

The Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to health promotion and value based health care. By prioritizing outcomes, the healthcare system will focus on value to patients. Value-based healthcare initiatives lower costs for better outcomes, increase patient satisfaction rates and provide stronger control over costs and risk reduction.

While our province is at the national average of meeting the six-month benchmark for joint replacement surgery, we are always striving to improve wait times.

COVID has caused a disruption in health care of sorts, including its impact on wait times for non urgent surgeries. Managing acute health care during a pandemic like this has challenged governments here and abroad in ways that we have not been used to.

The pandemic has also accelerated our work in the field of virtual care. We need to make the most of this disruptive opportunity to reimagine and reinvent how we deliver health care around the province so that it's meeting the needs of our citizens. Our low population density in Newfoundland and Labrador makes health care delivery challenging. Expanding eHealth initiatives and integrated health care teams will help address that demographic challenge, and allow us to better focus resources on procedures that must be completed in person. .

Our government is working with key stakeholders like the NLMA at a more centralized approach to waitlist management through the department's wait time coordinator.

Our Government's focus on improving access to primary health care and health and wellness will also help address issues identified in your letter. We know that keeping people healthy is the best way to avoid an overburdened system. Helping people maintain healthy lifestyles also helps reduce the numbers waiting for surgery, thereby shortening wait times for those that require it.

We also continue to work with the RHAs and stakeholders to retain and recruit needed physicians and other primary healthcare workers here in the province.

We are committed to advancing the well-being of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and reimagining what healthcare means in our province. This is the purpose of establishing Health Accord NL, a taskforce that will reimagine the health care system in order to best deliver services to meet the needs of people in communities across the province. This work will be undertaken in consultation with stakeholders to ensure it is reflective and responsive.

With our concentrated focus on health and wellness, improving access to primary healthcare, and recruitment and retention of physicians and other healthcare workers we are confident that these actions will lead to a reduction in wait times for joint replacement surgery.