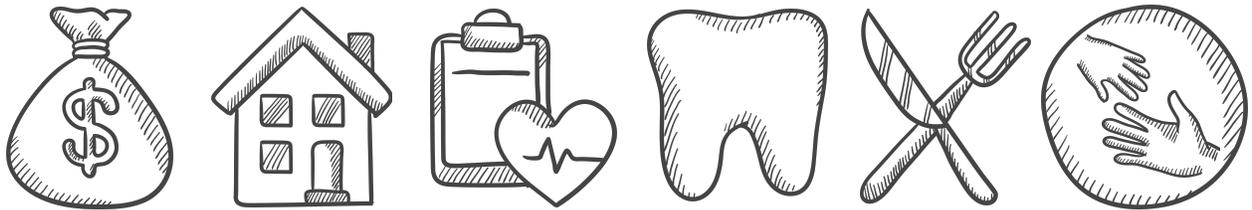


Wellington-Halton Hills Candidate Q & A

Federal Election 2021





QUESTION 1:

Will you and your party commit to the elimination of poverty in Canada? If yes, what actions will your party take to strengthen Canada's poverty reduction strategy?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

We can tackle poverty not only by making things like home ownership more affordable, but by boosting support to those at risk. One example is child care, which is barely affordable to many. \$10/day child care will greatly reduce that burden, and help children avoid the poverty cycle. Senior poverty is also a problem, and we plan to boost Old Age Security by 10% next year for seniors 75+, and increase the GIS by \$500 (\$750 for couples) at age 65. For low-income workers who are at or below the poverty line, we will expand the Canada Workers Benefit.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

We need meaningful action to build a Canada without poverty, where all Canadians can count on quality public services and community supports to help them lead dignified lives. A core component of our approach is fully implementing the right to housing and working towards the goal of ending homelessness in Canada within a decade. We will support the creation of more social housing and other affordable options. Poor health and poverty are linked and a national Pharmacare program will mean that all Canadians can access the prescription medicine they need regardless of their income.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

Yes. Ending systemic poverty means rethinking the system. Canada is among the richest countries in the world. We have the resources and talent to create a truly just society. Canada's social safety net was developed almost 50 years ago. There have been no bold innovations since the government of Lester B. Pearson. It is time for the next major innovations – pharmacare and Guaranteed Livable Income. We can eliminate poverty and create a healthier, stronger Canada.

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QUESTION 2:

What will you and your party do to ensure decent work for all, including living wages and fair working conditions?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

The Liberal Party plans to expand the Canada Workers Benefit to cover an additional million low-income earners, for up to \$1,400 annually. We plan to provide 10 paid sick days for federally regulated workers, along with up to 5 paid days for employees who suffer a miscarriage or stillbirth. We'll also strengthen the Labour Code to better support pregnant or breastfeeding workers. We also plan to end the use of replacement workers by union employers who've locked out employees, and intend to work with unions and federally regulated employers to develop a new "right to disconnect" policy for workers.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

Too many families are worried about making ends meet and need action to create jobs and make life easier. We have a plan to create over one million additional new quality jobs. This means building better workplaces for all workers with paid sick leave, Pharmacare and dental care, a higher minimum wage, and expanded training opportunities. We want to create good jobs for those who care for our loved ones, expanding childcare and boosting wages and working conditions for long-term care workers.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

The wages and working conditions of Canadians need to be protected, no matter where they live or work. We must close the gender wage gap and eliminate wage disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Sending more Green MPs to Parliament this September will ensure a federal minimum wage of \$15 per hour and the introduction of Guaranteed Livable Income.

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QUESTION 3:

Will you and your party commit to introducing a basic income to ensure everyone can meet their basic needs and live with dignity?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

I personally support a universal basic income (UBI) – it would be more efficient at solving poverty than various targeted programs. Liberals also support UBI: Delegates at the Liberal conference earlier this year voted solidly to urge the government to adopt it, and in the last Parliament, a Liberal MP's private member's bill would have required the finance minister to develop a UBI strategy. Procedural delays kept it from being fully passed before the election, but with so much support among Liberal members, it won't be long before another such bill is proposed in the new parliament.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

New Democrats believe that this is a critical moment to strengthen our social safety net and to improve income supports so that all Canadians can live in dignity and security. We will work right away building towards a guaranteed livable income for all Canadians. Making the creation of a guaranteed livable basic income a priority will strengthen our social safety net and finally ensure dignity, security and peace of mind for everyone in Canada.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

Yes, and adamantly.

