



**PROTECT.
STRENGTHEN.
EXPAND.**



Report Health Accord Campaign 2013 / 2014

**Canadian Union of Public Employees
and
Council of Canadians**

CUPE / *Canadian Union
of Public Employees*

THE
COUNCIL
OF CANADIANS



LE
CONSEIL
DES CANADIENS

1. Introduction

In September 2013 CUPE and the Council of Canadians commenced a campaign about our country's most cherished social program, Medicare.

In 15 communities over a 15 month period, thousands of conversations were held and Canadians were clear in their message that Medicare is an essential Canadian commitment, one that needs to be improved, not dismantled.

“We cannot forget our moral right as human beings to care for one another.”

Judy Dixon, St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador – December 1, 2014

This report captures the key components of the campaign, where we went, what we heard and how we act, collectively, to preserve and enhance Canada's Medicare system.

It's not too late to act, in fact it is our duty to do so for today's and future generations of Canadians.

Maude Barlow, Chairperson
Council of Canadians

- and -

Paul Moist, National President
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

2. The Health Accord

In 2004 former Prime Minister, Paul Martin agreed to a 10 year Health Accord with Canada's provincial and territorial governments.

The Accord offered partial redress for federal funding cuts to Medicare. Ironically, it was then Federal Finance Minister, Paul Martin's infamous 1995 federal budget which eliminated the federal deficit, drastically cut federal Medicare funding and other federal/provincial programs.

In December 2011 at a meeting of provincial finance ministers held in Victoria, former federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, announced a new Federal Health Accord for the period April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2024.

This was a unilateral announcement, there were no discussions, let alone negotiations with the provinces/territories.

The key features of the new transfer arrangement were:

- Alteration of the former minimum 6% escalator to a minimum 3% escalator after the 2017/2018 fiscal year.
- Amended funding formula away from equalization to one based strictly on population. This ignored varying provincial capacities for revenue collection and demographic differences.

The combined effect of these changes when compared to the former accord and predicted health care inflation were as estimated \$36 billion reduction in federal funding (based on calculations published by the Council of the Federation – www.councilofthefederation.ca).

The following table outlines the estimated ten-year cut per province/territory:

Province	10 year cut (millions)	Population 2013 (thousands)	Per capita cut (\$ per resident)
British Columbia	4969	4582	\$1,084
Alberta	4121	4025	\$1,024
Saskatchewan	1098	1108	\$991
Manitoba	1335	1265	\$1,055
Ontario	13952	13538	\$1,031
Quebec	8023	8155	\$984
New Brunswick	715	756	\$946
PEI	144	145	\$993
Nova Scotia	902	941	\$959
Newfoundland	491	527	\$932

3. The Campaign

The Health Accord Campaign had a variety of components, including:

- 12 targeted ridings narrowly won by the Conservatives in 2011
- Door knocking by volunteers in each riding
- Direct mail outs and mail drops in all targeted ridings
- A CUPE-Council of Canadians sponsored town hall meeting in all targeted ridings

The response from Canadians was overwhelmingly positive. Most were not aware of the new Health Accord and the federal retreat from properly funding Medicare. Virtually all citizens expressed strong support for public Medicare and thanked our volunteers for the information we provided.

In summary our volunteers achieved the following results:

- 42,500 doors knocked on
- 103,500 leaflets distributed by volunteers
- 59,500 leaflets mailed
- 205,500 total contacts with Canadians

In the 11 of our targeted ridings won by the Conservatives in 2011 they won by a total of 38,000 votes four years ago. With a 90% positive response to our outreach we are confident many citizens we met will have public Medicare in mind when they vote later this year.

