

# Advocacy Toolkit

## Federal Election 2025

**Dietitians of Canada / Les diététistes du Canada**

99 Yorkville Avenue, Second Floor  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R 1C1

[dietitians.ca](http://dietitians.ca) | [dietetistes.ca](http://dietetistes.ca)

**Tel:** 1 (877) 721-0876

**Email:** [contactus@dietitians.ca](mailto:contactus@dietitians.ca)

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Dietitians of Canada advocates for increased access to dietitian services in the healthcare system. Our purpose is to connect and support members, while increasing awareness of the role and value of dietitians. To learn more and get involved:

- [Sign up](#) to stay updated on the DC federal election advocacy
- Visit [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)
- Email [contactus@dietitians.ca](mailto:contactus@dietitians.ca)

## Background

The 45<sup>th</sup> federal election presents a pivotal opportunity to engage with election candidates and help shape the policy agenda of your future Member of Parliament (MP).

Advocacy is a powerful tool for change. By engaging with your local candidates, you have the opportunity to raise issues of concern and request action, while also building a foundation for working together in the future. Whether that be with the government of the day, the official opposition, or your elected officials and their staff.

Advocacy is a powerful tool for change and most importantly it's a team sport. The work Dietitians of Canada (DC) does to represent the profession in Ottawa is reinforced more strongly when our members are aligned and active in their communities. By engaging with your local candidates, you are building a foundation for working together in the future. Whether that be with the government of the day, the official opposition, or your elected officials and their staff.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Toolkit is to support advocacy efforts in advance of the upcoming federal election. A key component of advocacy includes meeting with election candidates to introduce yourself and DC and build lasting relationships ahead of the federal election. Strong personal connections are valuable for influencing decision-making and engaging early can create long-term positive outcomes for policy change.

## Guidance for Local Advocacy: Be Prepared and Ask Questions

Candidates are often busy during an election campaign. It is important to prepare your outreach goals to improve your chances of making a genuine connection. There are multiple opportunities to engage your candidate - they could knock on your door, you could run into them at the grocery store or on the street, you could attend a local debate and ask a question, you could call into a local radio show - in any of these forums there are a few important things to keep in mind to make your issue memorable.

The following best practices can help guide you to engage with your candidates successfully:

- **Know Your Key Messages:** Understand DC's key messaging on Household Food Insecurity and Student Loan Forgiveness to ensure consistent advocacy across members, and so that decision-

makers are exposed to clear policy asks. The more a politician can point to inconsistency between members, the greater their ability to dismiss our advocacy goals/ask. More information about key messages, [visit DC's website](#).

- **Emphasize your position as a constituent:** Candidates and MPs are eager to hear from you to win your vote. Once elected, MP offices prioritize the concerns of residents in their ridings - also known as their constituents. Their primary job as elected officials is to listen and address your concerns. When interacting with a candidate or MP, contextualize your advocacy as a member of the local community, and your role within it.
- **Build positive relationships:** Fostering long-term relationships with candidates is extremely beneficial. With a close connection, candidates who are elected as MPs are more likely to advocate for your needs which in turn builds trust and credibility towards your advocacy message. Politicians value the opinions of those they trust, and frequent communication is key to gaining that trust, allowing you to provide ongoing advice and feedback to your MP.
- **Get personal:** Connect your advocacy goals directly with your personal experiences and those of your loved ones. Be clear about what commitments you would like for them to make, and how your personal experiences reflect the issue at hand. While numbers and statistics are important, elected representatives are more likely to connect to hearing about how you experience hardships in the health system. Ultimately these are issues affecting you and your community, so it is best to speak from that position.
- **Tone:** While we know our issues are worthwhile, not all political parties or politicians will prioritize our advocacy goals the same way. Advocacy is a long-term process, an opponent one day can become a fierce advocate for our issue down the road. Keeping conversations respectful is of great importance to the overall work we are doing to advance our profession.