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QUESTION 4:

How will you and your party address the housing crisis, so that everyone has a place to call home?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

A large factor in our skyrocketing housing prices is lack of supply. We plan to invest \$4 billion in measures that will make it easier for municipalities to build new housing, and faster, with a goal of 100,000 new homes by 2024. For younger Canadians, a new tax-free First Home Savings Account will help them save for a downpayment, with no requirement to repay once withdrawn. For more vulnerable populations, we plan to invest \$2.7 billion over four years to repair and build new affordable housing, among other measures.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

The NDP is committed to ensuring that every Canadian has the opportunity to access a safe and affordable place to call home. We promise to build at least 500,000 units of affordable, safe, and accessible housing in 10 years. Ensuring half of those units will be completed in five years.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

I am personally affected by the housing crisis. Among other steps, the Green Party has called on the government to immediately recognize housing unaffordability and homelessness as twin national crises, redefine affordable housing using a better, updated formula, and enhance the Canada Housing Benefit.

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QUESTION 5:

Will you and your party commit to the elimination of homelessness in Canada? If yes, what actions will your party take to support this commitment?



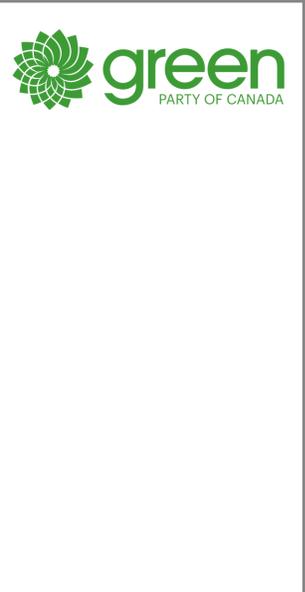
Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

Yes, everyone deserves a safe, affordable place to live. Our Liberal Housing Plan aims to 20,000 new affordable housing units, and refurbish 130,000 existing units in desperate need of repair. Homelessness is especially a problem for our veterans, so we will launch a pilot program in 2022 that will provide rent supplements and other supports, as well as introduce a dedicated veterans stream to the Rapid Housing Initiative. We'll also appoint a new federal housing advocate, whose job will include making sure Ottawa is doing all it can to make sure everyone has a home.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

Everyone should have the right to a safe and affordable place to call home. Canada is the midst of a national housing crisis impacting many Canadians. The NDP is committed to building 500,000 units of quality, affordable housing in the next ten years with half being done within five.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

Yes. Building on top of the previous answer, it is a twin crises. Among other steps, the Green Party is calling on the government to immediately. We will strengthen regulation of foreign investment in residential real estate, create an "empty home" tax for foreign and corporate residential property owners who leave buildings and units vacant, and prioritize funding for non-profit and cooperative housing.

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QUESTION 6:

What actions will you and your party take to respond to the escalating impacts of mental health and addictions in our community?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

There's a stigma around mental health struggles and substance abuse that I think has worsened their impact, which I think we need to overcome. The Liberal Party has a comprehensive plan to tackle these issues, beginning with \$500 million to support the provinces in providing evidence-based addictions treatment. For mental health, we plan a new, permanent Canada Mental Health Transfer, with an upfront investment of \$4.5 billion over five years, to support the provinces' efforts in that realm. Over and above that funding, we plan further investments to improve access to addictions and mental health services in Indigenous communities.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

The NDP believes that we need to work towards a health care system that covers Canadians from head to toe. A New Democrat government would promise to bring in mental health care for Canadians that are uninsured - ensuring that Canadians have access to mental health support without having to worry about the price tag.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

Green MPs will prioritize the expansion of mental health and rehabilitation services through the Canada Health Accord, create a national dementia strategy to adequately fund research and supports to treat the disease and reduce wait times for mental health programs and gender-affirming surgeries, hormone blockers, etc.

