

1 **08:44**

2 Q) Liberals say doctors have a moral obligation to refer patients for services like abortion,
3 gender affirmation surgery, medical assistance in dying. Not just an obligation to help or
4 conduct these procedures, but to refer them as well, to refer patients to other
5 professionals. So, do you support the rights of health care professionals to not have to
6 refer these services? Yes or no.

7 **09:08**

8 A) Let me repeat. I’m a pro-choice member of parliament. I’m a leader that will have that
9 approach. I will always stand up for the rights of all Canadians, including women,
10 including the LGBTQ community. I’ve served in the military, including here in
11 Winnipeg, protecting rights of Canadians and that’s how I will lead as Prime Minister.
12 There are some in our health care system — nurses, physicians — that have some
13 discomfort offering specific services like medical assistance in dying, which is expanding
14 right now in Canada. I think we can find a reasonable balance for those conscience
15 protections while ensuring referring of those Canadians to the services is provided. I
16 think Canadians want a reasonable approach here. That is what we will offer. But let me
17 reiterate. I’m here to defend the rights of all Canadians and that will be my approach as
18 Prime Minister.

19 **10:03**

20 Q) [Faint question, apparently not heard] Will they have to refer?

21 **10:06**

22 Q) Will they have to refer?

23 **10:07**

24 A) [Begins answer in French] Comme j’ai dit . . . [not transcribed]. . . pour le service, oui.
25 [As I have said . . .for the service, yes.]. Yes, they will have to refer because the rights to
26 access those services exist across the country. And this is about striking a reasonable

27 balance, and as we see medical assistance in dying expanded there are some concerns for
28 some in our health care sector, and we can, we can balance those, those concerns off but
29 not deny services. So that will be our approach. And I think Canadians want a
30 reasonable approach. It’s upsetting that in a fourth wave pandemic¹ called by Mr.
31 Trudeau, almost every day he’s tried to divide and mislead Canadians. Canadians
32 deserve better.

33 **10:52**

34 Q) [Asked to repeat answer in French].

35 **10:57 to 11:33**

36 [Repeats answer in French]

37 **21:00**

38 Q) You've spoken obviously about protecting conscience rights for health workers on
39 abortion but the federal government obviously doesn't have jurisdiction over regulating
40 health care. You said you'd do it the same way that the Liberal government did for
41 conscience rights on medical assistance in dying. Which was, involved, obviously, sort
42 of amendment to the Criminal Code. Are you saying that you'd amend the Criminal Code
43 to deal with abortion in the context of your conscience rights policy?

44 **21:29**

45 A) No, Ian. Let me, let me reiterate. I’m pro-choice and it’s very important for anyone who
46 may be seeing me for the first time to know that I will always stand up for the rights of
47 all Canadians. I, I think that’s important. That’s been my track record and I will do that.
48 With, with some health care professionals who have some concerns particularly with the
49 expansion of medical assistance in dying especially into mental health issues, which
50 concerns a lot of people, we have to respect conscience rights but allow there to be

¹ Presumably meant to say “a fourth wave pandemic *election* called,” etc.

51 referrals. Some professional bodies of physicians and, and surgeons and provincial
52 bodies are already providing such conscience right protections. But this is important for
53 us to get the balance without sacrificing the access rights for Canadians. I think
54 Canadians want that balance. Some provinces already find it. It, it will be important for
55 our government to find it.



56 25:35

57 Q) Mr. O’Toole, today you stated your position on doctor referrals.
58 But I just want to take you back to 2020 when you were running
59 for the leadership of the Conservative Party you said you would
60 have legislation for conscience rights for health care professionals
61 but you added that you would put in that legislation that you
62 would prevent health care professionals from carrying out or
63 referring patients for services that violate their conscience. I just
64 find that - - Has your position changed? And why?

Figure 1: O’Toole, 2020

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND A STRONGER SOCIETY

We should strive to make Canada the freest country on earth and a beacon to those yearning to be free around the world.

SOME MEASURES THAT AN O’TOOLE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE INCLUDE:

- Bringing back the Office of Religious Freedom, an important contribution to global freedom that was shut down by Trudeau.
- Through legislation, protecting the conscience rights of all health care professionals whose beliefs, religious or otherwise, prevent them from carrying out or referring patients for services that violate their conscience. The rights of all Canadians must be respected. Rather than dismissing the conscience rights of Canadians, a mature society like Canada should work on solutions to accommodate all rights.

