



# All Hands-on-Deck:

Grassroots Advocacy Strategy for the  
2024 B.C. Provincial Election



**BC Care  
Providers**  
ASSOCIATION



## All Hands-on-Deck:

### Grassroots Advocacy Strategy for the 2024 B.C. Provincial Election

In preparation for the upcoming 2024 provincial election, BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) has prepared a comprehensive pre-election strategy on behalf of its members and the seniors living, wellness and care communities they serve.

BCCPA's **All Hands-on-Deck: An Urgent Action to Ensure Care for B.C. Seniors** plan is designed to secure commitments from all major political parties to adopt this plan, and ultimately, to see that BCCPA's policy recommendations are implemented by the next governing party.

### Calls to Action

We urge our members, as well as non-members, to actively participate in this advocacy effort. By engaging with local MLAs and candidates, you can highlight the critical work of care providers and emphasize the needs of seniors and their families in your community, keeping seniors' care at the forefront of political priorities.

#### Key Advocacy Priorities:



**1 Implement an 'aging in the right place' tax credit** to support seniors who want to age in their homes and communities, while avoiding premature moves to long-term care or assisted living;



**2 Build 5,000 new long-term care beds by 2028** to help ensure that older adults can access long-term care services where and when they need them;



**3 Implement a continuous request for proposal (RFP) model** for long-term care providers to pitch in to meet the demand for new seniors' care residences across B.C.; and

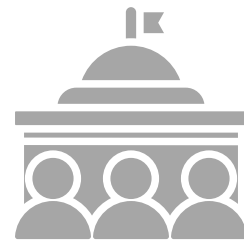


**4 Create a redevelopment fund for aging long-term care infrastructure** to ensure that older adults can age with dignity and comfort.

## Understanding Candidates and Incumbent MLAs



**Candidates** are both non-elected and elected officials who have been nominated by a political party to run in an election.



**Incumbent MLAs** are those who are currently holding a seat in the legislature and are running for re-election.

## The Role of MLAs

Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are elected by their constituents to represent them in B.C.'s Legislature. Except for independent members, MLAs represent political parties – e.g., the B.C. New Democratic Party (BC NDP), the Green Party of B.C., or the Conservative Party of B.C. MLAs play a critical role in shaping policy and legislation.

When the Legislative Assembly is not in session, MLAs are often in their communities learning about the local issues and concerns that residents may have. The Legislative Assembly adjourned for the summer on May 16th and will return after the 2024 B.C. provincial election on October 19th.

## Connecting with Candidates

Candidates often live in the communities where they are running for election, making them familiar with the local issues that matter most to their constituents. With the election nearing, candidates and MLAs will be even more active in their communities, making it a prime opportunity to make your voice heard. You can reach out to them through emails, meet them at local events, or speak with them directly when they're canvassing door-to-door. The insights they gather during this time helps shape their party's platform, ensuring that local concerns are reflected in their policy approach.

When engaging with a candidate at your door, share the All Hands-On-Deck Plan and ask about their party's stance on seniors' care. Additionally, scheduling a formal meeting with your MLA/candidate can be highly effective. To assist you, we've prepared a checklist to guide you through the process.

**Want to enhance your advocacy?**



Encourage an MLA/candidate to endorse and integrate BCCPA's *All Hands-on-Deck* plan by using our email template.

Download it by scanning the QR code:



## Before the Meeting

- Identify the constituency/riding of your organization and gather the contact information of the relevant MLA or candidate(s). Expect a response from their office between 2-5 business days.

**Information for MLAs** can be found on the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia website at [www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca).

**Information for candidates** can be found on each party's website:

- Conservative Party of BC: [conservativebc.ca/our\\_team](http://conservativebc.ca/our_team)
- BC Greens: [bcgreens2024.ca/your-candidates/](http://bcgreens2024.ca/your-candidates/)
- BC New Democratic Party: [www.bcndp.ca/team](http://www.bcndp.ca/team)

- Read the **MLA/candidate's biography** and learn if they are a Minister, Parliamentary Secretary, or sit on a relevant committee. This will determine **how to address the MLA/candidate in your meeting request**.

Scan the QR code to access the MLA Engagement Guide and scroll to page 9 for a guide on honourifics.



