

## **Letter from Arthritis Consumer Experts**

Dear (Party Leader/ Party National Campaign Office)\_\_\_\_\_,

The delivery of healthcare may be a provincial responsibility, but the federal government also plays a significant role in funding healthcare and shaping healthcare policies that impact chronic diseases such as arthritis.

Arthritis is one word that describes more than 100 disease types. It is the leading cause of disability in the country and affects more than 6 million Canadians. This represents 20% of the Canadian population – more than the entire populations of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. The number of people living with arthritis in Canada is expected to increase by about 3 million to a total of 9 million people by the year 2040.

Canadians of all ages, sexes and races can and do have arthritis. Although commonly perceived to be a disease affecting older adults, approximately two-thirds of Canadians living with arthritis are under the age of 65. And, to many people's surprise, one in 1,000 children in Canada has arthritis.

Arthritis is the most common long-term chronic disease in Canada. Yet, no national arthritis strategy exists like it does for cancer, heart & stroke, diabetes, and mental health.

As the number of Canadians living with the most disabling and life-threatening types of arthritis - osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis - increases dramatically over the next 20 years, it has become more important than ever for the next elected federal government to develop and implement a new national arthritis strategy that will improve patient outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) members and subscribers are keenly following the federal election campaign. To help them compare the competing Party healthcare platforms, ACE is asking the Liberal Party of Canada, Conservative Party of Canada, the New Democratic Party of Canada, the Green Party of Canada, and the Bloc Québécois questions about the top health care issues for Canadians living with arthritis.

We look forward to your Party's response to our attached survey titled: "Share your plan for arthritis prevention, treatment and care in Canada". Responses will be posted on our [2021 Federal Election](#) page.

Regards,

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