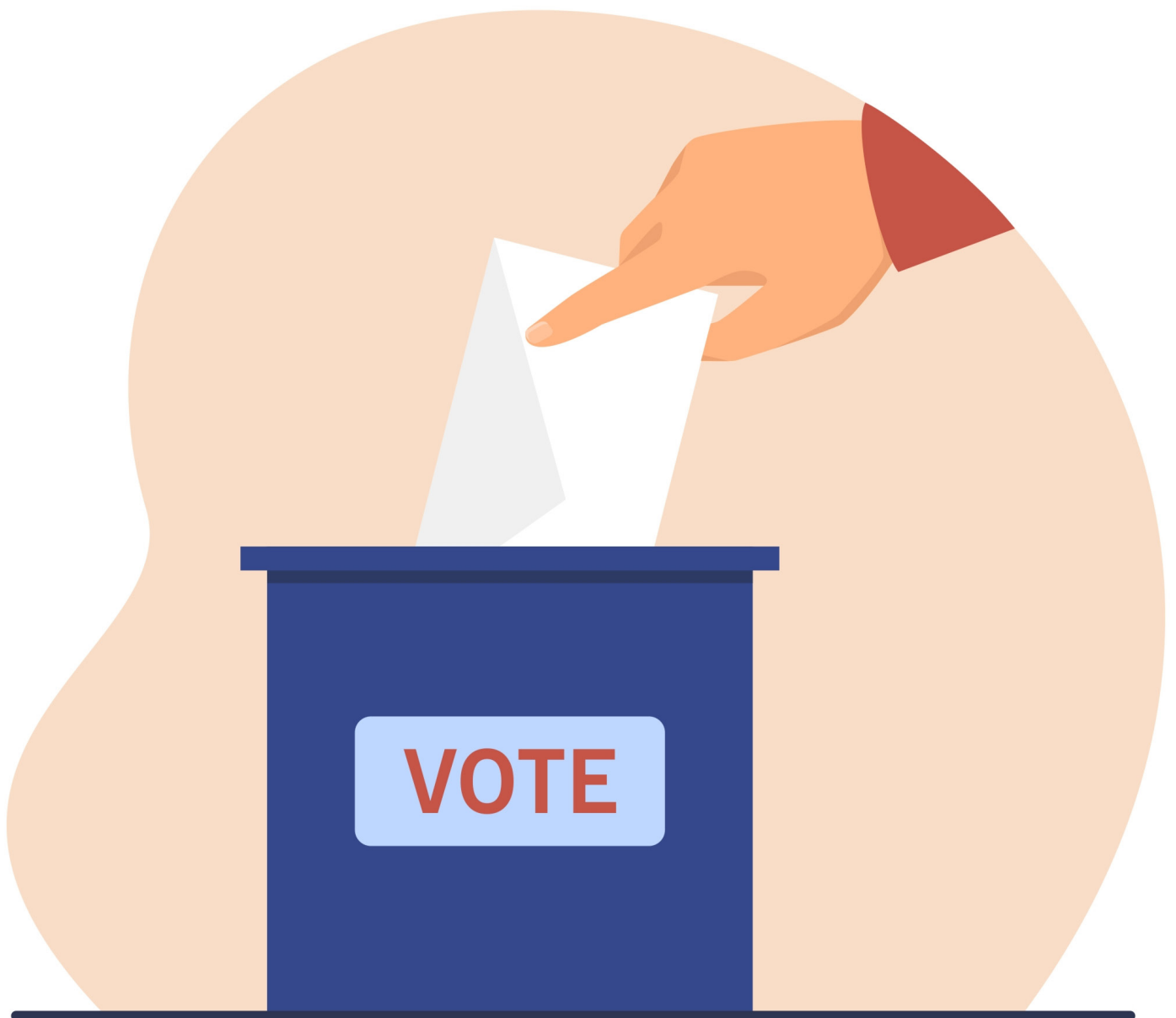


QUÉBEC ELECTION TOOLKIT 2022



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2022 QUÉBEC ELECTION TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Québec is heading to the polls and in the lead up to this election we are asking you, the members of the Québec Parkinson's community, to reach out to your electoral candidates and call on them to prioritize Parkinson's. It is time Québec recognizes that the province's healthcare outcomes need improvement, and this is the opportunity to have your voice heard!

