

**CARP Advocacy Issues Poll Report**  
**April 19, 2013**

**KEY FINDINGS**

**CARP members are asked to suggest the necessary pace for issues where the organization advocates. In almost all cases (with the exception of older workers, in which case opinion was evenly split), the majority call for bold political action now, rather than incremental steps. Almost no one says no action is needed (except, once again, with respect to older workers). Issues which attract especially strong calls to action include equal accessibility to health care and home care.**

**In cases where some action has been taken by governments or in the recent federal budget, on most issues, members are evenly split between those seeing these measures as a good first step, and those seeing no real progress at all. The one exception to this is Alberta's pharmacare plan, which is seen to be both a good first step *and* a bold political move.**

**Members believe strongly in backbencher independence in Parliament, either because the MP's constituents want it, or because he or she wants it. Members are somewhat split on e-petitions in parliament, with the majority favouring them, but a substantial minority worrying about them being rigged.**

**Ontario residents are most eager to see the provincial ombudsman's mandate expanded to cover nursing homes and hospitals, or to see more funding for LTC and home care in the coming budget.**

**When members use a 10-point scale to rate accessibility and quality of health care in Canada, neither does particularly well, both scoring below the mid-point, on average.**

**The NDP continues to decline in our poll, and the Liberals to grow, but now the Conservatives have started to decline as well, which mirrors general population electoral polls which are current.**

## Detailed Findings

Two thirds see the need for a bold political move on health care accessibility (68%), evenly split between a demand for federal/provincial health care standards (35%) and a complaint the government has dithered too long (33%). Those who think only incremental steps are needed (20%) do so because of economic uncertainty (14%).

***CARP recently hosted a forum for federal leadership candidates. Among the issues discussed were whether the federal government can work with the provinces to ensure health care across Canada is equally accessible, high quality and well-funded. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>8%</b>
Feds turned over responsibility to provinces	6%
Health care system works now	2%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>20%</b>
Economy too weak now	14%
No political will now	6%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>68%</b>
Federal/provincial agreement on standards	35%
Governments have delayed for too long	33%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>4%</b>

Two thirds agree with universal access to home care (62%), either from the federal government to the provinces (32%) or directly from the provinces (30%). Those who want to start slowly (27%) suggest starting with the heaviest needs patients first (19%).

***Canadians should have equal and adequate access to home care and other chronic care in the community. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>6%</b>
Home care is individual's responsibility	3%
Governments already acting	3%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>27%</b>
Start with heavy care needs patients	19%
Start with pilot projects	8%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>62%</b>
Feds to transfer funds for home care to provinces	32%
Provinces should offer home care to all who need it	30%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>3%</b>

One half agree a bold political move is required to deal with caregiver support (51%), either paid leave, respite and income support (30%) or LTC insurance for all Canadians (21%). Those who seek more modest steps (38%) suggest a refundable tax credit (21%) or work leave protection for caregivers (17%).

***Canadians must offer support for family caregivers. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>7%</b>
This is individual's/family's responsibility	4%
Government programs already help enough	3%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>38%</b>
Refundable tax credit	21%
Work leave protection for caregivers	17%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>51%</b>
Paid leave, respite, income support for caregivers	30%
Long term care insurance for all Canadians	21%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>4%</b>

One half of members think bold political moves are required to reform parliament (52%), especially a Royal Commission (40%). Those who seek smaller steps (27%) focus on a greater role for backbenchers (17%) over more clout for committees (10%)

***Canadians want to see parliament respected, and MPs act with civility and decorum. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>This is the nature of parliament</b>	4%
<b>Adversarial parliament works</b>	3%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>More rights for backbenchers</b>	17%
<b>More clout for committees</b>	10%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Royal commission to reform parliament</b>	40%
<b>Super majority needed for confidence votes</b>	12%
<b>OTHER</b>	7%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	6%

There is less agreement bold political action is needed to protect the vulnerable while cutting the deficit (42%) and an equal proportion say smaller steps are needed (41%), especially indexing the social safety net to the real cost of living (36%). One quarter suggest a guaranteed minimum national income (22%).

***Dealing with the deficit competes with protecting the rights and needs of the most vulnerable in Canada. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Social system we have s adequate</b>	12%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Extend moderate deficit financing</b>	5%
<b>Index social safety net to real cost of living</b>	36%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Guaranteed minimum annual income</b>	22%
<b>Legislated protection of safety net</b>	20%
<b>OTHER</b>	2%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	4%

One half agree with bold steps to end senior poverty (52%), including a guaranteed minimum income for seniors (33%), and one for all (17%). Those who seek smaller steps (34%) focus on increasing GIS/OAS (29%).