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QUESTION 7:

Three million Canadians do not fill their prescriptions for medication because they cannot afford it. How will you and your party ensure that everyone has access to prescription drug coverage, regardless of their income, age, or where they work or live?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

Earlier this year, the Liberal Party launched new funding of \$500 million annually for high-cost drugs for rare diseases, and has begun reaching out to provincial partners to lay the groundwork for universal pharmacare. Healthcare is a provincial jurisdiction, but the eight provincial and territorial child care deals signed in recent months show that despite sometimes being at loggerheads, there's a real appetite for cooperation between Ottawa and the provinces. Affordable prescription drugs should be a right for all Canadians, and I'm confident that we're on the verge of really making that happen.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

People shouldn't have to worry about the cost of filling the prescriptions they need to stay healthy. The NDP knows that the time for universal Pharmacare is now. We recognize the need for quality prescription drug coverage for everyone, regardless of your job situation. We want to implement a system where you just need your health care - not your credit card - at the pharmacy.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

The Green Party has revealed its national Pharmacare plan to make affordable medicine a reality for all Canadians while saving billions of dollars back in 2015, we will continue to push this plan forward and I encourage you to review our plan.

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QUESTION 8:

An estimated 1 in 5 Canadians do not see a dentist because they can't afford it. What actions will you and your party take to ensure dental care for all?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

Dental care is another gap in Canada's healthcare system, and one I think can be alleviated by increasing the number of dentists in communities that need them, particularly rural communities. I support the Liberal Party's plan to increase student loan debt relief for healthcare practitioners to \$60,000 over five years, and expand the eligibility list to include dentists and dental hygienists. We'll also offer new healthcare professionals, including dentists, a one-time tax deduction of \$15,000 over the first three years of practice to cover startup costs.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

Far too many Canadians are being left without access to affordable dental care, and that needs to change. Canadians should not have to worry about whether or not they'll be able to afford a trip to the dentist. The NDP is committed to ensuring Canadian families get the dental care they need. Our proposal would allow 6.7 million people in Canada, those whose household income is less than \$90,000 a year, to access the dental services they deserve.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

The Green Party of Canada is committed to preventative health care, and to promoting wellness. Given current knowledge of the health risks of cavities and gum disease, ensuring public funding of basic dental health care for all Canadians is a logical extension of our current federal Canada Health Act.

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QUESTION 9:

Household food insecurity occurs when there is inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints. What actions will your party take to address food insecurity?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

Canada is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, so it always shocks me that there are people here who don't have enough to eat. It's especially hard on children, so one thing I'm supportive of in the Liberal platform is a proposed National School Food Policy, which includes \$1 billion over five years to establish a nutritious school meals program. We also plan a new No-Waste Food Fund, which will work with partners to end, reduce, or repurpose food waste, to make sure more of it ends up on the tables of those who need it.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

We believe every Canadian should have access to nutritious food and no one should have to try to lean on an empty stomach. Despite the urgency, the Liberal government has failed to improve access to healthy food for Canadians. New Democrats will partner with provinces, territories and communities to work towards a national school nutrition program, connect Canadians to farmers, developing a national food policy - making our food systems strong all across the country and we will support indigenous food sovereignty, to expand access to healthy food including traditional and country foods.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

Canada needs an innovative forward-thinking food strategy - one that promotes food security, food safety, and healthy food. The Green Party believes strong national leadership is required to promote agricultural sustainability, energy efficiency and support farm families. This means encouraging the localization and diversification needed to stabilize the food economy without expensive government subsidies. It means thinking local, building soil capacity, encouraging economic diversity, reducing farm debt and increasing the number of young farmers.

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QUESTION 10:

What actions will your party take to ensure families have access to quality early learning and childcare regardless of their income?



Melanie Lang, Liberal Party of Canada

Though child care is a provincial issue, I think parents want and expect the provinces to work together with Ottawa to bring the costs down. Even before the election, the Liberal government signed deals with eight provinces and territories, governed by a wide variety of parties, to make it happen. The new deals aim to cut child care fees by 50% next year, and deliver \$10-a-day child care within five years. The Liberal Party already slashed child poverty by reforming the Canada Child Benefit, and that commitment to helping parents with children is one reason why I'm a Liberal.



Noor Jahangir, New Democratic Party of Canada

Every Canadian should have access to quality, affordable childcare. The NDP will immediately work with other provinces aiming to build a universal \$10 a day child care system that's there for all Canadian families. Canadians should not have to choose between pursuing a career or raising a family.



Rhan Zhu, Green Party of Canada

The Green Party of Canada will dedicate additional resources to making universal, affordable, early learning and child care system a reality. Our plan will provide support for parents, enhance early learning to benefit children and reduce greenhouse gases. The Green child care plan will also provide the early educator jobs that sustain local communities.

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