct services to Albertans and Alberta communities for philanthropic purposes, helping to ensure the sustainability of the not-for-profit sector.”

Question 4:

“The Progressive Conservative government invested \$285 million to address immediate housing pressures. This includes \$100 million to municipalities for affordable housing projects, \$33 million for the Rent Supplement Program, \$43 million for support to housing providers and special purpose housing, and \$7 million for the Homeless and Eviction Prevention Fund. As well, Ed Stelmach’s Progressive Conservatives announced a Secretariat on Homelessness to work on ending homelessness in 10 years.”

Question 5:

“Progressive Conservatives understand that the sound mental health of Albertans is essential to the long-term sustainability of the health system. For this reason, as government, we are seeking to transform the health system from an acute care model of health to a wellness model. This includes

addressing the economic, productivity, health and social costs associated with mental illness.

Recognizing that the majority of mental illnesses are present before the age of 14, an additional \$39 million is being provided specifically to address mental health issues in children and youth. This investment builds on Alberta's 10-year framework for optimizing the mental health of children and youth.

Under the leadership of Ed Stelmach, the Progressive Conservative Party fully supports the goal of Health Vision 2020 to make Albertans the healthiest people in Canada by the year 2020 through evidence-based primary prevention initiatives that have the capacity to motivate healthy lifestyles and behaviour change.

Our membership has consistently promoted programs and public education on health and lifestyle choices that reduces risk of chronic disease in later life. Unquestionably, primary prevention is fundamental to the forward looking vision that Alberta's Progressive Conservative party has for health care."

(Updated February 29, 2008)