4. What we heard



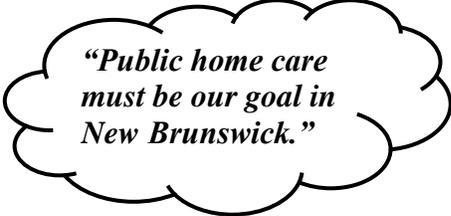
In every corner of Canada the campaign heard from ordinary Canadians who talked about life before Medicare; what Medicare meant for them; their dreams for a new revitalized Canadian Medicare system.

A sample of what we heard:

“Citizen’s engagement is essential!”

Dennis L., Winnipeg
April 17, 2014

Cecille, Moncton
April 23, 2014



***“Public home care
must be our goal in
New Brunswick.”***

A thought bubble graphic with a black outline, containing the text above. It is connected to the text 'Cecille, Moncton' by three small circles of increasing size, suggesting a thought process.

“Pre-Medicare days – praying for health to avoid hospital costs.”

Sharon L., Moncton
April 23, 2014

“How do we improve, expand Medicare.”

“Canadians want this conversation.”

Dr. Ryan Meili, Regina
June 23, 2014



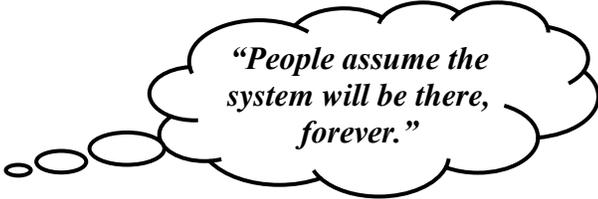
“Front-line workers see the wait – daily.”

“Over prescribing vs. nutrition.”

Sandra Seitz, Regina
June 23, 2014

“Canadians don’t believe public Medicare can be lost. But eye care; access to a physician; dental services; housing; nutrition....all are barriers poor people face.”

Lana Mitchell, Regina
June 23, 2014



“People assume the system will be there, forever.”

Amanda Giroux, Regina
June 23, 2014

“My mother and father came from Scotland with nothing....she was having a baby, 1 month later, bill collector came to ask how they’d pay the bill....he suggested they sell the car, they had to get a bank loan.”

Madeline, North Bay
June 24, 2014

“Nanos poll – 84% of Canadians feel Medicare is threatened.”

Mike McBane, Charlottetown
August 26, 2014

“Private privileged interests cannot trump public interests.”

Anonymous, Charlottetown
August 26, 2014



“Ontario spends less per cap on public services than all other provinces.”

“Ontario has cut more hospital beds than any other province (per cap) and most OECS countries.”

“20,000 on list for a long term care bed.”

N. Mehra, Oshawa
September 4, 2014

“Role of government – provision of safety net.”

“Health issues – not discretionary.”

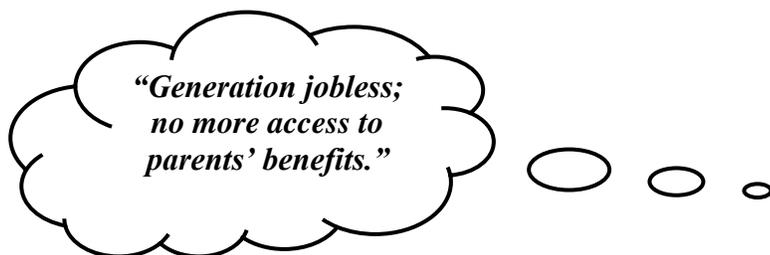
“Federal retreat of Medicare funding is a treasonous act.”

Paul B., Oshawa
September 4, 2014

“Wealth should never determine health.”

“Money can’t determine society goals; values should.”

