



### Questions for voters to ask candidates

During an election campaign, voters often have many opportunities to ask questions of the candidates standing for election in their riding. These opportunities may include:

- **All Candidates Meetings:** in most ridings, these meetings are held at least once, and often more, to give members of the public the opportunity to see their candidates in person. All Candidates Meetings are presented in a question-and-answer format, and people attending are almost always encouraged to ask questions.
- **Debates:** The leaders of the major parties debate one or more times during an election campaign. Sometimes the opportunity exists for citizens to submit questions about issues that are important to themselves and their communities.
- **Telephone calls from the campaign office or door-to-door visits:** One of the primary components of an election campaign is called “voter contact”. In most ridings, the campaigns will be organizing phone calls and/or visits to voters. When you are called or visited, it is important to ask questions about arthritis. Any specific questions asked will be logged by the canvasser and forwarded to the candidate or campaign manager.
- **Radio phone-in shows:** these provide an excellent opportunity to ask a candidate questions about party policy or personal opinion.
- **Walking in to the campaign office:** Campaigns set up offices in part to allow people to walk in and communicate with campaign staff and/or the candidate directly. Simply walk in during campaign office hours and ask to speak with someone about policy. Bring along your list of questions in print form, including your name and contact information, to leave behind in case no one is available.

Whenever possible, it is vitally important that people who care about arthritis issues take this election campaign period to ask questions about arthritis and to express a strong interest in health care issues. If candidates understand that people with arthritis are watching to see which politicians care about their issues, change will begin to occur at the government level.

It is important to frame your questions with a small amount of information at the beginning, so that candidates have some background on the issue. Here are some examples of questions you can ask candidates, or their authorized representatives:

1. Currently, the cost of arthritis and related musculoskeletal diseases in BC has been estimated at \$2.1 billion each year. **What measures will your government establish to address the detrimental impacts of arthritis and related conditions?**
2. Currently, no comprehensive program of treatment and care for arthritis exists in BC. **Do you agree that a program of treatment and care for inflammatory arthritis should be a priority for BC?**
3. Arthritis affects more British Columbians than heart disease, cancer, respiratory conditions, and spinal cord trauma, and has a serious impact on quality of life. **Given its prevalence and seriousness, do you think the current BC government is doing enough to address arthritis?**
4. While most inflammatory arthritis medications have been listed on the BC PharmaCare medication formulary, provincial reviews for these medications in BC took several years. **Moving forward, do you agree that all people with inflammatory arthritis in BC should be able to fill the prescriptions their doctors write for them regardless of ability to pay?**
5. Aboriginal British Columbians are more likely than non-Aboriginals to get arthritis, and their disease tends to be more disabling. **What would your government do to improve access to treatment for aboriginal people in BC, especially those living in rural/remote areas?**