## Guidance for Dietitians: Leverage Your Credibility

As a registered dietitian, you are a respected member of the community with a degree of credibility and play an integral role in promoting the health and well-being of people within a community. The close ties dietitians have with their local communities can significantly impact the lives of residents, and consequently, the success of political candidates vying for votes within that area. By speaking on certain issues and highlighting them to candidates, your knowledge and experiences are more likely to resonate with them due to your subject matter expertise. Your stories and lived experiences carry extra weight and matter deeply to the people trying to secure your vote, as well as other community members with shared experiences.

You may choose to employ this credibility to advocate in other ways. For example, you may request to speak with a candidate after an event and request them to commit to certain policy positions. Even asking pointed questions at a campaign event or through a public social media post can generate desirable interest within your community and encourage local candidates to engage with you and your key messages. Your credibility gives you the upper hand over the candidate during an election campaign as voters are likely to trust your perspective. This is an opportunity to foster a long-term relationship with whoever is elected as your local MP. Given your role as a dietitian, you are more likely to get quoted in local media and people will want to hear your perspective as an expert.

## Key Messages

The following key messages should be used when building talking points with candidates during meetings and can be integrated into social media messaging and emails. The two key areas of focus are:

- Household food insecurity (HFI)
- Student Loan Forgiveness (SLF) for Dietitians

### Household Food Insecurity Key Messages

#### Call to Action

The government needs to develop and implement economic policies to address the serious issue of household food insecurity affecting millions of Canadians across the country. There are a range of potential solutions that can align with the economic agenda of any political party.

#### Problem

Household food insecurity is a significant problem in Canada. In 2022, almost one in five households (17.8%) across all ten provinces reported that they experienced some level of food insecurity in the previous year.

As Canadians face rising costs of living, coupled with the uncertain implications of tariff threats, each political party needs to turn towards economic policies that increase household income, such as basic income programs and poverty-reducing measures, alongside targeted support for Indigenous food systems. Addressing this crisis will not only improve health outcomes but also reduce strain on our already overburdened healthcare systems, making it a critical priority for government action.

#### What is Household Food Insecurity?

- In Canada, household food insecurity (HFI) is defined as inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints. It results from not having enough money to buy food and is a significant, serious and avoidable public health issue.
- HFI has profound impacts on the mental and physical health of individuals and is adding strain on our already overburdened healthcare systems.
- HFI disproportionately affects racialized and Indigenous households, due to systemic and structural inequities and settler colonialism.
- HFI cannot be solved through food charity, food waste diversion or community food programs because its cause is economical and needs to be addressed through economic intervention.
- As annual income increases, household food insecurity drops. The rates of severe food insecurity dropped to approximately 10% in households with an annual income between \$40,000 and \$50,000. Rates continue to drop to 4% in households with an annual income between \$70,000 and \$80,000.

#### Impact on Canadians

- There were 312,000 more food insecure households in 2022 compared to 2021 and half of these were households consisting of a couple with children under 18 years of age - the highest rate of



household food insecurity in the 17 years.

- Among the provinces, the Atlantic provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan have the highest rates of household food insecurity (between 20% and 23%), while Ontario has the largest number of individuals living in food insecure households at over 2.8 million.
- Individuals experiencing severe food insecurity are 1.4 times more likely to die prematurely than individuals who are food secure, and rates of chronic health conditions (e.g. diabetes, high blood pressure) generally increase as food security status worsens.

### **Impacts our Healthcare Systems**

- Of the estimated \$155 billion spent on acute healthcare between 2011 and 2017, \$6.2 billion is estimated to have been excess costs due to food insecurity.
- Adults from food-insecure households are more likely to delay or not fill a prescription, reduce medication dose from the one prescribed or skip doses altogether as a way to cope financially, which can lead to worse health outcomes and increased use of the healthcare system.
- Healthcare system usage and costs increase as food insecurity worsens. Evidence suggests that individuals experiencing food insecurity are more likely to visit the emergency department, be hospitalized in acute care, and stay in the hospital longer than individuals from food-secure households. Food insecurity can cause developmental impairment, chronic physical problems and serious mental health conditions

