



Green Party of Ontario
PO Box 1132 Station F
Toronto, ON M4Y 2T8
(416) 977-7476/ 1 (888) 647-3366
Fax: (416) 977-5476
admin@gpo.ca

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
158 Pearl St.
Toronto, ON M5H 1L3

Dear Kayla;

Thank you for providing this opportunity to provide information about the Green Party platform to your members.

You can also find more information online at www.itstimeforgreen.ca

Regards,

Becky Smit
Campaign Manager,
Green Party of Ontario

QUESTION 1: Can we count on your party's support to bring Ontario's RN to population ratio in line with the rest of the country by adopting RNAO's call to increase Ontario's RN workforce by an additional 9000 RN FTEs by 2015?

Yes, we will work with the RNAO and other stakeholders to bring our RN population in line with the rest of the country. Our platform prioritizes investments in front line community care, nurse practitioner led clinics and family health teams. We will amend profession-specific acts of regulated health care professions to allow members of those professions to practise to the full extent of their demonstrated competencies as verified by their respective regulatory bodies.

QUESTION 2: Can we count on your party's support to raise the full-time share of RN employment to 67 per cent in this coming year and to reach 70 per cent full-time employment in all sectors for registered nurses (RNs) and registered practical nurses (RPNs) by 2015?

Yes, the Green Party will work with nurses and other health care professionals to ensure that all health care workers have adequate training and full time employment. We will ensure that we have a sustainable health care system that provides quality care now and in the future by focusing on preventing illness and promoting health. Nurses play an essential role in promoting health and better managing illness in the community.

3. QUESTION: Will your party continue the guarantee full-time jobs for new nursing graduates, and, importantly, work with employers to ensure continuation of full-time employment for these new grads after the six months of government funding ends.

Yes, the Green Party supports the guarantee of full-time jobs for new nursing graduates and will continue to work with employers to ensure that positions are retained after government funding ends.

4. QUESTION: Can we count on your party's support to establish 50 additional nurse practitioner-led clinics by 2015 (in addition to the 26 we will already have by 2012) in order to extend access to primary care in all communities?

Yes, the Green Party will establish a new goal of providing 50% of Ontarians with access to a community or family care team by 2016, rising to 90% by 2020.

We will invest an additional \$1.6 billion over four years in Family Health Teams, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, Nurse Practitioner led clinics and Community Care Centres, and clinics and practices that team doctors with nurses, dieticians, psychologists, counsellors, midwives, physiotherapists and others.

Our vision for primary health care reform is to invest in community-based interdisciplinary clinics with a wide choice of practitioners operating at their full scope of practice, providing patient-centred care.

5. QUESTION: Will your party support the immediate elimination of the competitive bidding model in favour of publicly-funded, not-for-profit alternatives for allocating funding for home care and health service providers?

Yes. Home care is a core fundamental piece of sustainable health care. A properly functioning home care system is an essential part of a continuum of care, keeping people out of expensive hospital beds and allowing people to be discharged from hospitals faster without compromising their well-being.

We will ensure that funding actually is implemented. For example, Ontario announced in 2008 a \$1.1 billion Aging At Home Strategy, but after two years, only \$45 million went to home care services.

The Green Party will invest an additional \$2 billion over 4 years in better, more affordable care for seniors. These investments will focus on providing an appropriate continuum of care for seniors, including increased investment in home care, transitional care, assisted living, affordable housing and long term care services, and provide additional tax credits for family members staying home to care for seniors.

Under the current system of managed competition, Community Care Access Centres are forced to pay private agencies to provide the health care services they require, rather than employing the health care professionals themselves. The procurement process is flawed, prioritizing price over value with a bias towards large agencies.

Ultimately, due to our current approach, Ontarians - especially seniors - are being left behind. Forcing seniors to beg for care is not acceptable. It's time for a sustainable health care plan that recognizes the benefits of an accessible and quality home care system as an essential part of a continuum of care that respects our seniors.

6. QUESTION: Will your party support increasing the minimum wage by 75 cents per hour each year over the course of the next mandate, so that people working full-time can rise above the poverty line? This means the minimum wage would increase to \$11 per hour in 2011, \$11.75 in 2012, \$12.50 in 2013, and \$13.25 in 2014.