Tracy Newman, Oshawa
September 4, 2014



Lisa Diaz, (McMaster Labour
Studies – 22 years old) Oshawa
September 4, 2014



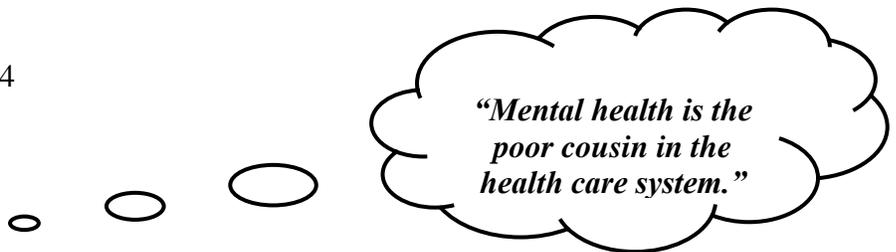
“Canadians tend to have a short memory. We’re polite. We have had numerous cuts to the system, bed closures, diabetic services.....we have to wake up.”

Peggy Smith, Sault Ste Marie
September 18, 2014

“I placed my grand-parents in long term care years ago....but today with the cuts to acute care beds, much downloading onto long term care.....one PSW on night-shift taking care of 50 patients. Downloads onto long term care system, reduces access to long term care for seniors.”

Kevin Bates, September 18, 2014
Sault Ste Marie

Kathleen Connors, St. John’s
December 1, 2014



“This man Tommy Douglas, he’s a good deed in a naughty world, he’s a breath of fresh prairie air in a world of chicanery and deceit.” Vancouver province.

Maude Barlow, St. John’s
December 1, 2014

“My dad did not have drug coverage when laid off so for my sister’s diabetes, it came down to food or prescription drugs.”

“I’m not rich with money, but I hope I can enrich the lives of others and my community.”

Derek Windsor, St. John’s
December 1, 2014



“Medicare without Pharmacare is quite hypocritical. Seniors of this province are being gouged by drug prices.”

Ralph Morrison, St. John’s
December 1, 2014

“As a Canadian I couldn’t believe a senior would have to forfeit his life to pay for his wife’s chemo treatment.”

“What it means to be Canadian? To have a publicly funded Medicare system.”

Jenny Nowlan, St. John’s
December 1, 2014

“We can’t forget our moral right as human beings to care for one another.”

Judy Dixon, St. John’s
December 1, 2014

“Many of my clients must choose between picking up their prescriptions or paying their light bill.”

Jude Kearley, Corner Brook
December 2, 2014



“Every generation must fight to defend Medicare.”

“There was a great consensus in the 40’s, 50’s and 60’s in Canada that we were going to look out for one another, Medicare emerged out of this consensus.”

“We must pledge one generation to the next that we will defend Medicare and ensure it is there for future generations.”

Colin Brown, Corner Brook
December 2, 2014

“In the early 1960’s I tried to borrow \$500 to take my son to Toronto for care, the first two banks said no.”

Israel Hahn, Corner Brook
December 2, 2014

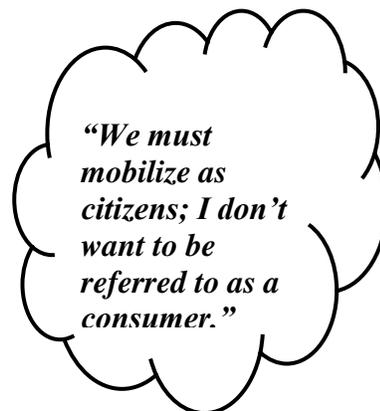
“My first child I had to pay \$20 maternity fee. My second child was covered by Medicare, what bonus for us at Christmas.”

D. Ryan, Corner Brook
December 2, 2014

“A healthy society is a prerequisite for a healthy economy.”

Deanne (student @Grenfell), Corner Brook
December 2, 2014

Bob, Corner Brook
December 2, 2014



5. Conclusion

Public Medicare remains Canada's flagship social program.

In many respects our public health care system defines our commitment to one another as Canadians.

Poll after poll reveals Medicare to be the number one, top of mind issue, for Canadians.

Election 2015 will be about many things, including the state of Medicare and our federal commitment to public health care.

Our Health Accord Campaign showed us that Canadians care about public health care. It is a priority worth fighting for.

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