### **Potential Financial Policy Solutions**

1. Develop and implement a basic income so that all people in Canada can meet their basic needs, including purchasing enough safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food. (NDP / LPC)
2. Strengthen or establish new, existing tax credits, transfer payments to individuals and other economic policies that reduce poverty, including indexing these programs to inflation. (CPC / LPC / NDP)
3. Apply a health equity approach when developing economic policies to address the unfair and unjust burden of household food insecurity based on sociodemographic factors including race, education, household structure and home ownership status. (CPC / LPC / NDP)

### **Monitoring and Tracking**

1. Continued annual collection of data about household food insecurity across all regions. (CPC / LPC / NDP)
2. Ensure annual analysis of and public reporting on the state of food insecurity in Canada, including measures that collect race-based data, and identify food insecurity in Indigenous households. (CPC / LPC / NDP)
3. Regular evaluation of the impact of economic policies on household food insecurity in conjunction with strengthening policies to maximize effectiveness. (CPC / LPC / NDP)

### **Indigenous Focused Recommendations**

Indigenous households experience disproportionately higher rates of household food insecurity not only due to inadequate income but also because of the unique factors affecting the availability, accessibility and utilization of food.

As such, Dietitians of Canada recommends using an approach that respects and promotes the autonomy of First Nations, Inuit and Métis to:

- Support Indigenous food systems and the right of communities to define and have decision-making control over their food systems and build on the existing strengths of the communities. (CPC / LPC / NDP)
- Remove policy barriers that restrict or ban land-based food activities. (CPC / LPC / NDP)
- Implement policies and strategies that improve the availability, affordability and quality of foods at grocery stores. (CPC / LPC / NDP)

## Student Loan Forgiveness Key Messages

### Call to Action

The government needs to expand the list of professions eligible for student loan forgiveness to include dietitians.

### Problem

Dietitians are currently not included in the list of professions eligible for student loan forgiveness in rural and remote areas.

### What is Student Loan Forgiveness?

- Canada's student loan program aims to improve post-secondary accessibility by providing interest-free loans and increased grants, with some adjustments in Budget 2024 to address cost-of-living pressures and support workforce development.
- In 2024 and 2025, the federal government expanded student loan forgiveness for specific health professions working in rural and remote areas. This forgiveness program, previously for doctors and nurses, now includes a broader range of healthcare and social service professions, such as dentists, pharmacists, social workers, and physiotherapists, helping to address critical shortages in these fields. Dietitians are currently not on the list.
- Currently, the Canada Student Loan program offers grants of up to \$4,200 per year for full-time students from low-income backgrounds. Loans are interest-free, and graduates don't begin repaying them until earning at least \$44,388 annually. The government has also increased student rental support by updating housing costs in the financial need assessment formula, providing more accurate support for rent.

### Why Dietitians Should be Included

- Access to extended healthcare services in rural and remote communities remains a significant challenge for over 6 million Canadians. Northern, geographically isolated and small communities often face disproportionate challenges in accessing essential healthcare services, and worse health outcomes than those living in urban areas. Geographic factors coupled with healthcare workforce challenges further exacerbate these ongoing barriers.
- Registered dietitians are the principal providers of nutrition care. Dietitians play a critical role in healthcare by improving physical health and mental well-being and preventing chronic diseases through nutrition. They assess individual needs and provide expert dietary advice to manage and prevent conditions throughout life stages. By bridging nutrition and health, dietitians empower

individuals to make informed food choices, leading to improved health outcomes and quality of life.

- As Canada's rural and remote population expands in some regions, incentivizing dietitians to practice in these underserved communities would increase access to crucial preventative care services and alleviate healthcare system burdens, especially in areas where people do not have reliable access to primary care.
- Indigenous people are more likely to live in rural areas and experience household food insecurity and chronic conditions such as diabetes. Dietitians are trained to demonstrate awareness of Indigenous values related to health and wellness and understand the ongoing impact of colonization, residential schools, intergenerational trauma, and systemic racism on Indigenous peoples in Canada. Dietitians can engage with local communities, and understand traditional knowledge of Indigenous food systems to support Indigenous self-determination in food systems

## Engaging Your Candidates: Identify, Evaluate, Personalize

### Identifying Your Candidates

To determine the riding(s) of the home(s) where you wish to invite a candidate to visit, use this [link](#), and enter the postal code of the home. The riding will be identified for you.