The Green Party has supported recent increases in the minimum wage. Moving forward, we support efforts to maximize take home pay for low income workers. The Green Party's Green Tax Cut plan seeks to lower personal income taxes by immediately increasing the personal tax exemption by \$2000. This approach, while reducing taxes for all income earners, focuses the benefits on workers with lower incomes. The Green Party believes that all workers should have jobs that provide adequate income to meet basic needs and will explore the best system for providing liveable take home wages.

7. QUESTION: Will your party commit to closing the remaining coal-fired generators by 2012, while keeping them on standby reserve to be operated only in event of an emergency?

The Green Party is committed to completely phasing out coal generated electricity by 2014, immediately placing our coal plants on stand-by reserve for emergency use only and halting all exports of coal generated electricity to improve air quality. Coal is the most polluting form of power generation, and we believe it has no place in Ontario's energy supply mix.

8. QUESTION: Will your party commit to cancelling plans for the construction of expensive and risky new nuclear plants?

The Green Party opposes the government's current plans for new nuclear reactors in Ontario.

Given the large time and cost overruns associated with every nuclear power project to-date in Ontario, it is irresponsible to waste money on new nuclear when we are still paying for the massive cost overruns from our last round of nuclear projects.

Building new nuclear generation capacity would lock Ontario into an unaffordable energy future. Nuclear power is an inflexible supplier of base load power requiring both billions in capital investment and a long time to deploy. And we still have no solution or cost estimate for the storage and disposal of nuclear waste.

Instead of committing to expensive new nuclear, the Green Party has a responsible and realistic long term energy plan that prioritizes energy efficiency and conservation, invests in affordable technology such as combined heat and power, and expands generation targets for safe, clean renewable energy, especially hydroelectricity.

9. QUESTION: Will your party adopt aggressive targets to greatly enhance conservation and improve energy efficiency and support safe, green sources of energy such as wind, water, solar, biomass, biogas and combined heat and power?

The world is on the verge of a new energy era. Renewables, including solar, wind, biomass, hydro and biogas, are an essential part of Ontario's energy future. The Green Party believes all Ontarians should have the opportunity to become renewable energy producers, earning income by generating green power for the grid.

The Green Party's Energy Plan prioritizes energy efficiency and conservation as the most affordable approach to meeting our energy needs. For less than half the cost of replacing just one nuclear power plant, we could retrofit 1.6 million homes for energy efficiency and reduce the need for the same amount of energy the plant would produce. Doing so would also create 90 times more jobs than replacing the power plant.

The Green Party will create a comprehensive Green Building Program that includes \$1.6 billion over four years in refundable tax credits for home owners, tenants and businesses to invest in energy efficiency and building retrofits. This program will help individuals and businesses save money on energy bills and save the province money by reducing the need for new supply, while also stimulating local job creation.

As part of a safe, affordable supply mix, the Green Party supports increasing generation targets for Combined Heat and Power (CHP). Combined Heat and Power provides an affordable and flexible source of base load power; CHP plants can have an overall energy efficiency of 80-90% - better than the 33% of a nuclear reactor.

The Green Party's energy plan will expand generation targets for renewable energy, especially hydroelectricity, as a clean, reliable and less expensive alternative to new nuclear power. We will immediately negotiate agreements to increase hydro imports from Quebec and explore completing grid connections to Manitoba.

We will also increase hydroelectricity capacity in Ontario, especially micro-hydro projects, in partnership with communities. This, combined with the government's existing generation targets for other renewable energy sources--solar, wind, biomass, biogas--while using existing nuclear capacity to end of life, could meet Ontario's electricity needs without investing in expensive new nuclear facilities.

The Green Party believes Ontario needs a long-term sustainable energy plan that will provide a reliable source of affordable energy with the flexibility to incorporate new technologies. By

deploying new generation only when needed, Ontario will be in a position to utilize new technologies. The Green Party has an energy plan with twenty-first century solutions to ensure that our power supply is safe, reliable and affordable.

For more information on the Green Party plan for Ontario, please find our platform online at www.itstimeforgreen.ca