

RNAO Comparison of Ontario Liberal Party Platform

The following table compares the published platform of the Ontario Liberal party with RNAO's key expectations as set out in RNAO's blueprint: "***Visionary Leadership: Charting a course for the health system and nursing in Ontario***" (link: <http://rnao.ca/vision>). Platform commitments in the table are based on the policies and costing available from the party platform documents only. Only those commitments that address components of RNAO's Vision are included.

There is more detailed information on the Liberal party position. On May 9, 2014, RNAO sent 13 questions on health and nursing policy to the four Ontario political party leaders. The Liberal party response is found at: <http://rnao.ca/policy/political-action/provincial-election-2014-rnao-resources>.

A. Invest in Social Determinants of Health	
<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
Immediately increase minimum wage to \$14/hour and index to inflation	"We are increasing the minimum wage to \$11 an hour on June 1, 2014, and we will index it to inflation after that." (1d p.5)
Improve access to affordable housing	"...increase annual funding for the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative by \$42 million in our first year, bringing total funding to \$294 million. We will also recommit to the Investment in Affordable Housing program for a five-year, \$400 million investment." (1d p. 4,5)
Increase social assistance rates to reflect cost of living	"Building on the down payment in the 2013 Budget, we will increase Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates for people with disabilities by one per cent in 2014-15. We will also increase the benefit for single Ontario Works clients without children, giving them a total benefit increase of \$30 per month in 2014, for a total increase over two years of \$50." (1d p.5)
Work with federal government to expand EI eligibility and benefits	
Build new affordable, licensed, not-for-profit child care spaces	"... complete the roll-out of Full-Day Kindergarten, which saves a family up to \$6,500 in child care costs per child per year." (1d p.3)

A. Invest in Social Determinants of Health

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
	<p>"We will re-introduce the Child Care Modernization Act, our comprehensive legislation to modernize the delivery of child care, including improved safety, higher quality, and greater accessibility...We will support the Child Care Modernization Act by investing to protect licensed child care spaces and subsidies and improve the quality of care." (1e p.3).</p> <p>"We call on all federal parties to adopt a national child care program in their 2015 election platforms and will work with a willing federal partner to increase access to and the quality of licensed childcare as core elements of such a program." (1e p.3).</p>
<p>Respect the right of First Nation, Inuit and Métis to self-determination and ensure equitable access to resources, jobs, health care, clean water, good schools, and safe housing</p>	<p>"...Promote Aboriginal education and business capacity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing educational outcomes for Aboriginal students. - Investing \$25 million over three years to create the Aboriginal Economic Development Fund to promote aboriginal business. - Increasing the amount available for loan guarantees for renewable energy projects to \$650 million. This will encourage the development of projects that will pay dividends into the future and contribute to sustainable and clean energy generation in the province. - Investing \$2.5 million over three years in an Urban Aboriginal Action Plan to help Aboriginal people in our cities find economic opportunities and access social services." (1a p.4)
<p>Other social determinants of health</p>	<p>"Within our first 60 days in office, we will release our second five-year Poverty Reduction Strategy, building on our first strategy which brought 47,000 children out of poverty and prevented countless others from falling into it." (1d p.4)</p> <p>"In July 2014, we will increase the Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) to a maximum of \$1,310 per child, benefitting 500,000 families. We will then index the rate and the eligible income threshold to inflation. The OCB pays almost \$1 billion to more than one million children." (1d p.4)</p> <p>There is an entire Jobs and Investment Plan for Ontario section (1a)</p> <p>There is an entire Ontario Retirement Pension Plan section (1b)</p>

B. Invest in Environmental Determinants of Health

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
<p>Toxics: ambitious toxics reduction targets.</p> <p>Ensure right to know about toxics in environment, homes, workplaces and consumer products.</p>	<p>"Work with business and industry to find ways to provide Ontarians with better information about chemicals linked with cancer, and identify ways to support industry to ensure children's products on Ontario shelves are as safe as products in the US and European Union." (1f p. 4).</p>
<p>Dedicated fund from new revenue sources – without selling public assets – for transit and active transportation.</p> <p>Kick-start fund for transit improvements.</p>	<p>"Our Moving Ontario Forward plan will make nearly \$29 billion available over the next decade for investments in transit and transportation infrastructure projects across the province. We will create two dedicated funds: one for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), with up to \$15 billion available for investment in transit; and one for the rest of the province with nearly \$14 billion available for investment in roads, bridges, transit and other critical infrastructure." (1c p.3)</p> <p>"Work with Metrolinx and municipalities on how to best prioritize transit investments." (1c p.3).</p> <p>Transit expansion includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of GO service (p. 5) - Investing in High-Speed Rail (p.6) - LRT and subway expansion (p.5) - Ontario Northland Transportation Commission Bus and rail refurbishment infrastructure (p.6) <p>"We will support more and safer cycling by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementing the province's first-ever cycling strategy, CycleOn, through an investment of \$25 million over three years. - Providing, for the first time, funding to municipalities to access dedicated cycling infrastructure funding, allowing up to 400 new kilometres of bike lanes to be added province-wide over three years. - Designating and building 135 km of paved shoulders on provincial roads and highways over the next three years. - Introducing a law to mandate that vehicles give one metre of space to cyclists they are passing." (1g p.3) <p>"We have introduced award-winning land use planning legislation that encourages smart growth and protects green spaces for future generations. We know that communities and citizens need</p>