Once you have determined the riding, you can identify the candidate by searching the riding on the [Elections Canada Website](#). Here, you will find a list of confirmed candidates for the upcoming federal election.

We encourage you to engage with candidates from the Conservative, Liberal, NDP, Bloc Québécois and Green parties. Use your discretion and local knowledge to prioritize your outreach strategy.

### Websites, candidates and electoral district associations (EDAs) of Canada's main political parties:



Liberal Party [website](#), [candidates](#) and [EDAs](#)



Conservative Party [website](#), [candidates](#) and [EDAs](#)



NDP Party [website](#), [candidates](#) and [EDAs](#)



Green Party [website](#), [candidates](#) and [EDAs](#)



## Methods of Communication

### If you have 1-2 hours...

- **Meetings:** While requiring the most resources and effort to schedule, prepare for, and follow up on, meetings are the most effective way for advocates to build strong relationships with potential candidates.
- **Visit their campaign office:** If candidates are available at their office, they may be willing to meet with you. If not, you can indicate your interest to the staff about scheduling a meeting. Be sure to leave your contact information and a document outlining your advocacy priorities with them.

### If you have 5-10 minutes...

- **Phone calls:** Ideal for concise and effective communication by quickly voicing concerns and inquiring about scheduling a meeting. Keep your script simple.
- **Email:** The most convenient option if you are requesting a meeting with a candidate or simply voicing your concerns. You can also attach and send a [formal letter](#) via email. We encourage you to personalize your email and include information on how an issue is affecting you or your community.
- **Letter writing:** An effective option, particularly if it's on behalf of many constituents, as it shows that time was spent by the advocate. Note that letters take a longer time to organize and may not receive a timely response. We recommend attaching a digital copy of your letter to an email.

### If you have 1-2 minutes...

- **Social Media:** An increasingly more efficient way to get in touch with candidates and fellow constituents and follow along with local events.

### If you bump into the candidate in public...

- If you encounter candidates in public during the campaign period, use your judgment and feel free to introduce yourself and express your interest in setting up a meeting with them to discuss your concerns. You can also pitch your advocacy interests to them, so they are aware of pressing concerns in the community.

## Via Email

Requesting a meeting with a candidate in their riding can be done by sending a formal letter via email. See [below](#) for tips on what to include in your email and how to [follow up](#). For a sample template, please [click here](#).


*We encourage you to clearly communicate DC's key messages but also customize the email to include local information on your home and community.*

## Via Social Media

Social media outreach is an increasingly effective strategy for local advocacy and getting the attention of candidates. Most candidates have a presence across multiple social media platforms and tend to be more active during an election campaign. Links to the candidates' social media platforms can be found on their profiles on their party websites. Additionally, most riding associations (known formally as electoral district associations or EDAs) also have social media accounts or party staff who may be contacted. Riding associations are the local party chapters that run the campaign for the candidate in that riding, and have their own elected executives, both types of social media accounts are likely to be managed by staff and should be considered as a secondary path to connect with your candidates.

A professional and polite tone must be maintained even when using more informal channels like a Facebook message. Approaching this as a confrontation likely will not result in productive dialogue, so maintaining a cordial tone makes for a more constructive exchange. This makes it easier for politicians to form positive bonds with an organization during advocacy meetings. Advocacy is a long term process, so an opponent today can be a fierce advocate in later years. Additionally, it is highly recommended that you include your email address or other forms of contact at the end of your message to facilitate continuing dialogue.

Once you are on the party [candidate webpage](#), simply search for your riding and click on the social media icon of your local candidate to contact them. Alternatively, you can click on the link to the electoral district associations (EDAs), where you can find the EDA for your riding and connect with campaign staff using the social media links or email addresses provided there.

