









CASW ELECTION PRIORITIES

• SUPPORTING SOCIAL WORKERS for BETTER OUTCOMES



CASW is seeking commitments from the federal parties to introduce [student loan forgiveness for social workers](#) that practice in rural and remote communities and immediately Fund a nation-wide [Child Welfare Caseload Study](#). CASW is also seeking policies that will support better data collection on the social and health workforce.

			
<p>The CPC:</p> <p>There is no mention of student loans or tuition in the CPC platform.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  FAIL </p> <p>No commitments present</p>	<p>The LPC has committed to:</p> <p>Include social workers in the Canada Student Loan forgiveness program</p> <p>Increase the maximum debt relief available through the program by 50% (from \$40,000 up to \$60,000 over 5 years)</p> <p>Offer health care professionals, who are just starting out in their careers, a one-time income tax deduction of up to \$15,000 over their first 3 years of practice to help with the costs of setting up a practice</p> <p>Permanently eliminate the federal interest on Canada Student Loans</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  A </p> <p>Strong commitments toward CASW advocacy goals</p>	<p>The NDP has committed to:</p> <p>remove interest from federal student loans, and introduce a targeted debt forgiveness program for graduates that will forgive up to \$20,000 in student debt</p> <p>permanently double non-repayable Canada Student Grants</p> <p>work with the provinces and territories to cap and reduce tuition fees</p> <p>remain vigilant especially against the creeping threat of privatization and user fees</p> <p>work with universities and health professionals to make sure that public research on critical health issues continues to flourish</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  B </p> <p>Some commitments toward CASW advocacy goals but sometimes vague</p>	<p>The GPC has committed to:</p> <p>abolish student tuition and forgive all federally held student debt</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  A </p> <p>Very strong commitment</p>

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LEARN MORE:

- **Introduce [student loan forgiveness for social workers](#) that practice in rural and remote communities**
to increase equitable care, decrease wait times, attract, and retain social workers in these communities. Given the gap between urban and rural areas in the availability of health services, including mental health, and the resulting wait times and correlated harms, CASW advocates the inclusion of social workers in the Canada Student Loan Reimbursement Waiver Program, which currently applies to other professions, including nursing.
- **Immediately Fund a nation-wide [Child Welfare Caseload Study](#)**
When social workers are prevented from remaining in their positions or developing relationships with communities, children and families suffer – resulting, in turn, in more kids in care and more families in crisis. In 2018, CASW completed [a major research project](#) assessing the state of social workers in child welfare and discovered that excessive workload and caseload are a critical issue. Currently, there are no national standards governing caseloads in child welfare practice.
- **Fund a [comprehensive social work sector study](#) to understand the workforce, identify gaps, and meet future needs**
Currently, we have little understanding of the number of social workers, or proportion of social workers in different practice areas, working across Canada and, crucially, whether this workforce has the capacity to meet current or projected needs of Canadians: we lack key demographic, labour market and education/training information. The last such study, In Critical Demand, was completed in 2000. A comprehensive sector study is required for the profession to support recruitment and retention, education/training realities and projections, and provide the basis for strategies to ensure a strong social work workforce moving forward.