Figure 2: Our Country: A call to take back Canada, p. 45 [emphasis added]
<<https://www.macleans.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Erin-OToole-OurCountry-EN.pdf>>

From “Erin O’Toole outlines conservative party’s job creation plan – August 20, 2021”
CPAC <<https://www.cpac.ca/episode?id=4f6d12c5-9f1a-4015-a388-ad5dd639480b>>
Transcript courtesy Protection of Conscience Project, 27 August, 2021

65 **26:01**

66 A) My position has not changed, Kevin. I’m pro-choice, as I’ve said repeatedly, and I’ll say
67 every day in the campaign. I will always stand up for the rights of all Canadians. And
68 that includes women, that includes the LGBTQ community, and that’s my track record.
69 With some in our health care system, nurses, doctors, particularly with the expansion of
70 medical assistance in dying, conscience rights are very, are, are becoming an important
71 subject of discussion. Some professional bodies and provinces are already looking at this
72 issue. We will work with them in that context, to, to, to make sure we can balance the
73 conscience rights of those Canadians but to make sure that access is there for all
74 Canadians to, to, healthcare services. That will be our approach, and I think Canadians
75 want a balanced approach here.

76 **26:50-27:49**

77 [In response to request, repeats answer in French]

78 **27:50**

Conservative Party of Canada
POLICY DECLARATION



As amended by the delegates to the
National Convention on March 19, 2021
As consolidated by the National Policy
Committee and approved by National Council

84 **Figure 3:** Conservative
85 Party Policy, 19 March,
2021

79 Q) With respect, I wasn’t asking about your stance on abortion, sir. I
80 was asking whether your position on whether doctors should refer
81 patients to another physician if their conscience means that they
82 don’t want to perform or refuse to perform a surgery or
83 procedures. So, you know, in your leadership it does seem to say
84 that, in your legislation that you were proposing when you were
85 running for leadership of the party that you would want to prevent
86 doctors from having to do that. Today it seems your position has
87 changed. I’d like to know why.

J) HEALTH

68. Health Care

The Conservative Party believes all Canadians should have reasonable access to timely, quality health care services, regardless of their ability to pay.

The provinces and territories should have maximum flexibility to ensure the delivery of medically necessary health services within a universal, public health care system. We support adding a sixth principle to the *Canada Health Act* to provide stable and transparent federal funding. The government should work with the provinces in a co-operative and constructive manner.

Flexibility for the provinces and territories in the implementation of health services should include a balance of public and private delivery options.

The government should work with the provinces and territories in the development of national quality indicators and objectives.

The government should work with the provinces and territories and professional medical groups to increase the supply of health care professionals where shortages exist.

The Conservative Party supports conscience rights for doctors, nurses, and others to refuse to participate in, or refer their patients for abortion, assisted suicide, or euthanasia.

The government should work with provinces and territories and professional medical groups to develop a National Palliative Care Strategy and adopt appropriate legislation to provide timely and equitable access across Canada to palliative care which affirms life, regards dying as a normal process and excludes euthanasia and assisted suicide (MAID).

Figure 4: Conservative Party Policy Declaration, p. 28 [emphasis added]
<<https://cpcassets.conservative.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/04094452/d1effca7a5c8818.pdf>>

88 **28:19**

89 A) My position has never changed, Kevin.

90 And it’s important for me to state that I’m pro-choice and I have a record very clear as an
91 ally for the LGGTQ community, because out of the gate in this pandemic election that no
92 one other than Justin Trudeau wanted — every day he’s been trying to divide people,
93 whether it’s on the pademic itself or whether it’s on misleading people with respect to, to

94 my record. My record is crystal clear. I will always stand up for the rights of all
95 Canadians. I did that when I wore a uniform. I will do that as Prime Minister.
96 And I think for some health care professionals that are, that are uncomfortable giving
97 certain services we can respect their conscience rights while also making sure that
98 Canadians can have access to those services. It’s about respect and balance.
99 And this will be very different than Mr. Trudeau, who never tries to respect or find
100 balance. And we see that with Jody Wilson Raybould, leaving politics. We see that with
101 the litany of broken promises and with three personal conduct ethic investigations.
102 We have a Prime Minister who is only centred on himself and his insider friends, has a
103 track record of breaking the law and has no plan for the challenges our country has ahead
104 of us.
105 I’m telling Canadians we have a plan. It’s called Canada’s Recovery Plan. I will stand
106 up for the rights of all Canadians. And with the job surge I announced today let’s get the
107 country back to work.