



Dr. Cynthia Slade, President  
Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association  
164 MacDonald Dr.  
St. John's, NL  
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September 28, 2025

Dear Dr. Slade,

Thank you for sending along your questionnaire on behalf of your members. As I am sure you are aware, the NDP is the party of public healthcare, and we are constantly looking for ways to support and strengthen the system. But we cannot do that without the support of physicians and other healthcare professionals, and we strive to make sure that their needs and aspirations are addressed. Please accept the following as our position on the key questions you raise.

#### Protecting the Janeway Children's Health and Rehabilitation Centre

I have been vocal in my opposition to moving the obstetrics and gynaecology unit from the Health Sciences to the Janeway. I was especially upset to hear that the pediatricians that would be affected by the decision were not consulted in any meaningful way by the Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services (NLHS). That is not how we entice specialists to come practice in our province. It was a top-down decision that showed a lack of basic respect for the professionals that keep our public system afloat.

In addition, the NL NDP is concerned that moving obstetrics and gynaecology to the Janeway would once again jeopardize the accreditation of the pediatric program at the Medical School. Rather than address the root causes of a lack of beds at the Health Sciences, the government sought to solve the problem on the backs of children and health professionals. Our approach would be to reduce the number of patients in alternate levels of care by attracting more people to the home care profession with higher wages, thereby keeping more seniors in their homes living independently. We would also fund the social determinants of health with improved housing, an increase to the Seniors' Benefit, reduced HST on essentials, and other initiatives. We are certain that these measures would reduce the number of hospitalizations and generally ease the patient load in our healthcare system. The savings generated would be re-invested into our public system.

#### Upholding national compensation standards to attract and retain physicians

The NL NDP recognizes that the provincial government is operating in a very competitive market to attract and retain healthcare professionals of all types. This means that we must remain attentive to all the latest trends on that front, especially in physician compensation. An NL NDP

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government will commit to working collaboratively with the NLMA to monitor developments and keep up with the times. We want to ensure that our province becomes a more attractive place for physicians to set up practice, as we recognize that we cannot do so without the support and advice of the NLMA. We will uphold the current physician services contract and maintain it as our benchmark.

#### Improving the work environment within NL Health Services

I am dismayed by the number of times I hear health professionals of all stripes say that they feel unheard by their employer, or that the government just “isn’t listening” when they come forward with cost-effective solutions to fix our broken healthcare system. This is especially concerning since it makes the NLHS an undesirable place to work and risks undermining every effort the current government has made to attract new recruits and retain the health professionals we currently have.

An NL NDP government will approach the situation differently. As the party of worker rights, we would start by showing our health professionals the respect they deserve for their training, years of expertise, and devotion to service. A better work environment begins with a better employer, one that is transparent and responsive. As part of the NL Cares plan for healthcare, we pledge to give frontline healthcare workers, including physicians, a seat at the decision-making tables. We will create the necessary decision-making structures within the NLHS that encourage management to work collaboratively and consult regularly with frontline employees to improve work environment, quality of life, and patient care. We believe that together, we can get a better deal for physicians and the patients they care for.

#### Overhead funding support for all physicians who provide MCP-insured services in the community

The NL NDP believes in treating health professionals equitably for the services they deliver. While the Liberal government has pledged to cover overhead expenses for nurse practitioners as part of their pilot program, physicians were left out, despite the frequent calls by the NLMA for support in this respect. An NL NDP government will study the issue closely and determine a path forward in partnership with the NLMA and physicians across the province.

#### Commit to universal access to family physicians

We commit to working towards achieving universal access to family physicians, nurses, and a whole host of other allied health professionals that support the great work of our doctors. The NL NDP has a number of proposals that will help us attain that key goal, such as:

- Creating 20 new seats at the Medical School;
- Implementing support and mentorship systems for new health profession graduates;
- Restoring the full-time recruiter position in the Medical School for physicians, and hiring two new ones specifically devoted to nursing schools;



- Merging the new recruiters and those in the regions of NLHS into a single Office for Medical Professional Recruitment, so that they avoid duplicating effort and work together on common goals while sharing expertise and resources;
- Starting recruitment initiatives early, by building relationships with medical and nursing students in their first year;
- Making it a priority to recruit allied health professionals and others to reduce workloads; and
- Reducing paperwork for physicians by banning employers from requiring a note from the doctor for short-term illnesses.

Once again, I thank you for your interest in the NL NDP and our plan to get a better deal for ordinary Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. I also encourage you to have a look at our fully-costed platform, which we plan to release this Friday. I believe that it contains many other policies than those mentioned above that would appeal to you and your members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Dinn".

Jim Dinn  
Leader, NL NDP, Candidate for St. John's Centre