

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## The PEI Liberal Party to Expand Access to Nursing Care

CHARLOTTETOWN - Nurses are the most prevalent provider in our healthcare system. Without nurses, there is no healthcare system. More than anyone else, they are the face of healthcare delivery. But, as they've told us, "nurses are at a breaking point."

PEI is short approximately 300 nurses, causing a profound impact on healthcare access. Virtually every department, ER, or rural hospital is just one missed nursing shift away from a closure or reduction of service.

Today, PEI Liberal Leader Sharon Cameron announced a bold approach to expanding the nursing workforce on PEI and a real plan to improve recruitment and retention to solve the crisis facing nurses at all levels of our healthcare and long-term care systems.

"This government waited until four days before an election to present any sort of idea to address the stress and work conditions facing nurses," stated Sharon Cameron, Leader of the PEI Liberal Party. "Frankly, this shows a lack of leadership and foresight by a government who failed to work with nurses to increase a workforce that nurses themselves are saying is in crisis to the point of jeopardizing our healthcare system."

Under our *Healthcare First* plan, a Liberal government will:

- **Engage with RN and LPN Nursing organizations to develop a Nursing Sustainability Strategy** that is based on a 10-year workforce projection to define projected shortages and recruitment, retention, and compensation challenges, and identify lasting solutions that Islanders can have confidence in.
- **Increase student enrollment in expanded PEI nursing programs** through a Team PEI Nursing Scholarship that covers the tuition costs upfront for any nurse who trains on PEI and returns to work in PEI's healthcare system.
- **Address financial compensation** so that nursing becomes an attractive, financially-rewarding career that incentivizes new entrants and **ensures retention of existing nurses**.

"The Team PEI Nursing Scholarship is critical to rectifying the nursing levels in each sector," said Cameron

"By removing the upfront barriers for training and recruitment, we will facilitate more nurses entering the system, and we can start to relieve our health workforce challenges."

The Liberal Party will work with UPEI and Holland College to ensure that the programs can be offered in rural areas to assist recruitment.

**HEALTHCARE** *first*

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