

Disability Alliance BC
B.C. Green Party responses

1. Provincial Disability Assistance

Yes, a B.C. Green Government will take immediate steps to begin the transition to liveable incomes with an increase in all income assistance rates, including for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). Rates will increase by 10% effective October 1, 2017, and rise to 50% above the current level on April 1, 2020. This increase will be supplemented by other programming to support those on assistance programs. Under this increase, an individual with a PWD designation will receive \$1,136/month as of this October, up from the current rate of \$1,033/month. By April 2020, they will receive \$1,549/month. We believe that nobody should be living below the poverty line in a province as wealthy as BC. This significant increase to income assistance rates we view as the first step toward a transition to liveable incomes for all British Columbians.

2. Guaranteed Annual Income for People with Disabilities

Yes, the B.C. Green Party commits to working in consultation with advocacy organizations and experts to design a basic income pilot project that will test its ability to reduce poverty, and improve health, housing and employment outcomes. We believe that basic income has the potential help us alleviate poverty and foster healthier families and more resilient communities. It could reduce the stigma and complexity of our current social assistance system, and provide people enough income security that they are able to escape the poverty trap and take care of their families and lead healthy lives. Basic income could enable a fundamental rethink of how we approach social assistance in BC and help us prepare for a future that holds significant economic change. A B.C. Green Government will determine, in consultation with experts, the most effective way to design a basic income pilot and ensure that it is producing measurable outcomes to inform future policy decisions.

3. BC Accessibility Legislation

Our platform does not have specific commitments regarding accessibility legislation. As government we would work with experts and advocates to ensure that British Columbians with mobility issues are able to participate fully in their communities. We would consider passing legislation regarding areas under provincial jurisdiction as a means to this end.

We have also committed to significantly increasing the provision of affordable housing, investing up to \$750 million per year to support the construction of approximately 4,000 new units per year. We will also work with with social housing agencies and federal and local governments to develop and implement a provincial

housing plan to address deficiencies in the supply of affordable rental accommodation based on priority needs, including building accessible housing to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. We will also invest in frequent, affordable public transit, which will increase accessibility for people with mobility challenges.

4. Addictions support

We recognize that mental health issues and addictions often go hand-in-hand. Currently there are failings at all levels of the system, and only limited resources and fragmented programming available to support youth and adults in need of help.

A B.C. Green government we will take an integrated, evidence-based approach to mental health and addictions. We will seek to reduce the stigma too often associated with these issues, and we will emphasize integrated care and fund early intervention.

A B.C. Green government will establish a Ministry responsible for mental health and addictions, which will be responsible for developing and implementing: a Mental Health and Addiction strategy based on the recommendations of the Auditor General; and a Youth Mental Health Strategy for early detection of mental health illness. We will allocate \$80 million to fund early intervention, youth mental health initiatives, supervised injections sites, and community-based centres for mental health and rehabilitation.

We will implement an integrated primary care model specific to youth and mental health so that patients and their families can easily navigate resources in a supportive environment, and support innovative community-based options for responding to the needs of young people with mental illness and their families

We will also respond decisively to the fentanyl crisis, developing an immediate response based on successful programs in Europe that invest in treatment on demand, drug substitution, early-warning monitoring systems, and coordinated response.

5. ICBC Accident Benefits, *Motor Vehicle Act*

We believe that people need and deserve adequate financial support to recover from injuries sustained during a motor vehicle crash. We will work with organizations including DABC to ensure that individuals receive adequate support. Increasing Part 7 payments is one initiative that we will consider.

6. Home Care and Support

As the number of seniors in B.C. rises, so the pressures on the health care and long-term care systems increase. We recognize that most British Columbians, including people with disabilities, want to continue to live in their homes and communities. It also makes financial sense for the Government to support people to stay in their homes as far as possible. We also recognize that current supports are inadequate.

A B.C. Green Government will invest in home care and support, increasing funding by \$35 million over four years, to enable people who need assistance to stay in their own homes. A B.C. Green government will also work with health authorities to identify and remove barriers to the implementation of integrated healthcare delivery between acute and post-acute service providers. The shift from inpatient to community care has been shown to decrease health-care costs and better address the range of health care needs of the population.

7. Rehab for people who are blind or have low vision

The B.C. Green Party will work to ensure adequate funding for rehabilitation and recovery for people who are blind or have low vision. A B.C. Green Government will support programs that enable people to access rehabilitation programs in order to live healthier lives, function independently in their homes, and participate as fully as possible in their communities.

8. Woodlands School Survivors

We recognize the trauma that the victims of abuse at Woodlands School have experienced. As government we will explore our ability to ensure fair compensation for all victims who suffered abuse at Woodlands.