ELECTION STRATEGY TELEPHONE SCRIPT - CMA MEMBERS TO CANDIDATES

Quick Script:
1. Introduce yourself as a physician/medical learner and constituent
2. Express concern for the current health care system
3. Mention top 3 issues from list below that matter most to you and your patients
4. Tell a personal story that reflects the need for change
5. Ask for contact info to follow up with CMA’s solutions

Full-length Script

Ask to speak to the candidate. If they are unavailable, provide contact information where they can reach you.

Opening Line: Hello/Good morning/Good afternoon, (Candidate Name). I’m Dr./Mr./Ms. ______, I hope you’re well.

Follow-up Line: As a physician/medical learner living in your riding, I’m worried about the future of Canada’s health care system. Health Care in Canada has taken a backseat for too long, and we’re paying for it now. Our system is failing us. I know as a candidate, you have the power to do something about it. I’m hoping you agree that it will take leadership at the federal level to improve health care in Canada. And I’m hoping you can take a moment to speak with me about this.

The Canadian Medical Association, of which I am a member, has conducted extensive polling and research on Canadians’ key concerns. It may not be a surprise to you – but there’s overwhelming evidence to suggest that health care is at the top of their list and could be the leading voting issue during this year’s election. I know my vote will be hinging on it. We want to make sure health care is centre stage on the national agenda to give us the opportunities to improve it.

Is this something you agree with and you’re willing to address this election?

If yes, continue/If they ask for more details, offer to provide by email/If no, thank them for their time.

Continuing Line: There are 6 points that really sum up all of the pressing health care issues Canadians face. I know for me, not a single workday goes by without experiencing the effects of one of these points first-hand. It’s more than just inconveniences. It’s real lives I see that are affected. Every day.

There are six, as I mentioned, but the most important one(s) to me are: (pick top 3)

**Number One** – The need for increased access to care for all Canadians.

**Number Two** – Much greater support for our seniors and their caregivers.

**Number Three** – Catching up and adopting virtual care.

**Number Four** – Moving Pharmacare from discussion to reality.
Number Five – Addressing the myriad barriers youth face in accessing mental health and addictions services.

Number Six – Acknowledging and addressing the significant health impacts of climate change.

I’m sure you can think of at least one instance where one of these pressure points has directly affected you, your family or someone you know. But I can tell you that personally, one story is always on the top of my mind . . . There was a patient . . .

(Share a story about a patient or something personal that strikes a chord as it relates to an incident created/fostered by a hole in the present system.)

Wrap-up Line: What I’d like to do, is to email you a list of the issues and solutions that the CMA has compiled.

Could you share your email address with me? . . . And would you mind following up and confirming that you’ve received it.

In my opinion, and as backed my research, health care is the single-most important issue Canadians face and we’re at a point where we cannot afford to ignore it or wait to address it. I stand with tens of thousands of Canadians looking for national leadership on our health care system.

Thank you.
**ADDENDUM**
To serve as a resource for callers if the need for more in-depth discussion or clarification presents itself.

**ACCESS TO CARE**
Promise to increase access to care for all Canadians by:
• Committing to create a Primary Health Care Transition Fund which would focus on primary care, the backbone of our health care system.
• Committing to address existing inequities in accessing appropriate care for patient populations that fall under federal jurisdiction.
• Committing to invest in medical training positions and extending the Canada Student Loan forgiveness program to incentivize physicians to work in under-serviced areas.

**SENIORS CARE**
Demonstrate support for our seniors and their caregivers by:
• Committing to implement a demographic top-up to the Canada Health Transfer based on the proportion of older persons in a province or territory. This would alleviate fiscal pressures, free up hospital beds, build better community care models, and ensure all seniors get the best care possible.
• Committing to create a Seniors Care Benefits program, which would directly support seniors and caregivers. Similar to the Child Care Benefit program, it would offset the high costs that burden caregivers and patients.

**VIRTUAL CARE**
Lead the conversation on widely adopting virtual care by:
• Committing to establish a national Digital Health Literacy Secretariat to address the country’s digital divide.
• Committing to increase funding to assist the connectivity and interoperability of virtual care, ultimately enhancing communication between patients, their physicians and our health facilities.
• Committing to invest in establishing a national license to enable physicians to deliver patient care through technology everywhere in Canada.

**PHARMACARE**
Move Pharmacare from discussion to reality by:
• Implementing the recommendations of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare.
• Taking immediate measures to prevent and resolve drug shortages, including protecting the Canadian supply of necessary medicines.

**YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH**
Address the barriers youth face in accessing mental health and addictions services by:
• Committing to national leadership and long-term funding for integrated mental health and addiction services for youth.

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH**
Acknowledge and address the health impacts of climate change by:
• Committing to invest in adapting our health system and public health capacity to address the growing health impacts of climate change in Canada.
• Committing to implement a comprehensive plan so that Canada meets our international climate change targets.