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<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
	<p>more support to determine how their neighbourhoods grow. We will therefore introduce legislation to...ensure new residential development projects provide more revenue for transit..." (1g p.3)</p> <p>"...support the expansion of Ontario's trail network by removing barriers to the creation of new trails on private and public lands, including measures to reduce landowner liability." (1g p.4)</p>
<p>Improve air quality via minimization of energy footprint through use reduction, conservation, efficiency and greater use of renewables</p>	<p>"We will continue to invest in clean, green energy, with 20,000 MW of renewable energy online by 2015, including hydro-electric, wind, solar, and bioenergy sources." (1c p.9)</p> <p>"...help consumers who want to invest in energy-saving technologies by allowing them to stretch the cost of these investments over a number of years." (1d p.3)</p> <p>"...give energy ratepayers more tools to lower their bills, depending on the time of day they use electricity." (1g p.5)</p> <p>"We will meet our 2014 and 2020 Greenhouse Gas Emission targets through a variety of measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Better transit: Our 10-year, \$29 billion transportation and transit build-out will relieve gridlock so cars aren't stuck in traffic, unnecessarily emitting greenhouse gases (GHGs) -Better buildings: Our conservation-first agenda will provide for homeowners and building owners to reduce their energy needs, including natural gas. We will also make sure new buildings are as energy efficient as possible. -Closing the gap: In 2015, we will review progress toward meeting our 2020 target and develop a clear plan to get there. -Cleaner fuels: We are reducing greenhouse gas emissions from trucks, trains and other diesel-powered vehicles with new rules for clean bio-diesel that are the toughest in Canada. -More coal reductions: New alternative fuels rules will help Ontario's big, energy-intensive industries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. These industries are the largest burners of GHG-heavy coal in Ontario, now that the Province has shut down the last coal-fired power plant. Closing the power plants was the largest climate change action ever taken in North America." (1g p.5) <p>"...work with municipalites and our other partners to promote urban forestry and plant one million trees, as part of our</p>

B. Invest in Environmental Determinants of Health

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
	commitment to plant 50 million trees province-wide." (1g p.5)
Cancel plans for construction of new nuclear plants	"We will invest in the refurbishment of 10 nuclear units at Darlington and Bruce over 16 years..." (1c p.9)

C. Strengthening our Publicly Funded, Not-for-Profit Health System

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
Speak out for a National Health Accord	"...advocate for a fair share for Ontario from the federal government, which unilaterally cut \$641 million from Ontario in 2013-14, so that Ontario can provide the health care services our people need." (1f p.2)
Expand Medicare to also include home care, pharmacare and dental care for low income people.	"...continue to push the federal government to come to the table so that we can provide affordable access to medication for all Ontarians, building on the success of the Ontario Drug Benefit and other programs." (1f p.4) "... we will continue to advocate for a renewed national role in funding health care needs, such as a national pharmacare program." (1f p.2) "...introduce health benefits for children living in low-income families, starting with prescription drugs, vision care, mental health services and assistive devices." (1d p.5) "... expand the Healthy Smiles program to cover dental care for an additional 70,000 children, bringing the total number of children covered to 460,000." (1d p.5)
Enforce the letter and spirit of the Canada Health Act and strengthen publicly-funded, not-for-profit health care	
Reject privatization of payment and commercialization of delivery, including new P3 hospitals and medical tourism.	

C. Strengthening our Publicly Funded, Not-for-Profit Health System

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
Transition all 3,500 case managers and care coordinators from CCACs into primary care by 2015 -- maintaining their level of remuneration -- to assume the system navigation and care coordination of persons with complex care needs	
Expand by 2016 the role of the LHINs to assume accountability for planning and funding all sectors. Phase out CCACs by 2016	"We will review Local Health Integration Networks, Community Care Access Centres, and Public Health Units to ensure that we are using financial, health, and human resources in the most effective way." (1f p.7)
Strengthen in the next four years interprofessional primary care, by funding substantive expansion of NPLCs, CHCs, AHCs and FHTs -- to achieve universal access to integrated interprofessional primary care by 2020	<p>"We will guarantee that every Ontarian has access to a primary care provider. We will work with our partners to expand access to primary care, and develop targeted approaches for northern, rural and fast-growing communities." (1f p.3).</p> <p>"Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne is promising access to 24/7 primary health care by 2018 if the Liberals are re-elected... The Liberals... say their guarantee that everyone will be able to reach a family doctor or nurse practitioner at any time would cost less than \$20 million" (Canadian Press)ⁱ</p> <p>"We will invest \$300 million in new money over the next 10 years in community health infrastructure. Projects include: New and expanded facilities for Community Health Centres, Family Health Teams, Nurse Practitioner-led Clinics, and other facilities." (1c p.7)</p>
Focus on well-researched and demonstrated policies and evidence-based clinical practices to optimize the health of people, families, communities, and our health system.	
Ensure models of nursing care reflect the best evidence and provide	

