



Pan-Canadian Pharmacare

Access to medications for treatment and prevention is necessity, not a luxury.

In terms of access to HIV treatment across Canada, we are fortunate to be located in British Columbia: our province has made antiretroviral medications available, free of charge, for everyone living with HIV. This year, British Columbia also significantly increased access to medications that can treat Hepatitis C, and to HPV vaccinations for those of us under the age of 26. We believe this level of access to medications for treatment and prevention is a necessity, not a luxury to be handed out based on the luck of where we live.

We believe youth need a pan-Canadian drug plan so that treatment, care and support are a reality for those of us living with HIV and Hepatitis C, and who are managing other health conditions with medication, whatever province we call home. Our ability to access prescription medications should not be dictated by whether we live on-reserve or off-reserve, whether we are incarcerated or not, or whether we live with parents or guardians who have private drug plans.

Approximately 25% of people newly diagnosed with HIV in Canada are under the age of 30. **Inequities in our education, health, and social services are factors that contribute to the ways HIV and Hepatitis C affect our communities.** For youth who are street-involved, who inject drugs, and for young men who are sexually active with other men, rates of HIV are elevated. Similarly, injection drug use and street involvement are key factors that drive new Hepatitis C diagnoses among youth.

Pan-Canadian pharmacare will mean better health for youth living with HIV and/or Hep C, and more options for preventing HIV and Hepatitis C from being passed between people. HIV and Hep C treatment, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention, are crucial tools for reducing the impact of these viruses in our communities. Pan-Canadian pharmacare should mean all youth in Canada are able to access medications as part of our care when it comes to HIV treatment or prevention, treating Hepatitis C, and supporting our overall wellness.

Most youth in Canada do not live in a location where we can access medications we need in an affordable way. Moving between provinces is a reality for many youth: we may move to another province to find communities where we are safe and supported, and/or to access meaningful employment and education opportunities. Pan-Canadian pharmacare will ensure we have uninterrupted access to medication for treatment and prevention of HIV and other medical conditions, and treatment of Hepatitis C, wherever we live and as we move between provinces and territories.

Pan-Canadian pharmacare is consistently shown to be cost-effective and to improve health outcomes, and Canada has not yet made this a reality for all of us. We are encouraging youth, people living with HIV and/or Hepatitis C, and our supporters, to get our vote on and make pharmacare part of this upcoming federal election. Access to prescription medications matters for all Canadians. Get your vote on, and vote for pan-Canadian pharmacare.



GET YOUR VOTE ON!

YouthCO operates on the traditional territory of the x̱w̱məθḵw̱y̱əm, Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, and works to support indigenous youth leadership, health and wellbeing.