

**Arthritis in Canada – A letter to the Federal Election Candidates  
(Email sent out date: September 18, 2019)**

**Letter from Arthritis Consumer Experts**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The delivery of healthcare may be a provincial responsibility, but the federal government also plays a significant role in funding healthcare and shaping healthcare policies.

Arthritis affects more than 6 million Canadians.

Many Canadians living with the disease are told that it is “just arthritis.” Indeed, joint pain is often seen as simply a normal part of aging. The significance of arthritis, and the possibility and importance of doing something about it, are discounted. The health care system and providers often fail to recognize and treat arthritis effectively. Health strategies, public policy and workplace policies treat arthritis lightly or say nothing at all.

In fact, Canadians of all ages, sexes and races can and do have arthritis, and it is the leading cause of disability in Canada. While the risk of arthritis increases as you age – half of people 65 and older have arthritis – the truth is people of all ages get arthritis including children and young adults. Approximately 60% of Canadians with arthritis are under age 65. And, to many people’s surprise, one in 1,000 children in Canada has arthritis.

As the number of Canadians living with osteoarthritis or inflammatory arthritis increases dramatically over the next 30 years, it has become more important than ever for the federal government to find solutions to prevent and treat these diseases.

Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) is the largest national, patient-led arthritis organization in Canada and is a trusted source for information on arthritis, treatments, research and health policy. Our members and subscribers are keenly following the federal election campaign and to help them compare the newly emerging healthcare platforms, we are asking the Conservative Party of Canada, the Green Party of Canada, the Liberal Party of Canada and the New Democratic Party of Canada the same five questions about top health care issues for Canadians living with arthritis.

We look forward to your Party’s response to our attached survey titled: “Share your plan for arthritis prevention, treatment and care in Canada”. Responses will be posted on our 2019 Federal Election page.

We have also included an arthritis information fact sheet titled “Arthritis Consumer Experts – Arthritis in Canada Fact Sheet” for your reference.

Regards,

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