Platform	Considerations
 <p>Facebook</p>	<p>Facebook is a widely used platform allowing users to connect, share content, and engage with friends, family, and businesses on their personalized 'timeline.'</p> <p>Many candidates are likely to respond to Facebook messages and post personal updates, as that is where they have the largest personal networks. Join neighbourhood Facebook groups or issue-focused groups in your community to pose questions and elevate issues - many candidates are active on them to increase their name recognition and connect with voters. To optimize engagement, do not link news articles to your posts, as they are no longer permitted on Meta sites.</p>



Instagram is a visually driven social media platform where users share photos and videos on their pages and 'stories.'

When sharing any stories or posts with a candidate, be sure to tag them so that they can repost your content  
To optimize engagement, do not link news articles to your posts, as they are no longer permitted on Meta sites.



LinkedIn is a professional networking platform that enables users to build and engage with their professional networks.

LinkedIn is an ideal platform to react to candidates' updates and share your experience from a professional standpoint. You can increase credibility by ensuring your page reflects your professional title related to healthcare and nutrition.



Candidates are unlikely to respond to meeting requests on X, but it is a good platform to share posts using DC hashtags, such as **#DietitiansofCanada**. Posts on X should be concise and could include general hashtags such as **#cdnpoli** and **#Election2025**

Also, note that X is a contentious platform as many people are leaving the platform and joining other emerging microblogging sites (aka Bluesky and Threads).



Bluesky is a microblogging social networking service modelled after and formerly owned by Twitter. Users can share text messages, images, and videos in short posts and its layout is reminiscent of Twitter before its acquisition by Elon Musk.

With Twitter becoming more politically and algorithmically polarised, a large number of users have moved to Bluesky. This platform might be especially useful for reaching out to your local Liberal or NDP candidates, especially if you're in an urban riding.

## Drafting a Message

When reaching out to a candidate, keep the message brief and follow the three key points:

- **Introduction:** The first line of your message should include your name and identifying yourself as a local constituent. If you are a dietitian, be sure to include your title and location of practice as well.
- **Key message:** Briefly articulate the purpose of your outreach. We recommend you also briefly describe how the issue you are advocating for has affected you personally as a constituent in the candidate's riding. See the [Key Messages](#) section for more details.
- **Contact information:** Always include an alternate contact at the end of your message, preferably a phone number or email address so that the candidate can get back to you conveniently.

## Following up on Your Message

Given that campaigns are brief, don't hesitate to follow up with a candidate - it is their responsibility to engage with you. Their lack of engagement is an indicator of their potential performance if elected. If you haven't received a response within a week, it is appropriate to follow up via email or a phone call to their campaign office.

## Best Practices for Engaging with Your Candidates

Scan through the social media pages of candidates and their parties, as well as local news channels, as you may hear about events, debates and rallies hosted for your candidates. These are opportunities for you to meet your candidate, introduce yourself, and inquire about scheduling a meeting. At the least, these moments can also make your candidate aware of the issues affecting their community, so take advantage of asking a question at the debate, talking to them before or after events, and engaging with their teams at rallies. Meetings can also be made effective if you convene a group of people with shared interests and experiences.

If you have scheduled a meeting with a candidate through your outreach, the following tips will guide you to prepare for and conduct successful meetings as well as appropriate follow-up.

### Before the meeting

Once you have scheduled a meeting with a candidate, it is important to:

- Provide any materials to the candidate's staff via email in advance of the meeting so they have time to review the materials.
- Review the [key messages](#) you plan to convey ahead of time to ensure you are prepared.
- Review information on the candidate – What party do they represent? Did they have any previous roles in the House of Commons? What is included in their bio?
- Print any materials you would like the candidate to take with them.
- Ensure you can start the meeting on time because a candidate's time is usually short, and you must be able to cover all your materials within the meeting time. Note that candidates may need to leave right when your scheduled meeting ends, as this is the nature of their work.
- The candidate is not the only person to keep in touch with. Senior staff that could become (or currently are) chiefs of staff or policy people for the candidate will be influential in longer term work (and sometimes more important).
- If your candidate would rather meet you in their campaign office, arrive at least 10 minutes early

to ensure the meeting can start on time.