C. Strengthening our Publicly Funded, Not-for-Profit Health System

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
continuity of care and continuity of caregiver from the most appropriate provider.	
Other health policy directions	<p>"our wait times strategy will focus on referrals to specialists. By better coordinating care and improving access to the right providers, in the right place, at the right time, we will continue to bring down wait times in key areas of health services." (1f p.3)</p> <p>"increase funding by \$220 million over three years and renew our commitment to Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy with investments in community supports, early intervention and help for families and individuals as they transition through the system... As part of our Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, we will commit to investing in additional supportive housing through rent supplements and supportive services." (1f p.3)</p> <p>" invest more than \$750 million in home and community care over three years, including more than \$270 million in the first year, to provide better care and bring down wait times." (1f p.6)</p> <p>"We will develop a strategy to help more patients receive their end-of-life care at home. As an immediate step, we will commit to funding 20 more hospices, almost doubling the number of people who will have access to quality end-of-life care, including in rural areas. That translates into 75,000 additional days available to allow people the opportunity to spend their final days in a home-like setting, with the right care. We will also work at the national level to ensure that Canada has a national dialogue on dying with dignity." (1f p.6)</p> <p>Develop a community wellness and culture of health strategy, including Community Hubs to develop wellness strategies, promotion of active living, and renewing efforts to build a Smoke-Free Ontario (including raising tobacco taxes \$3.25/carton). (1f p.4)</p>

D. Ensuring Adequate Access to Nursing Services

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
Focus attention on RN retention and recruitment to narrow the RN access gap -- of about 17,600 RN positions -- between Ontario and the rest of Canada	
Minimum daily standards of care in LTC of 0.8 hours of RN care, 1 hour of RPN care and 2.2 hours of PSW care	
Reach 70% Full Time Employment for all nurses in Ontario by 2016	
Fund a minimum of 250 additional nurse practitioner (NP) positions annually to improve access to health services across Ontario.	
Support Clinical Nurse Specialists	
Invest in an additional 25 Registered Nurse First Assists (RNFAs) per year and 10 additional NP Anesthesia positions to strengthen timely access to surgical procedures and quality care across Ontario	

E. Building a Nursing Career in Ontario

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
Ensure equitable compensation across sectors so that RNs and NPs receive fair wages across practice settings.	
Maximize and expand the role of RNs, including new and emerging roles.	"We will build on our expansion of scopes of practice, to ensure that nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals can make their full contribution to the health care system. By allowing providers to use a greater skill set, we will be able to ensure that Ontarians can get the care they need, closer to home." (1f p.4)
Create incentives to retain and recruit nursing faculty in Ontario	

F. Embracing Our Democracy, Strengthening Our Public Services

<u>RNAO Position</u>	<u>LIBERAL PLATFORM COMMITMENTS</u>
Ensure fiscal capacity to deliver essential services by strengthening our progressive tax system and expand revenue sources that encourage environmental and social responsibility	<p>"We will balance our budget by 2017-18, but we will not sacrifice economic growth or public services to do so.." (1h p.5)</p> <p>"Raise income taxes on the top two per cent of income tax filers, by lowering the limit on the top 13.16 per cent tax rate to those with a taxable income of \$220,000 or more. We will create a new tax bracket of 12.16 per cent for those with a taxable income between \$150,000 and \$220,000 per year... At a time when income inequality is increasing and the middle class is under stress, we are asking the top two per cent of Ontario earners to pay a bit more, to ensure the prosperity of the province." (1h p.5,6)</p> <p>"Increase the tax rate on aviation fuel, which is much lower than the rate for gasoline and diesel, by one cent per litre a year for four years, and provide exemptions for remote and northern areas." (1h p.6)</p>
Reject tax cuts for corporations	<p>"Remove the small business tax deduction currently used by large businesses" (1h p.6)</p> <p>"Maintain competitive corporate tax rates, and tax credits that are working well..." (1h p.6)</p>
Reject fire sale of publicly owned Crown Corporations and assets to fund government programs.	<p>"...explore opportunities to sell properties, such as the LCBO and Ontario Power Generation headquarters and the Seaton lands in Durham region, providing a return to the province." (1h p.6)</p>
Work with the federal government to research the scope of tax evasion losses, and then put in resources to recover the lost revenues	<p>"...aggressively pursue tax cheats and evaders, and call on the federal government to release a national strategy to combat the underground economy." (1h p.7)</p>

