



# Federal Election Toolkit 2019

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*A Plan for Parkinson's Disease  
in Canada*

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## Step 1: Identify and Find Out More about Your Local Candidates

To find your electoral district, ways to vote, information on candidates, and more, visit:

<https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=vot&document=index&lang=e>

## Step 2: Get Prepared

**Review Parkinson Canada's infographic** available at: [bit.ly/348ZeHr](http://bit.ly/348ZeHr). The infographic shares key information and data on Parkinson's disease and access to care in Canada. It also contains two "asks" to the new government:

- Fund the Canadian Open Parkinson Network (C-OPN). C-OPN is an initiative spearheaded by Parkinson Canada and led by prominent Parkinson researchers from across Canada to increase data collection, sharing and collaboration with the intent to accelerate discoveries and find a cure.
- Partner with Parkinson Canada on a plan for Parkinson's disease. The plan starts with access to a timely and accurate diagnosis and asks that key areas of concern for people with Parkinson's be addressed, which includes timely and equitable access to treatments, therapies, care and services.

You do not have to have all of the answers! If there are specific questions the candidates have about the facts and figures presented in the infographic or the asks to government that you are not comfortable answering you can always let them know that you will bring it back to the team and Parkinson Canada and we will get back to them.

**Make it Personal.** Be prepared to share your story with Parkinson's or caring for someone with Parkinson's.

What challenges have you faced?

What would the government investing in a plan to accelerate Parkinson's research and address access issues mean to you?

Are you currently underserved or cannot get access to a therapy?

Did you wait a long time for an accurate diagnosis?

Are you paying out of pocket for treatments and therapies?

Prepare 3–5 key points about your journey that you want to get across to the candidates.

### **Questions for Candidates**

We want to find out information on who could potentially form Canada's next government. Do they have a connection to Parkinson's? Can we count on them as a champion if elected?

Ask these questions in one-on-one meetings, public forums (especially #2), at the door, on the phone. These are the key questions to ask the candidates whether they come to you or you go to them.

1. Do you know someone with Parkinson's?
2. How does your party intend to improve the lives of Canadians living with Parkinson's?
3. If elected, can I count on your commitment and support to fund the Canadian Open Parkinson Network and partner on a plan for better access to care and services for people with Parkinson's?

### **Step 3: Get Involved!**

Here are a few ways you can get involved and have *your* voice heard in this election:

1. Meet with candidates in-person or by phone
2. Attend town halls to listen to candidates and ask questions
3. Write a letter or email to the candidate(s)
4. Share the infographic and ask questions when candidates come to your door
5. Vote!

## Considerations when Meeting/Interacting with Candidates

- Candidates are trying to meet with as many voters as possible. Prepare yourself; expect to have only 10–15 minutes with a candidate.
- Meetings are not the only way to get time with a candidate. Watch for local town hall-style debates or events that the candidates will be attending in your local area. Check your local news and candidate websites for updates on where they will be.
- As a charitable organization, the Parkinson Canada is a nonpartisan. When you are representing Parkinson Canada you must not show support or favour for one party or candidate over another. Maintain fair and equitable treatment at all times.

### **Step 4: Share your Ambassador Experience**

Keep the advocacy team at Parkinson Canada updated on your interactions with candidates at [advocacy@parkinson.ca](mailto:advocacy@parkinson.ca)

Have an innovative idea for interacting with candidates? Tips? Share it with us so we can share it with the Ambassador Network.

## **Additional Resources**

### **Template Agenda for Candidate Meeting**

1. Introductions
  - share your connection to Parkinson's
  - ask if they have a connection to Parkinson's
  
2. Parkinson disease in Canada & Request
  - share the infographic and pick 3–5 data points to highlight from the document
  - highlight the two asks to government
  - make it personal—provide your 3–5 prepared points on why this is important you as it relates to your personal experience with Parkinson's
  
3. Questions to ask the candidate
  - How does your party intend to improve the lives of Canadians living with Parkinson's?
  - If elected, can I count on your commitment and support to fund the Canadian Open Parkinson Network and partner on a plan for better access to care and services for people with Parkinson's?
  
4. Thank them for their time.

### **Sample Email to Candidates**

Use this email template if you are unable to get a meeting with a candidate and would like to share the infographic with them.

Hello Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a resident in the riding for which you are running for [election/re-election]. I have been [living with Parkinson's disease for X years/month/caring for my \_\_\_\_\_ with Parkinson's for X years/months]. During this time I have experienced [add personal challenges with accessing care/services].

Parkinson Canada is an organization that provides education and support, advocacy, and funds for innovative research. I have attached a document from Parkinson Canada

that provides an overview of Parkinson's disease in Canada and includes two asks for the next government to consider.

I ask that you review this brief document and let me know the following:

How does your party intend to improve the lives of Canadians living with Parkinson's?

If elected, can I count on your commitment and support to fund the Canadian Open Parkinson Network and partner on a plan for better access to care and services for people with Parkinson's?

Thank you in advance for your response.

## **Social Media Engagement**

### **Facebook/Twitter**

- Average wait time to see a specialist for diagnosis of Parkinson's in Canada is 11 months and in some regions the wait is 2+ years. I'm calling on the government to improve access to care in Canada. #cdnpoli #election2019 #Parkinson [bit.ly/348ZeHr](http://bit.ly/348ZeHr)
- 100,000 Canadians are living with Parkinson's today and that number is expected to double by 2031. The time is now to ensure equitable, timely and affordable access to care. #cdnpoli #election2019 #Parkinson [bit.ly/348ZeHr](http://bit.ly/348ZeHr)
- Researchers call Parkinson's a "pandemic" due to the growing prevalence in all regions around the world. Canada needs a plan to ensure Canadians with Parkinson's and care partners have access to equitable, timely and affordable care. #cdnpoli #Parkinson #election2019 [bit.ly/348ZeHr](http://bit.ly/348ZeHr)
- Parkinson's has one of the highest direct healthcare costs annually of any neurological disease. Canadians living with Parkinson's and care partners deserve equitable access to drug treatments, exercise and other therapeutic options for multidisciplinary care. #cdnpoli #Parkinson#election2019 [bit.ly/348ZeHr](http://bit.ly/348ZeHr)