

ACTION Update



15 Gervais Drive, Suite 305, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8 tel: 416-441-2502 www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

Ontario Government Plans to Cut Community Hospitals and Bring in Private Clinics

Ontario Health Coalition Mounts Major Campaign to Protect Public Community Hospitals from Cuts and Privatization

In August, Ontario's Wynne government registered two new proposed regulations that could have devastating consequences for our local community hospitals. The regulations would enable the government to cut local hospitals and hive off surgeries, diagnostics, and other procedures to a colony of private clinics.

The Ontario Health Coalition held a press conference at the Main Legislative building in Queen's Park with Natalie Mehra, Executive Director of the Coalition and Steven Barrett, managing partner in the law firm Sack Goldblatt Mitchell, which has provided legal advice to the coalition concerning the government's private clinics proposal.

"We are concerned that there is a very real danger that these services would end up being delivered on a for-profit basis," said Barrett. "The government could have chosen to have specialized clinics under the Public Hospitals Act, or establish a regime guaranteeing public not-for-profit delivery but it has chosen not to do so," he noted.

The coalition has written a briefing note for our members, made a formal submission to the government and has met with the Health Minister's staff about our concerns. This is only the beginning. We will be launching a pilot project including a door-to-door campaign on this issue in Windsor that could be a model we ask communities to take across Ontario. We are doing a media tour warning of the negative impact of private clinics on our local hospitals. We will be discussing further actions at our Health Action Assembly in November. To read the briefing note and submission, please go to: www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

Windsor Door-to-Door Campaign to Stop Private Clinics and Protect Our Local Community Hospitals

The Windsor and Ontario Health Coalitions are working together to mount a major pilot project including a county-wide door-to-door campaign on the private clinics issue. The two-month campaign will include a series of media events and public outreach to all local groups that support public health care. It will feature hundreds of local volunteers distributing petitions and flyers door-to-door and through mass distribution at community events. Volunteers are needed and any support you can give would be most appreciated. Please contact Richard at 519-974-5332.



Thousands joined the Ontario Health Coalition Summit at the Council of the Federation this Summer in Niagara-On-the-Lake to call on the federal government to renew Canada's Health Accord and protect Public Medicare

Health Coalition Calls Day of Action to Stop \$28 Million in Cuts to Scarborough and Ajax Hospitals

Ontario's Wynn government has imposed a funding freeze on hospitals in a bid to make them cut services. In real dollar terms, this means a cut because hospital funding is not keeping pace with inflation, let alone population growth and aging.

Despite the Health Minister's claims that care is being moved out to homecare, in truth, services that cannot be replaced in community care are being cut and privatized all across Ontario.

Among the hardest hit areas is Scarborough where \$17 million in hospital services have been cut this year. Now, the Scarborough and Ajax hospitals are studying a merger proposal and hospital documents show that the two hospital systems will have to cut \$28 million.

Already, in Scarborough:

- 20 surgical beds & 2 entire operating rooms have been closed, cutting thousands of surgeries per year.
- The arthritis clinic, which treated 2,000 patient visits per year, closed in June. Elderly residents face long waits & travel for care.
- 200 nurses, health professionals & support staff positions are on the chopping block. This equals a cut of more than 345,000 hours of patient care, therapy and hospital support.
- Dozens of hospital departments have seen cuts, from maternity to geriatrics, labs, physiotherapy, cardiology and more.

continued>

OHC Home Care Round Tables Across Ontario

Building Consensus for Progressive Reform in Home Care

From north to south, east to west, there is a deep consensus among community groups, seniors’ advocates, careworkers and family members of home care clients that the current system is not working and home care in Ontario needs a fundamental re-think.

In June, the OHC held 10 round table meetings in towns and cities across the province. We were able to hear from a wide breadth of participants, with participation of board members and executive directors of community service organizations like Alzheimer and brain injury associations, community health centres, an array of seniors’ groups, union retirees, faith and social justice groups, anti-poverty groups, and home care providers.

There was a fair amount of consensus on the critique of the current system. Key issues raised include: poor access to care; disorganization; long waits; rationing; poor working conditions; need for improved training; staffing shortages, and; heavy administrative burden, among others.

“This process was a great experience and organizing tool,” said Natalie Mehra, Ontario Health Coalition executive director. “It helped to begin to build trust and has established the groundwork to move forward potentially with a much larger movement to improve home care in Ontario.”

The OHC is currently writing a report on the consultations and is forging a new home care position paper. We will send an update in the next mailing.



“Rock-In” for Better Long-Term Care OHC Tour Planned

The Ontario Health Coalition is working with a committee of family councils, residents’ advocates, seniors’ groups, retirees and unions to mount a province-wide “rock-in” tour featuring a giant rocking chair and a post-card drive to improve access to care and standards of care in Ontario’s long-term care homes. We will provide tour dates and locations in the next mailing. To help out in your area, please contact Kim, OHC Campaign Director at 416-441-2502.

