

What we need the Federal Government to do!

LISTEN

The Federal government must listen to what Canadians want. They must consult with Canadians and the provinces about what services are needed and make our demand for a national long-term care program a priority.

ACT

⇒ **INTRODUCE** legislation that would guarantee long-term care is available to all Canadians, regardless of where they live, and is based on the five principles of the *Canada Health Act*:

- publicly administered
- comprehensive
- universal
- portable
- accessible

⇒ **EXPAND** the CHT to include funding to create a national long-term care program.

⇒ **SET** national standards and guidelines and hold the provinces accountable to meet them!

What we need to do!

We need to remind the Federal government that they must play a progressive role in Canada's Medicare system. They have to do more than help pay the bills. They must also lead from the front to create the kind of Medicare we need and want.

Together we can make them do the right thing.



**national
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NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES

- B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union
- PEI Union of Public Sector Employees
- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees

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The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of the Public Services International.



MEDICARE 2.0
EXPAND. IMPROVE.

Here's
to life!

Why don't we
have a national
long-term care
program yet?



We don't want long-term care to be run like a lottery.

IT'S HEART-WRENCHING. We don't like to do it. But we do it—only because we want to make old age better for our loved ones. Chances are it won't. That's the hard truth of long-term care in Canada today. It's like a lottery. You've got to be lucky to come out all right.

The decision to put a loved one into long-term care forces us to make hard choices—the kind no one should ever have to make. They range from poor to bad. Families are often forced to settle for the kind of care they can afford, rather than the kind of care their loved ones deserve.

The root of the problem is that there is no national plan. The *Canada Health Act* does not cover long-term care. Each province is left on its own to decide how it will provide long-term care and how much. The result is a confusing mishmash of residences and payment options.

Where you live determines what is available. Privately or publicly provided—for-profit or not-for-profit—large corporations or small and municipally owned, etc. It is confusing for those who work in the system; imagine facing this when your family is in a crisis. There just is no method to the madness that is long-term care in Canada.

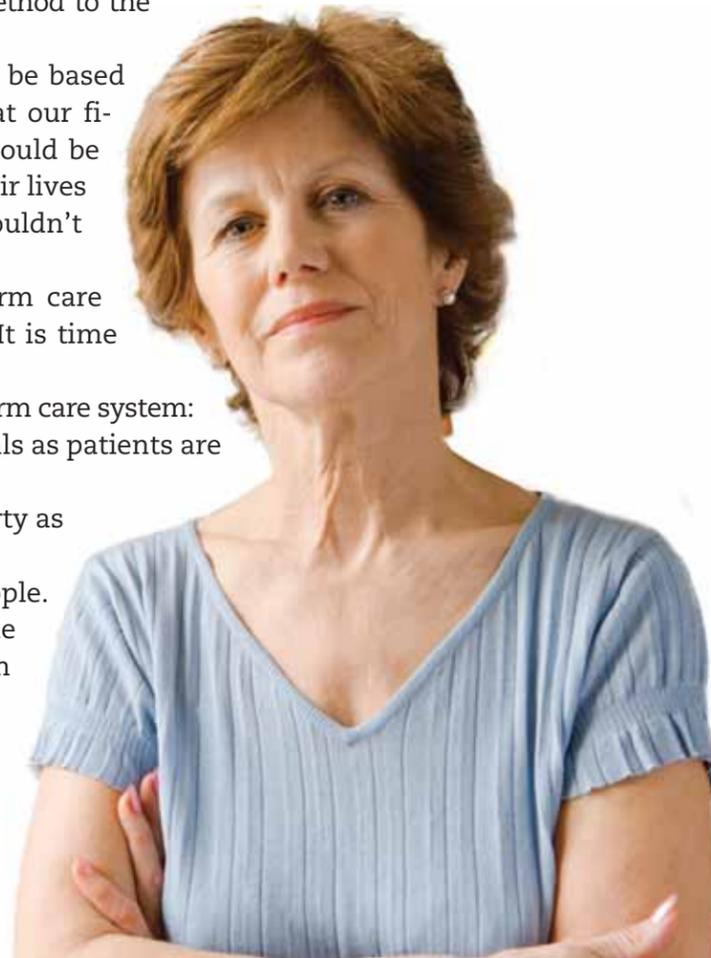
It doesn't have to be this way! Our options should be based on what is best for the family member and not what our finances will allow. People living in long-term care should be provided the best care and supports needed to live their lives with dignity. Where you happen to live in Canada shouldn't determine the quality of long-term care you can get.

Other countries have national systems of long-term care that provide a wide range of options and programs. It is time that Canada joined them.

There are many benefits to creating a national long-term care system:

- It will ease the demand for beds in many hospitals as patients are moved into more appropriate accommodations;
- Many families will not face loss of work or poverty as a result of helping a loved one; and
- It will create lots of good, meaningful jobs for people.

And what is possibly the best argument for the creation of a national public long-term care system—*Canadians want it!*



So, why don't we have a national long-term care program?

WITH ALL the benefits you would think it would be quickly acted upon. Unfortunately, the problem is that recent Federal governments have not wanted to make a long-term care program a priority.

Previously, the Federal government would use its ability to raise taxes and transfer funds to the provinces as a way to create, or expand upon, national programs. The money from the Federal government, usually matched by the provinces, would be targeted for specific programs. Provinces would deliver the services, but with standards and a mandate set by the federal government.

This worked well. The current health care system that Canadians so value was created this way.

Unfortunately, for the past two decades the Federal government has tried to back away from the role it has historically played. Cuts to transfer payments and a “hands-off” approach to dealing with the provinces, have left the system without Federal leadership.

The Harper government has taken this trend to a new level. They dictated how much money they will transfer under the Canadian Health Transfer (CHT), with almost no direction on how it will be spent.

Priorities for the Harper government have been spending billions of dollars on new fighter jets and federal mega-prisons, while introducing more corporate tax cuts. But long-term care, and other services that Canadians hold as priorities, were not on the government's list.



It's not the money

RESEARCH PROVES IT: our health care spending is not out of control or a problem. What we really have is a revenue problem.

Since the mid-90s, governments have cut taxes so drastically that they've reduced their revenue by at least \$90 billion every year.

That's more than enough money to create a national long-term care program—and MORE!

It's all about priorities and choices. There's more than enough money to protect, strengthen and expand our Medicare—the Federal government just has to make it a priority.