

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The PEI Liberal Party to Support Seniors to Stay-at-HomeFirst

CHARLOTTETOWN - According to Statistics Canada, the number of Islanders aged 80-plus is projected to rise by 66.2 percent by 2030.

"That's a major shift in our community to have that many seniors over the age of 80, but this does not seem to even be on the radar of this government," said Sharon Cameron, Leader of the Liberal Party of PEI. "We saw how much this government cared about our seniors during the aftermath of Fiona and the ongoing security concerns in the province's seniors' homes."

"The fact is that no one wants to leave home before they need to, but we aren't offering enough services to keep them in their homes," said Sharon. "If this government cared about seniors, there would have been more investment and programs."

The Liberal Party is proposing a new program called HomeFirst, where family caregivers can be compensated for up to \$1,500 per month to care for an immediate relative in their own homes. This program will also include a one-time capital contribution of up to \$10,000 to cover 50 percent of the cost of renovations to support caring for a senior in their own home.

The Liberal Party's *Healthcare First* platform will improve access to homecare with its plan to:

1. **Launch HomeFirst, a home care program** designed to provide financial compensation for Islanders who stay at home to care for a loved one;
2. **Ensure HomeFirst** supports Island caregivers with system-wide health supports, including:
 - Provincial needs assessment to determine the level of care requirements;
 - Inclusion in the provincial home care program for monitoring and follow-up;
 - Access to 911 and Island EMS paramedics mobile integrated health services for in-home care under an expanded Senior's Check-In Program;
 - Access to advanced first-aid training for caregivers; and
 - Access to mental health supports and training for caregivers;
3. Provide seniors and their families with the **tools and technologies** that allow them to live longer in their homes.

HEALTHCARE *first*

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"When caregivers are better supported, we can sharpen our focus to Islanders' long-term care needs that cannot easily be accommodated in our own homes, such as dementia or Alzheimer's care," said Cameron.

Despite the importance of nursing care and community care facilities, these facilities and associations have gone multiple years with expired government contracts and no funding stability.

The Liberal Party's *Healthcare First* platform will improve access to long-term care and senior's housing with its plan to:

1. **Engage with the associations serving the long-term care sector** to develop a strategic approach to planning for and addressing long-term care needs on PEI;
2. **Expand nursing care aimed at treating the unique needs of dementia patients** in both public and private facilities;
3. **Expand investments in new, affordable seniors housing** that provide seniors with assisted living options.

"We owe so much to our seniors in this province, and they deserve to live in dignity," said Cameron. "A Liberal government recognizes this, and we will get to work right away when elected to improve the lives of seniors."

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