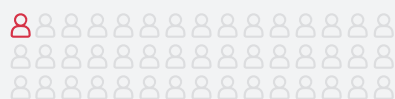
This toolkit provides you with a step-by-step guide on how to effectively engage with elected officials and candidates, some key information and data on Parkinson's and the current realities of healthcare in Québec, and with some key strategic asks.



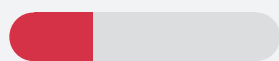
There are over **23,500** people living with Parkinson's in Québec.



The provincial average wait time to meet with a Parkinson's specialist is **seven months**.



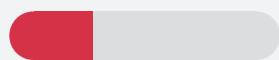
There is **1** Parkinson's specialist for every **2,359** people with Parkinson's in the province.



Nearly **25%** of people with Parkinson's in Québec report waiting one year or more to receive a formal diagnosis.



42% of people with Parkinson's pay out of pocket for physiotherapy.



26% of people with Parkinson's pay out of pocket for medications.



STEP 1:

Get Prepared

An overview of Parkinson's in Canada

Canada has one of the highest prevalence rates of Parkinson's in the world. It is estimated there are more than 100,000 people in Canada living with Parkinson's and that number will grow by about 30 people tomorrow and the day after, until we reach 50 new diagnoses per day within 10 years.

An overview of Parkinson's in Québec

More than 23,500 of the 100,000 Canadians living with Parkinson's are in the province of Québec. In 2018, the provincial average wait time to meet with a Parkinson's specialist was seven months, and this has likely worsened following the pandemic. It is estimated that there is only one Parkinson's specialist for every 2,359 people living with Parkinson's in Québec. Most of the specialists are in major cities across the southern portion of the province. Similarly, many Parkinson-specific services are centralized to urban regions posing geographical access barriers to residents in northern or rural areas.

Many Québécois living with Parkinson's are required to pay out of pocket for critical healthcare services. It is estimated more than 42 per cent of individuals pay out of pocket for exercise programs and physiotherapy, and 26 per cent of individuals report paying a portion of their medication costs out of pocket. Furthermore, more than 55 per cent of people with Parkinson's in Québec reported not being part of a movement disorders clinic.

It is very important that we make our elected officials aware of the urgency of improving healthcare outcomes for people with Parkinson's and their care partners.

Parkinson Canada Advocacy Roundtables

The 2021 Parkinson Canada Roundtable Series (www.parkinson.ca/advocacy) consisted of eight regional roundtables, including one in Québec, and a national session. This effort brought together more than 150 voices from the Canadian Parkinson's community to gather understanding, insight, and clarity around healthcare realities and how to support Parkinson Canada's advocacy efforts. People living with Parkinson's, care partners, healthcare professionals, and regional Parkinson's organizations were invited to participate.

The Québec Roundtable Report (www.parkinson.ca/election) summarizes the unique realities faced by the Québec Parkinson's community and identifies key priorities to better improve their overall health and quality of life.

Key Priorities Around Parkinson's Healthcare Realities in Québec:

1) Wait Times:

- The prolonged wait times to see a Parkinson's specialist and receive a diagnosis (seven month average and as long as two years) have serious implications for an individual's quality of life and increase the likelihood for both physical and mental health deterioration.

2) Model of Care:

- Integrated health care comprises a multidisciplinary, non-invasive approach involving mental health support, nutritional support, exercise/physiotherapy, and language or speech support that helps in the holistic well-being of people living with Parkinson's.
- Currently, there is no consistent model of care in Québec.

3) Access to Care:

- Most Parkinson's specialists are in major cities across southern Québec. Similarly, many Parkinson-specific services are centralized to urban regions, posing geographical access barriers to residents in northern or rural areas.
- Many individuals also experience financial barriers to care, having to pay out-of-pocket in some part for medication, speech therapy, physiotherapy, and exercise classes.

These priorities will provide a roadmap to the organization in developing our future advocacy work in supporting Québécois affected by Parkinson's.



STEP 2:

Identify your Member of the National Assembly and Candidates (pre- and post-election)

To find your electoral division, your Member of the National Assembly (MNA), their parliamentary roles, and more, visit: <https://www.electionsquebec.qc.ca/en/electoral-maps/quebec-electoral-map/>

To find your division's candidates, voting locations, how to register, and accessibility services available, please visit: <https://www.electionsquebec.qc.ca/en/homepage/>

MNAs often have additional parliamentary responsibilities or appointments, including being named a cabinet minister or member of a committee. These are of special interest as your MNA may have a closer connection to an issue and may potentially be in a better position of influence. For example, parliamentary responsibilities relating to health, finance, disability, or seniors would be of special interest to the Parkinson's Community.



