

# SHERRI ROLLINS

For City Councillor  
Fort Rouge – East Fort Garry



## MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

**Q:** What role do you believe our municipal government has regarding the health of our community?

**A:** While the provincial government has the primary responsibility for providing health care in our community, the City of Winnipeg has an important role to play in making sure people have access to the care they need. From emergency services to recreation facilities, the municipal government makes decisions that impact city residents every day. How healthy and connected our community is depends on the investments and supports the municipal government funds.

One important example of the direct role the municipal government has regarding the health of our community is with emergency services. First responders employed by the city like firefighters and paramedics, as well as police officers, are at the front lines of in our community and the decisions they make directly impacts the health and wellbeing of our community. They are often the first contact for people facing a health emergency, or suffering from chronic issues relating to addictions or mental health. First responders need to have the right training and resources to make sure that when they are dealing with people in crisis, they can respond appropriately and effectively. Making sure first responders are properly supported is one important way the City of Winnipeg can contribute to the health of our community.

**Q:** How could municipal government support Community Health Centres to address health equity issues, such as social isolation or lack of access to health care, in Winnipeg?

**A:** The purpose of Community Health Centres is to connect residents with the right type of care they need, when they need it. This model can serve to make our communities healthier and safer, and should be supported. The provincial government is responsible for funding the health care staffing needs at Community Health Centres, which is their primary and largest service. Other wrap around services like community supports and skills development can be co-supported with existing and improved municipal services.

Additionally, the City's first responders, 311 operators, and other public-positions can be trained to direct people facing health equity, isolation or health access issues to their local Community Health Centre. If more people are directed to better support earlier, it will help to reduce reliance on more costly interventions later.

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**Q:** What is your understanding of safer sex and drug use supply distribution programs in Winnipeg? Is this a concept you are supportive of and why?

**A:** Manitoba Public Health offices, Community Health Centres, and the public education system are the primary providers of sexual health education and resources in the city. Their work is supplemented by organizations like Klinik, the Rainbow Resource Centre, the Main Street Project and other community-based groups also provide ground-level supports for people dealing with illicit drug use or risky sexual behaviour.

Minimizing the public health consequences of risky sexual behaviour and illicit drug use requires more education and access to free supports, including contraceptives and other materials. Specifically when it comes to drug use and addictions, there is an increasing consensus of the need for a more proactive harm reduction model in Winnipeg, including the need for a safe injection site. I would support working with the province to see more harm reduction programs put into place including a safe injection site, as well as an expanded effort to educate and inform the public about safer sex and drug use.

**Q:** What role do you think civic politicians and governments can play in creating more responsive cities for people living with issues such as poverty, mental health, and/or addictions?

**A:** Civic politicians need to acknowledge that many people in our city that live in poverty, or suffer from mental health or addictions concerns deserve support from all level of government. These people are among the most vulnerable in our society but often lack a voice in decision making because of their precarious situations. These are real people facing real problems and we will not find solutions to those problems if we don't take these people seriously when we make decisions that impact them. It is only when we work together as civic leaders and governments to help support all our city's residents can we start to build a better society and city together.