Iroquois Falls Hospital CEO Replaced: OHC & Northeastern Ontario Coalitions send formal submission to Minister

The CEO of the Iroquois Falls hospital has been replaced by the Hospital Supervisor who will serve as Interim CEO. Recently, working with the OHC they sent a formal submission to the Minister of Health calling for improved accountability and restored democratic rights. For more information, contact Ben Lefebvre at 705-232-4475.

Scarborough/Ajax Day of Action cont’d....

As part of the local campaign to stop the cuts, the Scarborough and Ontario Health Coalitions are mounting a Day of Action at area MPPs’ offices:

Saturday November 9 S.O.S. Save Our Services Day of Action to save our local hospital services in Scarborough and Ajax

You can join in from the beginning as we carpool to each MPP’s office or join in at your nearest location:

9:30 am meet at the Canadian Tire parking lot at Sheppard and McCowan (4630 Sheppard Ave East) to decorate cars and distribute signs etc.

**10:30 am Rally Outside MPP Bas Balkissoon's constituency office
4559 Sheppard Ave East (near McCowan Rd.)**

**11:10 am Rally Outside MPP Soo Wong's constituency office
2245 Kennedy Rd (Kennedy and Sheppard Ave.)**

**12: 00 pm Rally Outside MPP Hon. Brad Duguid's constituency office
2063 Lawrence Ave East (Lawrence and Warden Ave.)**

**12:55 pm Rally Outside MPP Mitzie Hunter's constituency office
4117 Lawrence Ave East (just west of Kingston Rd.)**

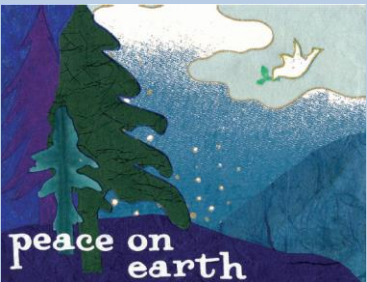
**1:40 pm Rally Outside MPP Lorenzo Berardinetti's constituency office
3090 Kingston Rd (north of St. Clair Ave. E. on Kingston Rd.)**

2 p.m. Finish



Scarborough activists joined the crowds in Niagara-On-the-Lake this summer at the Council of the Federation to protest cuts to their local hospitals.

It’s Time to Order Your Holiday Gift Cards!



Beautiful hand-crafted collages made from Indian, Japanese, Tibetan and Chinese paper, turned into holiday and thank you cards by our own OHC director Natalie Mehra. Cards are for sale. Proceeds help fund all the OHC’s work, such as the initiatives outlined in the updates here. To see all card designs – including several brand new designs – and make your order, please see our website at www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca
Dozens of designs to choose from! Prices start at \$5 for pkg of 4 cards, \$10 for 8 cards and so on. Discounts available for bulk orders. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery.



Ontario Health Coalition

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October 22, 2013

Dear Supporter,

Thank you for caring about our public health care system. With your support, we have protected single-tier Public Medicare in Ontario against the ever-present danger of privatization. For your information, we've included in this mailing lots of updates and information about our current campaigns and events. While there remains much to be done, we are proud of what we have been able to accomplish together. In fact, you may not be aware that, with you, we have built the Health Coalition into the largest public interest group on health care in Ontario. We are in the news on a daily basis in different communities. We are regularly able to move our key issues to the top of the public agenda. And we regularly make progress on these issues. This will serve us well as we move forward into a challenging year.

I'd like to share our recent accomplishments:

- This year, we helped to stop the sale of the Shouldice hospital to for-profit health giant Centric Health – a victory against the expansion of this for-profit chain in Ontario.
- We also held a community-wide referendum in Kingston Ontario to stop the P3 (Private-Public Partnership) privatization of one of the community hospitals. Almost 10,000 Kingston area residents voted, with 96% support to keep their hospital public.
- We have continued to stop any moves to close local community hospitals and their emergency departments, particularly those under threat in small and rural communities. To date, the Wallaceburg, Petrolia, St. Mary's, Southampton, Quinte West and other small, rural and community emergency departments remain open as a result of our efforts, and we are committed to working with local groups in each community to protect these vital services.
- Each time we have campaigned on home care we have won some positive change. After a round of cross-province consultations and an ensuing report, we were able to achieve improvements in the minimum wage and working conditions for personal support workers (many of whom live in poverty). After the release of our most recent home care report showing that home care funding has been declining for a decade as a proportion of the provincial budget, the Health Minister committed to improving home care funding. Though not all of the money has actually flowed, the government announced a 4% increase for home care in the 2012 budget and a 5% increase in the 2013 budget.
- We also achieved amendments improving legislation regarding secrecy in hospital records, though again there is still much work to do on this issue.