- Knowing what party they represent, use the BCCPA Election Message Guide to **tailor your key messages** to their background, portfolio and political party.
- Think about the **key points** you would like to communicate about your site and/or organization. You may develop key messages or have some **facts about the demographics** of your community prepared in advance.

## Requesting a Meeting

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- In your meeting request, include a sentence or two outlining the nature of your request and what you would like to discuss with the MLA. Ensure you address the MLA or candidate appropriately, using the correct title and name as mentioned in the 'Before the Meeting' section.

*To view a sample letter invitation, visit page 10 of the MLA Engagement Guide, which can be accessed using the QR code on page 3.*

- Let BCCPA know about the visit, as the Association may have information or useful advice to share with you. If you would like to request a meeting, BCCPA may be able to reach out and facilitate an introduction on your behalf.
- If applicable, let your organization's head office know about the invitation, as they may wish to send a representative.



### TIP

Meeting with a candidate is different from meeting with an MLA. Candidates often have a full-time job in addition to their campaigning efforts. This could mean that they are only available on evenings and weekends. You must be willing to be flexible to accommodate their availability.

Some candidates may have a temporary office in their electoral riding; however, some candidates might request a meeting in the community, such as a coffee shop or community centre.

## During a Meeting

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- Designate someone to take notes during the meeting to capture key points from the MLA/candidate and any questions they raise, as these insights can be valuable for future reference.

- Start with the basics – depending on their portfolio and professional background, the MLA/candidate may not know much about seniors living and continuing care sector. You can use the sector backgrounder on page 12 of the MLA Engagement Guide.
- Provide some examples/stories of how this will help the senior community you serve.
- Ask for their commitment to follow up on your request and get back to you.
- Ask for a picture with the MLA/candidate and let them know you would like to post on social media and tag them.
- Leave time for discussion and Q&A. Answer questions, but don't go beyond your depth.
- Offering to follow-up with more information is often sufficient.

Approach the conversation with the MLA/candidate as a collaborative effort. Focus on BCCPA's policies and the priorities of your organization, maintaining a non-partisan tone throughout the discussion.



Keep in mind that MLAs have busy schedules and may be running behind. Be prepared to start the meeting later than planned and adjust your agenda as needed to fit the time available.

### *After the Meeting*

- Send a thank you email with 3-4 of your most important points from the meeting and include any photos taken with you and the MLA/candidate.
- Follow up 3-6 months later and include your last email correspondence. Depending on the October 19th election, you may need to set up a new meeting if the MLA elected is not the candidate you originally spoke with.

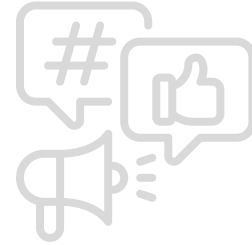
## TIP



Keep them engaged! Foster a relationship with the local MLA by keeping them updated on your organization's activity. Whenever you have noteworthy events, milestones, press releases, etc., consider sharing them with the MLA by email. MLAs like to hear what is going on in their constituencies.

## More Ways to Amplify Your Advocacy

**Get the Word Out:** Share your advocacy efforts with colleagues and peers in the sector, encouraging them to get involved. Connect with other BCCPA members to discuss opportunities for collaboration and how you can work together to strengthen advocacy for the sector.



**Utilize Social Media:** Leverage social media platforms to educate others and raise awareness about the All Hands-On-Deck policy objectives using the hashtag **#AllHandsOnDeck**. Encourage BCCPA members and others in the sector to like, share, and repost your content to maximize its reach.

Example X/Twitter and LinkedIn Post:

Thank you *[Insert honourific + MLA name/handle or candidate name/handle]* for meeting with *[your organization]* to discuss important issues that impact #seniorscare. Together, we can take action to meet the demands of the #agingpopulation and to help ensure the best care for our seniors well into the future.

#AllHandsOnDeck

*[Attach a picture of yourself with the MLA/candidate]*

Tagging individuals with @ in your posts and using relevant hashtags (i.e., #AllHandOnDeck) can help draw more attention to your message, making your advocacy efforts more visible and impactful.



Tag us in your posts at @bccareproviders on X/Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram!

# Contact

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