***Canadians want to make sure no senior lives in poverty. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>OAS/GIS takes care of that</b>	9%
<b>Not that many seniors live in poverty</b>	2%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>Increase GIS/OAS</b>	29%
<b>Create better job opportunities for older Canadians</b>	5%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>52%</b>
<b>Guaranteed minimum income for seniors</b>	33%
<b>Guaranteed minimum income for all</b>	17%
<b>OTHER</b>	3%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	3%

Just more than half think bold steps are needed on drug coverage (55%) and this is pharmacare, either for the low income and seniors (31%) or for all (24%). Smaller steps (35%) include lower prices for all drugs (18%) and bulk purchase of generics (17%).

***Canadians need equal and affordable access to drug coverage across the country. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Seniors covered/workplace pays for most</b>	4%
<b>Private insurance offers affordable coverage</b>	3%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Negotiate lower prices for all drugs</b>	18%
<b>Lower generic prices/bulk purchase</b>	17%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>National pharmacare for lower income/seniors</b>	31%
<b>National pharmacare for all</b>	24%
<b>OTHER</b>	1%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	2%

There is much more division on the issue of older workers. One third think there is no problem or that no steps are needed (30%), because mandatory retirement has ended (18%) and because it is not the state's responsibility (12%). One third seek small steps (32%), mostly employer incentives to hire and keep older workers (29%), and one third seek bold steps (31%), mostly flex work and phased retirement arrangements (23%).

***Canadians want to be able to work as long as they are able and willing to, in supportive workplaces free from age discrimination. What kind of action on the part of governments is required in order for this to happen?***

<b>NO CHANGE NEEDED</b>	<b>30%</b>
Mandatory retirement has ended	18%
This is individual's responsibility	12%
<b>INCREMENTAL STEPS NEEDED FIRST</b>	<b>32%</b>
Incentives to hire/keep older workers	29%
Job fairs	3%
<b>NEED BOLD POLITICAL MOVE NOW</b>	<b>31%</b>
Flex work and phased retirement	23%
Public/private funded training and placement	8%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>4%</b>

Three-in-ten see the Alberta government's pharmacare program as a bold political step which other provinces may emulate (30%), while 4-in-10 see it as a more modest step (40%). Few see it as no step (6%).

***The Alberta provincial budget was recently handed down. It included a provision to create a provincial pharmacare program starting in 2014. How would you characterize the impact of this budget item?***

<b>No real change, limited coverage</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Good first step, covers all Albertans</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Bold political move, example to other provinces</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>20%</b>

In terms of rating actual budget offerings, one half of members (49%) think the tax exemption for home care is a good first step (49%), while 4-in-10 think it is not a step at all (39%).

***The federal budget offered a GST/HST exemption for personal care services, in addition to the exemption for publicly-funded home care. This could be worth up to \$5 million a year in total across all the provinces. How would you characterize the impact of this budget item?***

<b>No real change, drop in the bucket</b>	39%
<b>Good first step, some impact</b>	49%
<b>Bold political move, significant impact</b>	7%
<b>OTHER</b>	1%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	5%

Half see the Canada Job Grant as not much change (47%), whereas one third think it will have some impact (37%).

***The federal budget has offered the Canada Job Grant program to fund up to \$5000 per employee for training, matching amounts paid by provinces and employers. How would you characterize the impact of this budget item for older workers?***

<b>No real change, employers not hiring older workers</b>	47%
<b>Good first step, some impact</b>	37%
<b>Bold political move, significant impact</b>	7%
<b>OTHER</b>	2%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	8%

Relatively equal proportions see the palliative care training offering as either no step (44%), or a small step (46%).

***The federal budget offered funding for palliative care training amounting to \$3 million over 3 years. How would you characterize the impact of this budget item?***

<b>No real change, staff needed, not training</b>	44%
<b>Good first step, some impact</b>	46%
<b>Bold political move, significant impact</b>	5%
<b>OTHER</b>	1%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	4%

Relatively similar proportions see awareness-raising and training funds for financial literacy a small step (49% may make seniors more aware), or no step at all (43%).

***The budget offered plans for consultation and awareness-raising on financial fraud and financial literacy for seniors. How would you characterize the impact of this budget item?***

<b>No real change, action needed, not more consultation</b>	43%
<b>Good first step, may make seniors more aware</b>	49%
<b>Bold political move, significant impact</b>	4%
<b>OTHER</b>	2%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	2%

The vast majority of members (90%) believe backbenchers should be able to speak on matters of conscience, mostly if constituents want it (49%) or on any matter they want (27%).

