

Survey - Recreation Nova Scotia - Response of the New Democratic Party

Question 1: What is your party's vision for ensuring the provincial government continues to provide a leadership role? Will you continue to appoint a Senior Minister who will have responsibility for making this happen? How will you involve those who directly support the delivery of recreation services?

Response: The NDP, in partnership with stakeholders and the public, will develop a comprehensive, multi-year plan to improve the health status of Nova Scotians. The NDP plan will include specific strategies with goals, objectives, and measurable targets. The Office of Health Promotion will have an important leadership role and the resources needed to achieve results. The NDP will appoint a Minister to be responsible for the Office of Health Promotion. This Minister will be responsible for achieving the goal of a healthier population. Recreational programs, facilities and support for community-based organizations are essential components of health promotion.

The NDP will work to improve the health of Nova Scotians by adopting healthy public policy. No other goal is as important to our province. The NDP will clearly communicate this priority to all departments. The NDP will use the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) to measure Nova Scotia's progress in such terms as increased environmental sustainability, healthier people and stronger communities. Health impact statements will become a requirement in all department business plans, Cabinet submissions and departmental program evaluations.

Question 2: What will you and your Party's level of commitment to increasing physical activity across Nova Scotia and ensuring adequate funds are provided to the Active Kids-Healthy Kids Strategy, i.e., how much funding over what period of time?

Response: The NDP realizes the program currently receives modest funding and expansion is needed. We will consider the recommendation brought forward by the Working Group overseeing the program, consult with stakeholders and determine which future directions offer the most promise.

Question 3: How will you and your party commit to support recreation opportunities—helping ensure our young people stay out of trouble?

Response: To reduce economic barriers to participation the NDP will increase support for community recreation.

Question 4: How is your party going to ensure that appropriate and equitable levels of funding is provided to recreation and sport facility development?

Response: Recreational facility development—major and minor—requires a provincial contribution to support community-based efforts to raise funds from the community or other levels of government. The funding commitment to these and other health promotion priorities must be placed in the context of a comprehensive long-term health promotion

strategy. The NDP will work with stakeholders to develop and implement such a strategy and provide a level of funding according to priority actions.

Question 5: How is your party going to ensure that funding for minor facility development (ball fields, play grounds, etc.) is available to meet the need and demand?

Response: See previous response

Question 6: What is your position on introducing daily physical education in Nova Scotia's schools?

Response: The NDP will restore physical education as full credit course in high school. We will review the proposal for daily physical education with parents, students, educators and the recreation community.

Question 7: We want to know what your plan is for supporting volunteerism and the voluntary sector, and what investment is your party prepared to make to this sector?

Response: As governments have backed out of commitments to community-based initiatives in recent years the burden has increasingly fallen on volunteers to make up the short-fall through more fund-raising and more volunteer work. With our aging population and slow growth the general decline in volunteerism in Canada is even more of a challenge in our province. Volunteers want support for their efforts as they are result-oriented people who are rewarded by the sense of accomplishment when a project is completed or a service provided. The NDP will work with voluntary organizations and support them by making the provincial government their partners once again.

One important issue is liability insurance. The NDP is aware of this threat to voluntary work and we will work hard to develop a solution that ensures secure, affordable rates over the long term.

Question 8: What is your party prepared to do to ensure these volunteer community groups are able to continue to offer recreational opportunities?

Response: As mentioned, liability insurance is one issue that is becoming a barrier. This needs to be addressed. Adequate funding levels for new development is another areas that needs to be improved. Continued support by way of instruction, guidance and encouragement is another valuable contribution government can make.