## During the meeting

On the day of the meeting, it is important to keep in mind:

- Building a rapport with the candidate is key.
  - Share parts of your personal story that you are comfortable with sharing.
  - If you are a dietitian, share your story of how you began working in nutrition and why it is important to you. It is a powerful way to engage the candidate and personalize the message.
- Connect the key messages back to your story and community. Issues that matter to the candidate's voters are the ones that will matter most to the candidate.
- Be clear with what you are asking the candidate to do. If there is one key message/ask that sticks out, focus on it.
- Most candidates do not have technical backgrounds and may need background information on the topic you are speaking to them about. Avoid technical jargon or acronyms and watch for any signals that the candidate may not understand something you are saying.
- Not all candidates will be supportive of each key message. Keep the conversation thoughtful and calm.
- Always leave with a thank you and a commitment to follow up with any relevant information.
- Feel free to ask the candidate what platform, email address, or phone number they would prefer for continued communication.
- Ask to take a photo and if it can be shared on social media at the end of the meeting.

## Following the meeting

Following the meeting, it is important to:

- Email a short thank you note to the candidate for their time. Let them know you appreciated the discussion and that you look forward to engaging with them in the future.
- If the candidate made a commitment to do something, follow up if they don't respond.
- Capture your impressions of the meeting and any concerns or questions the candidate raised as soon as possible.
- Let the staff at DC know how your meeting went! Feedback is an important tool for DC to identify its allies, adjust its messaging, and plan the next steps effectively.
  - Please submit your feedback to [contactus@dietitians.ca](mailto:contactus@dietitians.ca).

## Other Local Advocacy Tactics

- Write an op-ed/letter to the editor for your local newspaper
  - You can begin by finding your local community newspaper [here](#).
  - On the website of your local newspaper, there will usually be an 'Opinion' or 'Letters to the Editor' section. Click on that tab and explore the page until you find the option to submit your letter or send in your opinion piece.
  - If the aforementioned tabs are not available, you can always click on the 'Contact Us' tab or scroll to the bottom of the web page to find the email address of the editor or the



newspaper's general contact email to send in your op-ed. You can also use this contact to follow up on an op-ed or letter to the editor you submitted but have yet to hear back about.

- Organize an event and offer a candidate the opportunity to meet community members
  - During an election, candidates are looking for all kinds of ways to connect with voters, so facilitating such an opportunity gives you the chance to directly engage with candidates on your issues.
  - For example, if you live in Calgary, you may consider organising a pancake breakfast for your neighbourhood during the Stampede and inviting local candidates as guests. Such an event can be organised with the help of your neighbours and advertised through local Facebook groups and distributing campaign materials.
  - During an event, you have the opportunity to directly ask your candidates about your concerns and gently push for some kind of commitment. Be sure to communicate the purpose of the event to your candidates in advance via their emails or their campaign offices.
- Attend a debate, and ask a question
  - Information about upcoming debates is often advertised in advance in local media as well as the social media platforms of your candidates. Keep an eye out for any announcements and sign up to attend.
  - In most cases, the audience can ask questions at the debate or submit them in advance. Be sure that your question is succinct with a clear ask that the candidate answering will hopefully be able to commit to.
- Write a post on social media platforms calling for action and tagging your local candidates. Make sure to share it in local neighbourhood Facebook groups!
  - In many smaller communities, it is increasingly rare to find functioning local media outlets. In other cases, the local media is too overwhelmed with more pressing matters and may not respond to your requests to publish an op-ed. This is when connecting with your community online is most effective.
  - You can publish your thoughts as a public post on your Facebook page or join local groups (e.g. 'Burlington Moms' or 'Cochrane Updates') and ask permission from the group admins to post there. Tagging your local candidates gives them a chance to respond in a public manner.
  - As always, keep the post polite and succinct, and avoid any partisan politics to ensure that the users reading the post engage with the actual message instead of igniting a distracting debate in the comment section.
- Participants in the efforts of local coalitions and groups advocating for health, food insecurity and household income issues.
- Talk with your neighbours
- Volunteering for candidates you resonate with can bolster your advocacy efforts. You can reach out to the campaign office to inquire about volunteering, including by door-knocking, making phone calls and soliciting donations.
- Donating directly to a candidate's campaign.

