Questions For The 2015 Federal Election

In preparation for the upcoming Federal election, the BCASW Health Advocacy has compiled a list of questions that can be used by Social Workers to pose to candidates in order to clarify their positions on issues important to the people we serve.

- There have been a number of measles outbreaks in Canada recently. Health Canada has recommended vaccinations as a safe and effective way to prevent the spread of this type of disease. Aside from Ontario and New Brunswick, vaccination is voluntary and not a requirement for school attendance. It has been suggested that to improve vaccination rates, a mandatory vaccination policy needs to be implemented requiring parents to opt-out with a signed form witnessed by a doctor, which informs the parent of the positive and negative consequences of their decision. **What is your party's position on the implementation of a mandatory vaccination policy?**

- 40% of Indigenous children are living in poverty. **What will your party do to eliminate disparities in funding for services such as child protection, education and safe water? How will you ensure that people living on First Nation reserves have access to adequate and culturally appropriate services on a comparable basis to other communities in Canada?**

- We know that each night in Canada, over 3000 women AND 3000 children sleep in emergency shelters to escape domestic violence. The United Nations has called on all countries to have a National Action Plan on Violence against Women in place by 2015. Currently, Canada has no comprehensive strategy to deal with violence against women. **How will your party support a comprehensive response to violence—including an inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women - and a National Action Plan?**

- Canada is last among its peer countries on public spending on child care, even though we know that funding child care has long term economic, social, and health benefits for children, families, and society that far outweigh the costs. Studies show that current policies like income-splitting only benefit 15% of households, discriminate against single parents, and favour families with one big earner. **What concrete actions would your party take to make childcare a top priority?**

- **What is your understanding of the social determinants of health, and how would your party's social and economic policies strengthen these determinants?**

- **How would your party work to reduce the disparity that exists in the coverage provided by the various provincial and territorial health authorities across Canada?**

- There are 747,000 Canadians living with dementia, and that number is expected to double in the nest 16 years as our population ages. Canada needs a National Dementia Strategy. **What would this look like and how would your party implement it?**

- Given that the EI fund continues to run an annual operating surplus and given that the 15 week sick leave benefit is too short for some workers recovering from cancer and other serious illnesses, **do you support an increase in the duration of EI sick leave benefits for eligible recipients?**

- **What specific services are you interested in maintaining and in adding to our troubled National Health Care Plan?**

- **What views do you have about the importance of mental health services? What are your thoughts about implementing recommendations in regards to our National Mental Health Committee?**

- **What are your opinions about the proposed Correctional Service changes, e.g. privatization of correctional services, programs and institutions? What are your opinions about providing mental health services to inmates in our jails and institutions?**

- **How would your party ensure adequate levels of health care funding including community and public health?**

- Pharmacare coverage is different from province to province. Canadians not covered by extended health plans may not be able to afford costly medications required to treat their health conditions. **What is your party's position on universal Pharmacare coverage?**