

**CARP Health Care Poll Report
August 24, 2012**

KEY FINDINGS

More efficiency in the system and management and prevention of chronic disease are seen to be the most effective avenues for reform of the health care system.

Members' most common suggestion for controlling health care costs and improving care are having nurses and pharmacists take on more routine doctors' services.

Best ideas for reform of the health care system and containing costs include:

- **Nurses/pharmacists to perform routine doctors' services**
- **More coordination between doctors, specialists, hospitals and labs**
- **More med school training in preventative medicine and chronic disease management**
- **Emergency rooms at community clinics and vice versa**
- **Bulk purchase of drugs**

Virtually all members say it is urgent the government stop stalling and get on with bulk purchase of generic drugs

In reaction to the Premiers' Report on Health Care, members rank the main recommendations as follows:

- **Identifying best practices and applying them across the system**
- **Bulk drug purchase by provinces**
- **Chronic disease management standards**
- **Provincial cooperation on doctor pay**
- **Team practice**

The Conservatives' traditional lead among our members has been cut substantially, and the NDP is in second place, ahead of the Liberals in member vote preference.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Efficiency is seen as the touchstone of real health care reform (41%), followed by preventative medicine and chronic disease management (21%). Some also opt for cross Canada equal access to high quality health care (14%).

What single initiative would constitute real reform of Canada's health care system?

Design for maximum efficiency	41%
Preventative medicine/chronic disease management	21%
Cross country equal access	14%
Universal drug plan	6%
Universal home care	6%
Universal long term care	3%
Excellent acute/emergency care	2%
Publicize limits to medical science	1%
NONE OF THESE	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%

Nurses and pharmacists taking on doctors' duties is seen as the key to efficiency (31%), and this recommendation forms a through line through this report, with the same suggestion being made to solve a number of issues. Other keys to efficiency are more coordination between home care and community services (18%) and more team practice (14%).

How would Canada's health care system become more cost effective?

Nurses/pharmacists to take on doctors' duties	31%
Home care/community care coordination	18%
More team practices	14%
Hire/train more doctors	9%
Electronic health records	8%
Test treatments/medications for effectiveness	7%
Centralized waiting list	6%
OTHER	6%
DON'T KNOW	3%

The twin keys to preventative medicine and chronic disease management are seen to be nurses and pharmacists taking on doctors' duties and more medical school training in chronic disease management (22% each), while similar proportions think more coordination between hospitals, specialists and labs would help (18%) as would health literacy training in primary school (16%).

How could preventative medicine and chronic disease management work better in Canada?

Nurses/pharmacists to take on doctors' duties	22%
More training in preventative/chronic medicine	22%
Cooperation between hospitals, doctors, specialist	18%
Health literacy in primary school	16%
Electronic tracking for chronic diseases (diabetes, etc)	9%
More home care	5%
House calls	2%
OTHER	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%

The key to improving acute and emergency care is seen to be attaching urgent care centres to emergency rooms to take non-life-threatening cases (37%). Other ideas include emergency clinics at community care centres (15%) and cutting wait times (12%).

How could acute and emergency care be improved in Canada?

Care centres attached to emergency rooms	37%
Emergency care at community clinics	15%
Cut wait times	12%
Cooperation between doctors, hospitals, specialists	8%
Hire/train more doctors	6%
More effective triage at admission	6%
More hospital beds, emergency rooms	5%
24/7 access to medical professionals	4%
OTHER	3%
DON'T KNOW	3%

The keys to cutting drug costs are seen to be bulk purchase of generics (31%) and provincial/federal cooperation on drug pricing (25%). Other suggestions include universal drug coverage (16%) and bulk purchase of name-brand drugs (10%).

What would be the best solution for cost-effective access to medications?

Bulk purchase of generics	31%
Provincial/federal cooperation on drug pricing	25%
Universal drug coverage	16%
Bulk purchase of brand name drugs	10%
Universal catastrophic drug coverage	4%
Drug coverage just for means-tested groups	3%
Drug coverage just for kids and seniors	2%
CURRENT COVERAGE OK	5%
OTHER	2%
DON'T KNOW	3%

Once again, the most practice suggestion for improving home care is for nurses and pharmacists to take on some doctors' duties (16%), and this is followed by universal long term care public insurance (10%)

How could home care and long term care be improved in Canada?

Seniors to be able to stay home as long as possible	43%
Nurses, pharmacists to take on doctors' duties	16%
Universal public long term care insurance	10%
Enforce national standards	9%
More funding	8%
Affordable private long term care insurance	5%
Doctors to make house calls	4%
NO LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE NECESSARY	1%
OTHER	2%
DON'T KNOW	3%

The best way to cut health care costs is seen, once again, to be having nurses and pharmacists take on doctors' duties (45%), and this far outstrips bulk drug purchase (13%) or universal drug coverage (10%).

Which one of the following initiatives would have the most effect on improving quality of care in Canada while managing costs?

Nurses, pharmacists take on doctors' duties	45%
Bulk drug purchase by provinces	13%
Universal drug coverage	10%
Centralized waiting list for surgery/treatment	6%
Review effectiveness of drugs/treatments	5%
Reduce doctors' fees for simple procedures	4%
More innovative medical technology	4%
More effective, timely lab testing	2%
OTHER	5%
DON'T KNOW	6%

Two thirds of members think medical technology will improve care (67%), but they are split on whether the costs will be less (33%) or more (34%). Few believe advanced medical technology will not improve care (13%).

Do you think more advanced medical technology would improve health care in Canada and cut costs?

