



April 29, 2009

## Open letter to the BC New Democratic Party

The Better Pharmacare Coalition represents provincial and national health organizations and consumer groups with a mandate to speak on behalf of British Columbia citizens on issues related to the Government's PharmaCare program. The Coalition works on behalf of its membership of over two million patients to ensure appropriate and timely BC PharmaCare program coverage for medications proved effective at treating serious and life-threatening diseases.

For the BC PharmaCare program to best serve BC residents requires that experts are able to prescribe the right medicine, at the right time, to their patients.

We understand there are no easy answers or quick fixes to the challenges facing us in the health care system. We have worked closely with the Minister of Health Services and Ministry officials to improve patient health outcomes and find cost savings to help ensure the sustainability of BC's PharmaCare program.

We believe, however, the current drug policy can be improved so that patients have timely access to prescription medications best suited to their medical condition in this area. That is why the BC Pharmacare Coalition has consistently supported the recommendations of the Pharmaceutical Task Force. We want what patients across BC need and what the Task Force ultimately calls for in its recommendations: "to create a more streamlined and transparent drug review process while delivering the best patient outcomes and the best value for British Columbians."

Just as important, at this time of cost pressures on the BC healthcare system, the Task Force has made concrete and achievable recommendations to reform the province's pharmaceutical review processes to ensure Government gets the best possible value for taxpayers' dollars.

**During this provincial election, the BC Pharmacare Coalition would like to receive the BC New Democratic Party's commitment, if elected to serve as the next Government in BC, that it will ensure the full implementation of the Pharmaceutical Task Force Report recommendations to increase access to new medicines and technologies, provide greater control and choice for patients, resulting in a more transparent drug review and approval process with public participation better healthcare outcomes for all British Columbians.**

The BC Pharmacare Coalition would like to receive the BC New Democratic Party response to this vitally important question by May 5, 2009 and is committed to sharing your response with our membership of more than two million patients.

Please send your response to Pamela Gole, Better Pharmacare Coalition Coordinator at [pgole@betterpharmacare.com](mailto:pgole@betterpharmacare.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cheryl Koehn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cheryl" and the last name "Koehn" clearly distinguishable.

Cheryl Koehn  
Chair, Better Pharmacare Coalition  
President, Arthritis Consumer Experts