***Do you believe backbench government members should be able to move any private member's motion, or speak on any matter they wish?***

<b>YES</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>As long as constituents want it</b>	49%
<b>Any matter they want</b>	27%
<b>As long as it aligns with party policy</b>	9%
<b>OTHER</b>	5%
<b>NO</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Party discipline comes first</b>	3%
<b>Shouldn't raise issues of their own accord</b>	1%
<b>Only job is to support government</b>	1%
<b>OTHER</b>	1%
<b>OTHER</b>	1%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	3%



The majority see e-petitions as a good thing (58%), mostly because they encourage more citizen involvement (27%). One third do not favour the idea (32%), mostly because e-petitions can be rigged (16%).

***A motion in parliament would create electronic petitions that would allow ordinary citizens with MP support to bring subjects to debate. What is your reaction to this idea?***

<b>GOOD IDEA</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Allow more citizen involvement</b>	27%
<b>More democracy</b>	17%
<b>Bypasses partisanship</b>	11%
<b>OTHER</b>	3%
<b>NEITHER GOOD THING NOR NOT SUCH GOOD THING</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>NO</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>E-petitions can be rigged</b>	16%
<b>Waste of parliament's time</b>	8%
<b>Just mob rule</b>	5%
<b>OTHER</b>	3%
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>6%</b>

When asked about the upcoming Ontario budget, residents most want to see the Ombudsman's mandate extended to nursing homes and hospitals (31%), followed by those who want funding for LTC beds and seniors' co-housing (23%), minimum wait times for home care (a government promise - 18%) or income support for family caregivers (14%).

***ONTARIO RESIDENTS ONLY: The Ontario Provincial budget will be presented in the coming weeks. Which one initiative for older Ontarians would you most like to see in this budget?***

<b>Ombudsman to cover nursing homes and hospitals</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Funding for long term care beds/seniors' co-housing</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Minimum wait times for home care</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Income support for family caregivers</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Increase to GAINS</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>DON'T KNOW</b>	<b>4%</b>

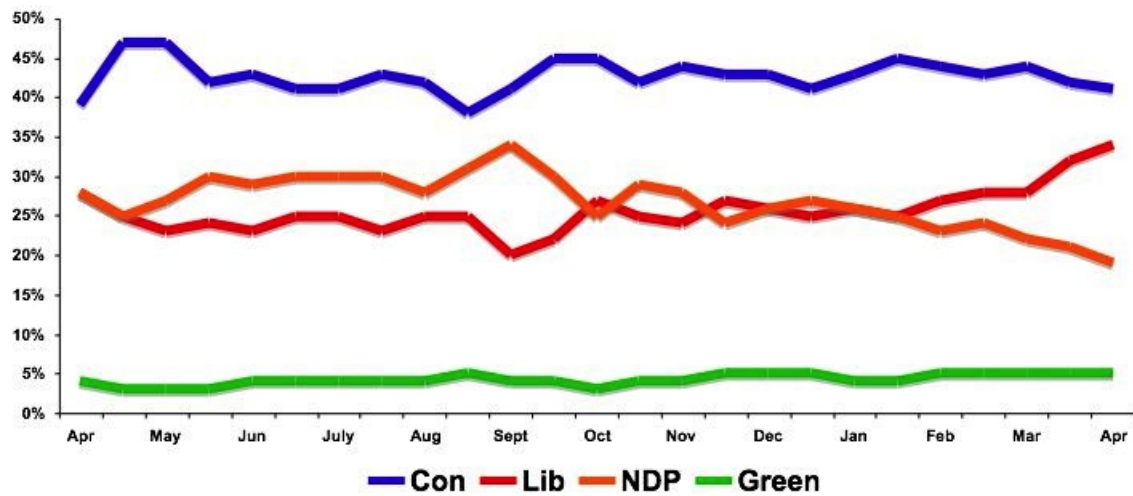
When members rate accessibility and quality of health care, both do relatively poorly, scoring an average of just higher than 4, which is less than “OK”.

***On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent, how would you rate Canada’s system for caring for the aged, including home care, nursing homes and hospital care for its accessibility?/for caring for the aged, including home care, nursing homes and hospital care for its quality?***

	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Quality</b>
<b>Poor</b>	8%	8%
<b>2</b>	8%	6%
<b>3</b>	17%	17%
<b>4</b>	29%	26%
<b>OK</b>	22%	26%
<b>6</b>	7%	7%
<b>7</b>	5%	8%
<b>8</b>	2%	2%
<b>9</b>	*	*
<b>Excellent</b>	1%	1%
<b>AVG. SCORE</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>

## Electoral Preference

The Liberals lead the NDP, 34% to 19% for second place, and this lead is increasing, but the Conservatives remain comfortably in first (41%). However, the Conservatives have started to decline along with the NDP, and the Liberals are on the rise..



***More than 1300 CARP Poll™ panel members responded to this poll between March 22 and 25, 2013. The margin of error for a probability sample this size is about plus or minus 3%, 19 times out of 20***