Improve care but increase costs	34%
Improve care and cut costs	33%
Would not improve care or cut costs	10%
Would not improve care but would cut costs	3%
DON'T KNOW	14%

Once again, most members see nurses as able to take on doctors' duties in defining their role (42%), while one quarter specifically describe overseeing a program of care designed by a doctor (28%). House calls are also seen to be an appropriate role (13%).

What role do you think is appropriate for nurses in our health care system?

Some doctors' duties like routine vaccinations	42%
Overseeing treatment plan prescribed by doctor	28%
House calls/home care	13%
Prescribing medication/treatment	5%
Role they have now, no more	5%
Reviewing, adjusting medications	4%
Developing treatment plans/no input from doctor	4%
DON'T KNOW	2%

Pharmacists are seen to be best able to review medications and adjust them (42%) as well as taking on some routine doctors' duties, like vaccinations (27%). Some say the role they have now is appropriate, no more (18%).

What role do you think is appropriate for pharmacists in our health care system?

Reviewing, adjusting medication	43%
Some doctors' duties like routine vaccinations	27%
Role they have now, no more	18%
Prescribing medication/treatment	7%
OTHER	1%
DON'T KNOW	3%

There is almost universal agreement among members that there is urgency in getting moving on provincial bulk purchase of generic drugs (91%), and more than 4-in-10 use the strongest language (extremely urgent - 43%).

The provinces have been talking about group bulk purchase of generic drugs for years, yet no progress has been made. How urgent is it that the provinces stop stalling and proceed with this initiative?

URGENT	91%
Extremely urgent	43%
Very urgent	33%
Somewhat urgent	15%
NOT URGENT	6%
Not very urgent	3%
Not at all urgent	2%
DON'T KNOW	4%

One third of members believe wait times have grown worse (35%) and this is twice the proportion who think they have gotten better (17%).

As far as you know, are wait times for surgery and treatment getting better or worse in Canada?

Getting better	17%
Neither better nor worse	35%
Getting worse	35%
MARGIN IN FAVOUR OF BETTER	-19
DON'T KNOW	14%

Applying best practices across the system (17% best idea, 35% on of the best) and bulk drug purchase (12% best idea, 49% one of the best) both lead as favoured recommendations from the Premiers' Report on Health. The least popular recommendations are controlling doctor pay and instituting team practices.

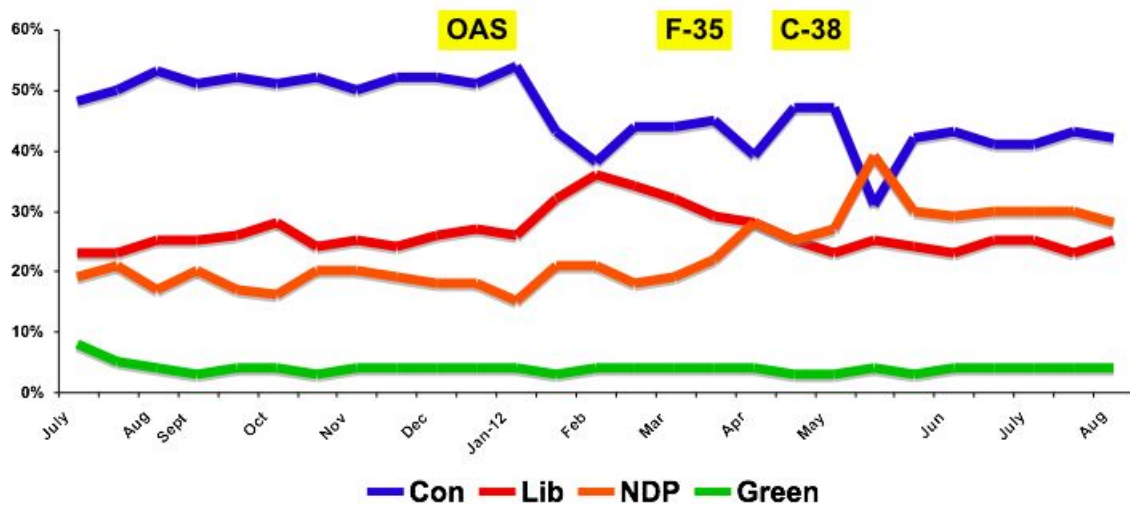
The Premiers' Report on Health Care makes a number of recommendations:

- ***One of these is more team practices***
- ***Another recommendation is cooperation between the provinces on bulk purchase of some generic drugs to cut costs***
- ***Another recommendation is setting national standards for the treatment of heart disease and diabetes with the aim of improving prevention and disease management***
- ***Another recommendation is to examine the best practices from across the country and other jurisdictions and apply them to Canada's health care system***
- ***Another recommendation is for the provinces to work together on training, hiring and setting pay scales for health care professionals to keep labour costs down. How good an idea is this?***

	Best Practices	Bulk Drug Purchase	Chronic Disease	Doctor Pay	Team Practice
Best idea	17%	12%	11%	10%	5%
One of the best ideas	35%	40%	37%	23%	31%
Good idea	32%	28%	34%	35%	36%
OK idea	6%	5%	6%	13%	9%
Should have been done long ago	9%	11%	9%	8%	11%
Don't need it	1%	3%	2%	8%	3%
DK	2%	2%	2%	4%	6%

ELECTORAL PREFERENCE

The Conservative Party leads (42%), but at a diminished level since the OAS, F-35 and Bill C-38 issues made news. After leading the Conservatives for one polling cycle immediately after the debate around the Omnibus Budget Bill C-38, the NDP (28%) are ahead of the Liberals (25%) in second place.



More than 2100 CARP Poll™ panel members responded to this poll between July 27 and 31, 2012. The margin of error for a probability sample this size is plus or minus 2.2%, 19 times out of 20