STEP 3:

Get Involved

Engage with your MNA and candidates

Here are a few ways you can get involved and have your voice heard by the government:

1. Visit www.parkinson.ca/election for further information and send a letter directly to your electoral candidates.
2. Connect with your MNA, electoral candidate, and key ministers through social media, using the **#PrioritizePD** hashtag. See some examples below.
3. Meet with your MNA or candidates in-person, virtually, or by phone to share your message.
4. Write a letter or email to your MNA, electoral candidate, and key ministers. See templates and letter writing tips below.
5. Follow your MNA or candidate on social media and subscribe to their newsletters to familiarize yourself with their activities and priorities.

Strategic Asks for Your Member of the National Assembly/Candidates

The objective of the meetings is to build a relationship with the MNA or candidate while raising awareness about Parkinson's and to find areas of shared priorities.

1. Request that the MNA/Candidate show their support for what you have discussed by sharing a message on social media emphasizing the importance of improving healthcare for Québécois with Parkinson's, using the **#PrioritizePD** hashtag.
2. Ask the MNA/Candidate to learn more about Parkinson's. A great place for them to start is our website www.parkinson.ca or by emailing advocacy@parkinson.ca.
3. Request that the MNA/Candidate share what they have learned around the need for improved healthcare outcomes for Québécois with Parkinsons with their party and in government.
4. Ask what their top priorities will be if elected and how can Parkinson Canada and you can help them accomplish these.
5. Ask what measures their party intends to take for Québécois to have equitable access to care across the province.
6. Ask how their party intends to improve specialist wait times in Québec.

SOCIAL MEDIA POST EXAMPLES



Improved healthcare support for people with Parkinson's and their care partners is an important issue, as over 23,500 of the 100,000 Canadians living with Parkinson's are in Québec. **#PrioritizePD #QCelxn**



Canada has one of the highest prevalence rates of Parkinson's in the world. The time is now to ensure equitable, timely, and affordable access to care. **#PrioritizePD #QCelxn**



The average wait time to see a specialist for diagnosis of Parkinson's in Québec is 7 months and over two years in some regions as there is only 1 specialist available for every 2,359 people with Parkinson's. Improve healthcare in Québec. **#PrioritizePD #QCelxn**



More than 40% of people in Québec living with Parkinson's find it difficult to pay for medical expenses. Québécois deserve a proper model of care and equitable access to treatments, programs, and therapeutic options. **#PrioritizePD #QCelxn**

Considerations When Interacting with Your MNAs/Candidates

1. MNAs and candidates are very busy during elections as they are meeting with as many constituents as possible. Be prepared and expect to have 15-30 minutes with the official.
2. Meetings are not the only way to get time with an MNA/candidate. Check the news or the candidates' website for local events they will be attending. Sign up for their local newsletters to receive updates on their activities.
3. As a charitable organization, Parkinson Canada is nonpartisan. When advocating on our behalf, please refrain from showing support or favour for one party over another.

Template Agenda for Meeting with MNAs/Candidates

1. Introduction

- Share your connection to Parkinson's.
- Ask if they have a connection to Parkinson's.

2. Parkinson's in Québec and Request

- Share key information and data on Parkinson's by highlighting some main points.
- Request their commitment to make Parkinson's a priority to ensure that improved healthcare is seen as important.
- Make it personal by providing your main points on why this is important as it relates to your personal experience.

3. Questions to ask your MNA/Candidate

- How do you and your team intend to improve the lives of Québécois living with Parkinson's?
- Can I count on you to make Parkinson's a priority?
- Will you share this support publicly by posting on social media with the **#PrioritizePD** hashtag?
- Will you write a letter to your electoral candidate and key ministers requesting that Parkinson's be urgently addressed as a healthcare priority?

4. Thank them for their time and let them know you will follow up!

Don't forget to let us know how your meeting went at advocacy@parkinson.ca

Sample Emails to MNAs/Candidates

1. Use this email template for meeting requests:

Hello Minister/MNA _____,

My name is _____. I am a resident in your division of _____. I have been [living with Parkinson's disease for X years/month/caring for my_____ with Parkinson's for X years/months]. During this time, I have experienced [add personal challenges with accessing care/services].

