

# BETTER NOW

## TAKE ACTION

Better Now: Six Big Ideas to Improve Health Care for All Canadians is a prescription for Canada's health care system. Become a #6bigideas influencer in your community! Add your voice and help make our health care system work better for you and your family:

### On social media

- Follow along on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) to see what Dr. Martin says about the book.
- Flip to page 2 below and share our tweets or comment on them with #6bigideas and @docdanielle.
- Like the [6 Big Ideas Facebook page](#) and stay tuned for Facebook Live appearances.

### By getting interactive

- Make it your next [book club pick](#) and choose an idea that your group wants to get behind. Use the [discussion questions](#) to start conversations and let us know by tweeting with #6bigideas.
- Look at [all the ways](#) you can get engaged in communities locally and nationally and have a look through the [resource list](#).

### By writing your MP, MPP, MLA or MNA

- Does one of the Six Big Ideas really speak to you? Do you think it would make health care better for you or your family? We've made writing your local government representative a whole lot easier. Simply flip to pages 4-7 below and start building your own letter.
- Not sure who your Member of Parliament (MP) is? No problem, find out by entering your postal code [here](#).
- Not sure who your provincial/territorial representative is? Search for them here:
  - [Yukon, Nunavut](#)
  - [Northwest Territories](#)
  - [British Columbia](#)
  - [Alberta](#)
  - [Saskatchewan](#)
  - [Manitoba](#)
  - [Quebec](#)
  - [Newfoundland and Labrador](#)
  - [New Brunswick](#)
  - [Prince Edward Island](#)
  - [Nova Scotia](#)
  - [Ontario](#)

# BETTER NOW

**Join the conversation on social media. Make these messages your own on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.**

## **The 6 Big Ideas**

- In #Canada, #healthcare is part of our national identity. The prescription for making it better now is here: [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas
- Healthcare is personal and it's political. I want to participate in the conversation about how to make it work better for everyone w/ [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca). #6bigideas #cdnhealth

## **Big Idea 1**

- Every #Canadian deserves the best possible care. I support the 3 relationships for #health. [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas #cdnhealth

## **Big Idea 2**

- #Pharmacare would make #prescriptiondrugs part of #universalhealthcare in #Canada. [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas #cdnhealth

## **Big Idea 3**

- In the U.S., ~30% of medical spending doesn't benefit #care. In #Canada, it's the same. I support change w/ [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas

## **Big Idea 4**

- Spending more on something doesn't make it better. Let's reorg the resources we have now in #healthcare. Here's how: [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas

## **Big Idea 5**

- Our income is our health. I support a basic income for all #Canadians. Find out how at [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas #cdnhealth

## **Big Ideas 6**

- We need more #innovation in #healthcare, not more \$\$'s. Let's spread the ideas that work at: [6bigideas.ca](http://6bigideas.ca) #6bigideas #cdnhealth

# BETTER NOW

**Write a letter to your MP, MPP, MLA or MNA. Download our [template](#) and customize it by cutting and pasting a paragraph on one of the Big Ideas from below.**

## **Big Idea 1: Ensure relationship-based primary health care for every Canadian**

The doctor-patient relationship is central to the wellbeing of our population, but right now, there are gaps in the system that are holding us back. Too often, health care providers are unaware when patients are being admitted or discharged from hospital, putting them at a disadvantage when it comes to managing care. And while many offices are using electronic medical records, they aren't using them to their full potential to prevent and manage chronic disease.

Access to primary care isn't enough on its own – our family doctors and the teams they work with need tools that enable them to be more proactive in connecting to the rest of the health care system to keep us well. What is your government doing to improve access to relationship-based primary care, and improve the quality of primary care my community can access? How can you break down the silos between the doctor's office, the hospital, and the home?

## **Big Idea 2: Bring prescription drugs under Medicare**

For our health care system to truly deliver on the promise of ensuring that all Canadians have equal access to life saving treatment and care, we need to make medications accessible and affordable. Currently, Canadians pay too much for prescription drugs and more than one in five report that they or someone in their household have been unable to take medications due to costs.

A strong national pharmacare program would solve our access problems and save Canadians billions of dollars. Canadians believe in the principle that access to health care should be based on need, not ability to pay. That principle needs to be extended beyond doctors and hospitals to include universal access to a publicly-funded formulary of essential medicines. If done right, a pharmacare program could also help to reduce overmedication and inappropriate prescribing – problems that affect too many Canadians, especially seniors. What is your government doing to ensure that we will have universal public pharmacare during this mandate?

# BETTER NOW

## **Big Idea 3: Reduce unnecessary tests & interventions**

Expensive technology, early diagnosis and aggressive treatments can save lives – but only when they are properly applied. Every year, millions of Canadians are harmed by unnecessary, inappropriate, harmful and wasteful medical tests and interventions. We need to stop talking only about the benefits of health care and start talking about the harms. Furthermore, more appropriate use of health care resources will help to reduce wait times and improve access to care when it will actually improve health. Campaigns like Choosing Wisely Canada are working to educate doctors and patients so that we can have informed conversations about health care. How do you see the role of government in reducing harmful and wasteful care? What can you do to help advance this conversation?

## **Big Idea 4: Reorganize health care delivery to reduce wait times & improve quality**

Canada faces challenges with wait times for elective health care – but very often we don't need more money, doctors or surgeons, or more fancy machines in our health care system. What we need to do is to better organize the resources we already have. By centralizing access to tests and treatment and by organizing our queues based on need, we could significantly reduce wait times for specialty care. What is your government doing to make better use of the resources we have in our health care system, to ensure people receive the highest quality care?

## **Big Idea 5: Implement a basic income guarantee**

Social and economic circumstances determine half the health of our population. All of the latest research points to the fact that poverty also has an effect on health that crosses generations. In Canada, our social assistance programs do not help people out of poverty. Rather, they penalize them by clawing back benefits on a dollar-for-dollar basis, dissuading many from earning more income to meet their basic needs. Our social assistance programs are invasive when it comes to people's lives and choices. They also do not reflect our modern economy, where part-time, contract and precarious work is on the rise.



# BETTER NOW

We need to change our thinking to help people do better for themselves and their families, especially as our labour markets continue to shift. The concept of a Basic Income Guarantee holds tremendous promise, not only for poverty reduction but also for health. What are your government's plans with respect to poverty reduction, and what is your view on the Basic Income Guarantee?

## **Big Idea 6: Scale up successful solutions across the country**

It has been said that when it comes to health care, Canada is nation of pilot projects: we manage to innovate but we are rarely able to scale up our successes so that everyone who needs care has access to best practice. Governments have a very important role to play in identifying successful health care delivery models and putting in place the infrastructure to scale those models across our country. What is your government doing to identify best practices in health care and to ensure that every constituent can expect to access them? How do you see your role in reducing unwanted variations in health care outcomes across our communities?