

PRESS RELEASE HOLD UNTIL August 15, 2023

Survey Shows 83 % of Canadians Approve of Free Prescription Birth Control Across Canada. 7 in 10 Feel it is an Urgent Issue.

Dr Rupinder Toor will be available for Media Interviews, Interviews in French can be arranged

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A new survey conducted by Abacus Data, an Ottawa polling firm, shows exceptionally high approval amongst Canadians for federal universal coverage of contraception. The survey reveals that 83% of Canadians approve of a federal policy for free prescription birth control across Canada, given studies show each \$1 invested in universal contraception can save up to \$9 in taxpayer dollars. Support was strong and consistent among various groups differing on age, gender, education levels, community size and parental status. Even among voters of all 3 federal political parties, approval rates were at least 75% or more. Support across different regions of Canada was also strong, with approval rates of at least 75% or more. Support was higher in younger Canadians and was particularly high for younger women. Considering some countries around the world, including the United States, are making policies that make it more difficult to access reproductive services, about 7 in 10 Canadians feel creating policies to secure access to birth control in Canada to be an urgent issue. This urgency was higher in younger Canadians and was particularly high for younger women. The online survey was fielded from August 3rd to August 7th 2023. Data was collected from a nationally-representative sample of 1650 adults aged 18 and over in Canada.

“The time has come to make birth control free in Canada”, says [Dr Rupinder Toor](#), the award-winning Medical Doctor, who has filed House of Commons Petition [E-4516](#), advocating for Federal Universal Coverage of Contraception. The petition has already garnered over 4000 signatures in the first 2 weeks and pushes for free birth control across Canada on 3 main points:

It Saves Money

In Canada, it is estimated that 40% of pregnancies are unintended, with an associated direct health care cost of over [\\$320 million annually](#). The petition highlights that a policy for free birth control in Canada, saves public dollars. [Studies](#) have shown each \$1 invested in publicly provided contraception results in up to 9 times total cost savings across the public sector. Furthermore, [savings](#) are realized quickly, with the policy costing no money by year two, and creating money by year three.

Why a Federal Policy?

[British Columbia](#) is the only province that provides free prescription birth control to its residents as of April 2023, and similar policies are on the mandate for other provincial political parties. While health care is a provincial jurisdiction, the petition is calling for a Federal policy on the grounds of equity and human rights.

“Reproductive Rights are Human Rights and cannot be left to the whim of changing provincial governments, they must be protected on a federal level” says Dr Toor. The petition highlights recent alarming movement to restrict access to reproductive care in the United States. *“Access to reproductive care is being increasingly restricted and*

dismantled just south of Canada's border in the United States, causing women in Canada to feel nervous. I am not fighting just for my patients, but for reproductive security for all Canadians"

A symbolic first step for Pharmacare

Canada is the only country worldwide with universal healthcare that lacks coverage for prescription drugs. The Government of Canada has committed to a national pharmacare program. The petition suggests that Universal coverage of contraception could be an important, immediate and symbolic first step of this program.

The Campaign

The petition will stay open until August 25, 2023. *"so far, this has been the only opportunity for the people of Canada to weigh in on the issue, and we hope they will send the government a show of strong support that NOW is the time to take action to ensure that access to birth control will always be equitable and secure in Canada"* says Dr Toor. [Project EmpowHER](#), the organization leading the campaign, hopes to have an affirmative member's statement in the House of Commons on September 26, 2023 World Contraception Day.

If successful, Federal Universal Coverage of Contraception could be seen as one of the most progressive policies for reproductive rights and gender equity in Canadian history.

More information about the petition:

[Project EmpowHER policy page](#)

[The petition](#)

[Press Coverage](#)

More information about Dr Rupinder Toor

[The IUD & NE Women's Clinic.](#)

[Project EmpowHER:](#)

[Globe and Mail Feature Article](#)

[TEDx Calgary](#)

More information about [Diplomat](#) Consulting