## Appendix A: Letter Template

[Click here](#) to download the letter template that you can customize and send to candidates. If you're looking for inspiration on what policies to advocate for, visit [DC's webiste](#) to learn more about the priority issues that DC is raising during this federal election.

## Appendix B: Additional Political Information

### Division of Responsibility

Federal Responsibility	Provincial / Territorial Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Setting and administering national principles for the system under the <i>Canada Health Act</i></li> <li>● Financial support to the provinces and territories</li> <li>● Funding and/or delivery of primary and supplementary services to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ First Nations people living on reserves</li> <li>○ Inuit</li> <li>○ Serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces</li> <li>○ Eligible veterans</li> <li>○ Inmates in federal penitentiaries</li> <li>○ Some groups of refugee claimants.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Health protection and regulation (e.g., regulation of pharmaceuticals, food and medical devices)</li> <li>● Consumer safety</li> <li>● Disease surveillance and prevention</li> <li>● Support for health promotion and health research</li> <li>● Health-related tax measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Administer and deliver most of Canada's healthcare services, with all provincial and territorial health insurance plans expected to meet national principles set out under the <i>Canada Health Act</i></li> <li>● Administration of health insurance plans</li> <li>● Planning and funding of care in hospitals and other health facilities</li> <li>● Services provided by doctors and other health professionals</li> <li>● Planning and implementation of health promotion and public health initiatives</li> <li>● Negotiation of fee schedules with health professionals</li> </ul>

## Appendix C: Glossary

**Canada Health Act:** Canada's federal legislation for publicly funded healthcare insurance. The Act sets out the primary objective of Canadian healthcare policy; to protect, promote and restore the physical and mental well-being of residents of Canada and to facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers.

**Candidate:** Someone running to be a member of Parliament in the federal election.

**Dissolution of Parliament:** Dissolution terminates a Parliament, ending all business in the Senate and in the House of Commons, and is followed by a general election.

**Election Cycle:** There are three phases of an election cycle: pre-election, election and post-election.

**Pre-Election Phase:** This phase involves the preparation and planning of the election and begins with the dissolution of Parliament. During the pre-election phase, Elections Canada recruits and trains election workers, prepares and conducts a voter information campaign and identifies polling locations. During this phase, political parties are finalizing their list of candidates for each of the electoral districts.

**Election Phase:** This phase can last anywhere from 37 to 51 days, begins on the date the writs are issued and ends on election day. During this time, political parties and candidates are promoting their party's platform, going door-to-door to meet with voters and taking part in debates with candidates of other parties. Voting day must fall on a Monday.

**Post-Election Phase:** After the election, Elections Canada validates the results, produces a series of reports, and ensures compliance with and enforcement of the *Canada Elections Act*.

**Electoral Districts / Constituencies / Ridings:** Canada is divided into 338 electoral districts, also known as constituencies or ridings, and each is entitled to one seat in the House of Commons.

**EDA:** Electoral District Associations (EDAs), also known as riding associations, are the local branches of political parties that run the campaign within that specific riding. They are the grassroots of political parties.

**Members of Parliament (MPs):** are elected to represent different geographic areas across the country, called constituencies or ridings. MPs voice concerns in the House of Commons on behalf of individuals living in these areas.

**Official Opposition:** In our parliamentary system, the official opposition is the largest party that is not in government. Currently, the Liberals are the governing party, so the Conservatives are the official opposition since they are the next biggest formation in parliament. The official opposition is charged with keeping the government of the day in check, and they will form a shadow cabinet that will scrutinise government activities and question government ministers in the House of Commons.

**Writ:** A formal written order instructing the returning officer in each electoral district to hold an election to elect a member of Parliament. The writ:

- specifies the day by which candidates must be nominated
- sets a polling date; and
- sets a date by which the writ, with the name of the successful candidate noted on the back, is to be returned to the Chief Electoral Officer.