As a supporter of the Parkinson's community and in partnership with Parkinson Canada, I am requesting to meet with you to discuss the need for the government to make Parkinson's a priority and commit to improving healthcare for Québécois in the Parkinson's community.

Thank you in advance for your response. I look forward to meeting with you.

[Signed]

[Your Address]

2. Use this email template if you are unable to meet with your elected official but would like to share your story and requests with them:

Hello Minister/MNA _____,

My name is _____. I am a resident in your division of _____. I have been [living with Parkinson's disease for X years/month/caring for my_____ with Parkinson's for X years/months].

During this time, I have experienced [add personal challenges with accessing care/services].

As a supporter of the Parkinson's community and in partnership with Parkinson Canada, I am requesting to meet with you to discuss the need for the government to make Parkinson's a priority and commit to improving healthcare for the Parkinson's community.

I would like you to consider the following questions:

How do you intend to improve the lives of Québécois living with Parkinson's in your role?

What measures does your party intend to take for Québécois to have equitable access to care across the province?

How does your party intend to improve specialist wait times in Québec?

Can I count on you to commit to making Parkinson's a priority?

Will you write a letter to your electoral candidate and key ministers requesting that Parkinson's be urgently addressed as a healthcare priority?

What advice or feedback do you have for us to have our request for improved healthcare move forward?

Thank you in advance for your response.

[Signed]

[Your Address]

Tips for Writing an Effective Letter and Emails to MNAs/Candidates

Address your letter correctly. Be sure you have the correct address and salutation in your letter.

Always start by writing to your local elected official or candidate. Elected officials are most interested in your concerns when they represent you.

Only address one issue per letter. Being concise on one specific topic will make for a quicker and more impactful ask and response.

Be accurate. Beware of false or misleading information. Always double-check if you are not sure!

Make a specific ask. Make sure to ask your elected official or candidate to act. Whether it is asking for a meeting, a phone call, to support a bill, or a current initiative; always ask for their position on the issue you are addressing.

Make it personal. Share your story and how it affects you. Tie in your own experience and expertise using your own words.

Be polite and courteous. Rudeness or aggressiveness is sure to alienate the reader.

Be concise. Keep your letter as short as possible to ensure that your message is fully read.

Include your return address in your letter. Even in an email, always include your address so that the elected official knows that you live in the division they represent. Make sure your MNA/candidate knows how to reach you and include your phone number if you are comfortable.

Express appreciation. Thank them for their time and consideration and add a note about another initiative that they may have taken part in to show that you are following their activities.

Follow up. Elected officials and candidates are busy and it may take weeks to respond. Follow up via phone or email to confirm that they received your letter if you have not received a timely response. When you do receive a response, send a follow-up thank-you letter and ask follow-up questions if they provided unsatisfactory responses. Follow-up letters often have a much larger impact than the initial communication as the elected official will recognize the importance of the issue to you.



STEP 4:

Post-election

The post-election period is the perfect opportunity to solidify existing relationships with the MNAs and other government officials and form new ones with those newly elected.

The day after the election, please visit www.parkinson.ca/election to send a letter to your MNA and ministers (once appointed) and follow Steps 2 to 3 in this package to continue raising awareness and engaging officials.



When addressing correspondence to Dignitaries, please reference the proper styles:

Dignitary	Salutation	In Conversation
Premier or Cabinet Minister The Honorable (full name), Minister of _____/ Premier of Québec Note: The Premier and/or Cabinet Minister does not keep the title of “The Honourable” after leaving office. A Premier will only retain the title of “The Honourable” for life if they are made a member of the Queen’s Privy Council by the federal government.	Dear Minister/Premier _____(last name)	Minister/Premier_____, (last name)
Members of National Assembly _____ (first and last name), MNA Or The Honorable _____ (first and last name), MNA Note: MNAs do not keep the title of “The Honourable” after leaving office. A Premier will only retain the title of “The Honourable” for life if they are made a member of the Queen’s Privy Council by the federal government.	Dear MNA/last name	MNA/last name

ABOUT PARKINSON CANADA

People with Parkinson's are at the centre of everything we do. Our mission is to transform the lives of people living with Parkinson's.

Parkinson Canada funds critical research, provides information and support, increases awareness, and advocates for improved health care outcomes for people living with Parkinson's across Canada.

<https://www.parkinson.ca/>

