



VIA EMAIL

11 October 2019

Dear Mr. Scheer:

Re: National Dementia Strategy – No Funding Commitment

On behalf of Dementia Justice Canada, I am writing to express concern about your party's lack of commitment to fund a national dementia strategy. Based on our review of the Conservative Party's costed platform, you will direct no funding toward a national dementia strategy.

Founded in 2017, Dementia Justice Canada is dedicated to advancing the rights, needs and dignity of people with dementia who are in conflict with the criminal justice system. We aim to achieve our objectives through public advocacy, awareness-raising, education, and interdisciplinary legal and policy research. The organization transitioned from an incorporated society to an unincorporated association in April 2019.

As you know, in June 2017, the Parliament of Canada passed the *National Strategy for Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias Act*, SC 2017, c 19. Section 3 states that the Minister of Health "must develop and implement a comprehensive national strategy to address all aspects of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia." Section 5 states that within two years of the legislation coming into force, and every year after that, the Minister of Health "must prepare a report on the effectiveness of the national strategy".

Given these statutory requirements, our question is this: If the Conservative Party wins the October 21, 2019 federal election, how will you meet the government's legal obligation to develop and implement a national dementia strategy without a funding plan?

This is a matter of national and urgent importance. There are currently 564,000 Canadians living with dementia. In 15 years, this number is projected to reach nearly one million. According to the Alzheimer Society of Canada, it costs Canadians \$10.4 billion annually to care for those with the condition.

Dementia is a non-partisan issue. Earlier this year, the Liberal Party's Budget 2019 proposed \$50 million over five years to help advance the strategy. During this election campaign, the NDP has committed \$35 million over four years, should they form government. The Green Party has committed \$50 million annually for five years.

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Canada needs a fully-funded national dementia strategy. We look forward to hearing how the Conservative Party would improve the lives of persons with dementia, should you win the election.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Campbell Pope, BA (Hons.), LLB, LLM
Founding Director
Dementia Justice Canada

Encl.: Party Platform Commitment Chart – National Dementia Strategy

cc: Lisa Raitt