NDP Caucus News

REALITY CHECK: Neither Liberals nor PCs Prioritized Pharmacare

NL NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre) is calling out the hypocrisy of both the Liberals and the PCs for claiming they prioritize pharmacare.

Since federal pharmacare – a program that would not exist without the federal NDP – received royal assent in October 2024, the NL NDP has pushed for the province to sign on and highlighted the critical relief it would provide to the one in three Newfoundlanders and Labradorians living with diabetes, one of the highest rates in the country.

Dinn says hearing former Liberal government members claim they always believed pharmacare was a "win-win-win" is nothing but disingenuous. He says if they actually walked their talk, we would've had a pharmacare deal months ago.

"To hear the former government claim they were working on pharmacare and had made it a priority is laughable. My question to the Liberal Health Critic – or better yet, the former Premier – is this: if you were so proud of your work on pharmacare, why was it never made clear to the public what you were trying to secure for this province? Why was it that every time my colleagues or I asked for an update on negotiations, we were met with silence? And why did it take only a matter of months for three provinces and one territory to sign on, yet you couldn't get it done after a year?" asks Dinn.

"To say they'll now be the ones holding government to account on getting this done is a slap in the face to the people of this province who could have had their diabetes and contraceptive medications covered by now. In true Liberal fashion, they wait until an election campaign to make promises in a desperate attempt to hold onto power, instead of doing what is morally right and pushing for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to get the relief they need."

Equally troubling, the PCs never showed any urgency about joining the federal pharmacare program until the election, when they quietly added it as a line in their uncosted platform.

"I wrote to the new Premier after the election to ask when we could expect to hear their government advocate to the Prime Minister that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians must be included in this program – I never received a response. Then they refused to say whether they had spoken to the federal Health Minister or the Prime Minister about pharmacare, until they were called out for it. Either you prioritize pharmacare 'for all of us,' or you don't – it's really that simple."

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"For years, our caucus has fought to convince government to act, but we were met with silence and a lack of transparency. Now, suddenly, we're expected to believe it's a priority for them."

"If Liberal verbiage and PC political rhetoric had medicinal properties, no one in Newfoundland and Labrador would be suffering to pay for their diabetes medication."

The NL NDP remains steadfast in its advocacy for the federal pharmacare program and continues to fight to ensure people can access these essential medications – whether it's election time or not.

Below are the instances where the NL NDP has called on the province to sign on to the federal pharmacare program or highlighted its significance.

NDP News Releases Calling for Gov to Sign on to Federal Program:
https://nl.ndp.ca/nl-ndp-call-on-premier-to-adopt-federal-pharmacare-program/
https://nl.ndp.ca/dinn-calls-for-real-action-on-housing-healthcare-and-cost-of-living-as-house-of-assembly-resumes/
https://nl.ndp.ca/brown-continues-fight-for-labradorians-in-spring-session/
https://nl.ndp.ca/brown-questions-government-on-pharmacare-privatization-and-accountability/
https://nl.ndp.ca/ndp-pushes-for-solutions-to-cost-of-living-tariffs-in-budget-submission/
https://nl.ndp.ca/statement-from-nl-ndp-leader-jim-dinn-on-international-womens-day/
https://nl.ndp.ca/liberals-stay-the-course-budget-out-of-touch-with-reality/
https://nl.ndp.ca/pharmacare-program-money-left-on-the-table-in-ottawa-brown/
https://nl.ndp.ca/dinn-urges-incoming-premier-to-prioritize-action-over-words/
https://nl.ndp.ca/nl-ndp-leader-jim-dinn-presses-premier-hogan-to-show-leadership/
https://nl.ndp.ca/cutting-the-sugar-tax-wont-cut-it-on-affordability/
https://nl.ndp.ca/dinn-on-hogans-first-budget-no-relief-no-plan-no-leadership/
https://nl.ndp.ca/people-are-hurting-pharmacare-rent-control-and-childcare-highlighted-at-affordability-town-hall/
https://nl.ndp.ca/governments-income-support-changes-wont-lift-people-out-of-poverty/
https://nl.ndp.ca/government-fails-to-act-on-pharmacare-neglecting-affordability-and-healthcare-access/
https://nl.ndp.ca/ndp-campaign-strongly-outlines-a-better-deal-is-possible-for-newfoundlanders-and-labradorians/
https://nl.ndp.ca/federal-budget-falls-short-on-relief-raises-more-questions-than-answers-dinn/
https://nl.ndp.ca/dinn-urges-premier-to-negotiate-with-ottawa-after-pharmacare-funding-left-out-of-budget/
https://nl.ndp.ca/ndp-question-period-december-4-dinn-demands-action-on-pharmacare-program/

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NDP MHAs Advocating for Pharmacare in the HOA:
May 13, 2024 – Dinn p. 49
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2024-05-13.pdf
November 5, 2024 – Dinn p. 15
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2024-11-05.pdf
March 3, 2025 – Brown: p. 14
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2025-03-03.pdf
March 5, 2025 – Dinn p. 38
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2025-03-05.pdf
March 12, 2025 – Dinn p. 46
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2025-03-12.pdf
April 14, 2025 – Brown p. 15 and Dinn p. 30
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2025-04-14.pdf
May 14, 2025 – Brown p. 43
https://www.assembly.nl.ca/HouseBusiness/Hansard/ga50session2/PDFs/2025-05-14.pdf

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