# **4. Questions to Ask Your Candidates**

These are questions on federal issues that affect autistic people. You will not have time to ask all of them to a candidate, but you can choose the ones that mean the most to you.

### **Autistic Consultation - Nothing About Us Without Us!**

* Will your party commit to **meaningfully consulting with autistic-led organizations and autistic people of diverse backgrounds** whenever creating national autism and disability policy?

This means that the party will talk to many different autistic people, such as autistic people who are BIPOC, women, 2SLGBTQIA+, non-speaking, AAC-using, houseless, and/or requiring significant supports. The party must actively work with autistic people, and make sure autistic people’s ideas and perspectives are followed through.

### **Health Care and Child Care**

* Will your party implement a **universal, single-payer public pharmacare system**? This means that prescription medications will be funded by the government.
* Will your party ensure that the **national mental health strategy** will provide accessible, affordable, and diverse mental health support options for disabled and neurodivergent people?
* Will your party commit to **defund and ban harmful “therapies” for autism**, including Applied Behavioural Analysis and pseudoscience “cures”? Will your party commit to funding neurodiversity-affirming, trauma-informed supports and services created by and in consultation with autistic people instead?
* Will your party commit to **implementing the full meaning and scope of** [**Jordan’s Principle**](https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1568396042341/1568396159824) to make sure First Nations children have equitable access to government services?"
* Will your party commit to **funding affordable, inclusive, neurodiversity-affirming child care** and **protecting the rights of disabled parents** to keep and raise their own children?

### **Violence towards Autistic and Otherwise Disabled People**

* Will your party commit to **defunding police and prisons**, and instead fund community-based services that address the roots of violence (e.g. mental health, housing, education, transportation, financial, & child and family supports)?
* Will your party commit to working with provincial and territorial governments to **ban seclusion and restraint in schools**, strengthen reporting and accountability requirements, and provide trauma-informed conflict and de-escalation training for school staff?
* Will your party resolve to take **stronger measures to crack down on deadly non-evidenced “treatments”** for autism such as Miracle Mineral Solution and chelation?
* Will your party commit to **reforming Medical Assistance in Dying legislation to align with Article 6 and 26 of the** [**UN ICCPR**](https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx) **and the** [**Vulnerable Persons Standard**](http://www.vps-npv.ca/), by:

1) restoring more stringent safeguards to protect those vulnerable to coercion?

2) implementing safeguards that disabled people who request MAiD are guaranteed meaningful, timely alternatives to access disability services and supports?

3) collecting and publicly reporting comprehensive data about MAiD (including disaggregated demographic data) to assess whether Canada’s safeguards are adequate?

4) meaningfully involving and actively addressing the concerns of diverse groups of disabled people, especially multiply marginalized disabled people in any review or changes to MAiD?

###  **Stigma vs. Acceptance**

* Will your party resolve to end stigma towards autism, stop harmful awareness campaigns that further stigmatize autistic people, and **work with autistic people to instead promote** [**autism acceptance**](https://autisticadvocacy.org/2012/04/acceptance-vs-awareness/)?

### **Equitable and Affordable Housing**

* Will your party **fund affordable and accessible housing** using **Housing First strategies** for people of all disabilities?
* Will your party adopt legislation to **protect the right to independent supported living**?
* Will your party commit to desegregated housingby **closing institutions and re-routing funding towards independent supported living**?
* Will your party commit to a target larger than merely 20% of **new accessible housing** in the National Housing Strategy?

###  **Poverty and Employment**

* Will your party **reform the Disability Tax Credit**: expanding eligibility, improving transparency of approval process and criteria, ending clawbacks, and simplifying application forms and processes?
* Will your party commit to working alongside provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous peoples to **create a universal guaranteed basic income program**?
* Will your party work with autistic people to **adopt more equitable hiring practices**?
* Will your party work alongside provincial and territorial governments to **end sheltered workshops** and instead transition disabled people to **competitive integrated employment**?

###  **Communication Access**

* Will your party adopt a [Communication Bill of Rights](https://www.asha.org/njc/communication-bill-of-rights/), enshrining the specific rights of those facing communication barriers, to guide legislation and government programs?
* Will your party commit to working with provincial and territorial governments to fund **affordable early access to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)**?
* Will your party **work with AAC users to create a** **national education program** for health care providers, educators, and other professionals working with autistic and otherwise AAC-using people?
* Will your party commit to providing **plain language and accessible format** versions of all legislation, policies, and services that impact people with disabilities?

###  **Research**

* Will your party invest in programs that fund **participatory autism research** that requires autistic co-design, consultation and input?
* Will your party invest in **research on supports rather than cures**, such as AAC supports, integrated employment supports, supports in educational settings, and autistic burnout and mental health?

###  **Beyond the Accessible Canada Act**

* Will your party commit to creating a **national disability strategy** with consultation of diverse disabled people, including autistic people?
* Will your party commit to **collecting independent, disaggregated demographic data on autistic people’s social and economic status**, including income, employment, education, incarceration, housing, mental and physical health, access to basic needs, and access to assistive devices, supports, and services?