We could not have succeeded in these without the thousands of members, volunteers and donors that provide funding and support to protect and improve our public health care system.

Today, I am writing to ask if you are not already a member or donor, would you consider joining the Ontario Health Coalition and/or providing a donation? As an organization that is dedicated to advocacy, we are not eligible for most grants and government funding. We rely entirely upon the funds that we can raise through our fundraising events and members and donors. Your support really does make all the difference, and thank you for considering this request.

Warm Regards,



Natalie Mehra
Director

Ontario Health Coalition

Monthly Giving Plan & Regular Membership

Municipality or Organization: _____

Contact Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Phone: (C) _____ Email: _____

☐ I am a new member (please check if applicable)

☐ I am renewing my membership (please check if applicable)

PLEASE JOIN OUR MONTHLY GIVING

Under this plan, a set amount will be withdrawn directly from your account each month as a personal donation to the Ontario Health Coalition.

YES! I will give per month a fixed amount monthly:
(circle one) \$5 \$10 \$20 other _____

Every 1st or 15th of the month (circle one).
Starting date: _____, 2013

Please attach a blank voided cheque.

If only 1 signature is required for the account, then only 1 Payor need sign. If 2 or more signatures are required, then both or all Payors must sign.

I/We authorize the Ontario Health Coalition to debit my account with the financial institution noted on my cheque for the amount and frequency described above until written notice to the contrary is given.

Payor signature(s):

Date:

I have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, I have the right to receive reimbursement for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with the PAD Agreement. To obtain more information on my recourse rights, I may contact my financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca

This Authorization may be cancelled at any time upon notice being provided by me either in writing or orally, with proper authorization to verify my identity within 10 days before the next PAD is to be issued. I acknowledge that I can obtain a sample cancellation form or further information on my right to cancel this Agreement from the Ontario Health Coalition or by visiting www.cdnpay.ca

CAN'T GIVE MONTHLY? ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES 2013

Individual members: \$20

Organizations:

Under 100 members: \$25

Over 100 members, membership rates set at \$0.20 per member, e.g:

500 members = \$100

1,000 members = \$200

5,000 members = \$1,000

10,000 members = \$2,000 etc.

Municipalities:

Population under 49,999: \$100

Population 50,000-99,999: \$200

Population over 100,000: \$300

Your membership fee rate enclosed is \$ _____

Additional donation (circle one):

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 \$1000

Is this a membership renewal? (check one)

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

☐ **Not Sure**

Please fill out this form and send it to us at:

**Ontario Health Coalition
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Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8**

Phone: 416-441-2502

Fax: 416-441-4073

E-mail: ohc@sympatico.ca

Check us out online at: www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

Ontario Health Coalition Health Action Assembly & Conference

Ontario Health Coalition

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Email: ohc@sympatico.ca
www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

Saturday, November 23 **Sunday, November 24**
10 am – 4:30 pm **9:30 am – 1:30 pm**

Civic Ballroom South at the Sheraton Centre Hotel, 123 Queen St. W., Toronto

Assembly Saturday November 23

- Local coalitions, members, and affiliated groups report on events of the last year.
- Presentations and discussion re. what is happening in Ontario's health care system, positions of political parties and election plans.
- Awards.
- Debate, amendment and adoption of OHC strategy for this year.

Hotel Rooms

We have reserved a block of hotel rooms at the Bond Place Hotel, 65 Dundas St. E. (across from the Eaton Centre downtown). It is a unionized hotel. To get the reduced rate of \$87 per night, call before November 1, 416-362-6061 or 1-800-268-9390 and cite "Ontario Health Coalition rate" or email reservations@bondplace.ca

Fees

In order to raise enough money to pay for the venue costs, speakers, and bring in health coalition representatives from across Ontario, we charge a sliding scale (pay what you are able) fee of \$0 - \$40 for the Assembly and \$0 - \$40 for the Conference.

Registration Form

Please mail or email your registration to the Ontario Health Coalition at
15 Gervais Drive, Suite 305, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8
tel: 416-441-2502 email: ohc@sympatico.ca
(this form is accessible online at www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca)

Conference Sunday, November 24

Speakers include:

Colleen Fuller *health policy analyst; author of Caring for Profit: How Corporations are Taking Over Canada's Health Care System and Reformed or Rerouted?: Women and Change in the Health Care System; contributor with Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives B.C. office; founder of Pharmawatch.* Colleen will discuss private clinics' impacts on B.C.'s health system and give a critical analysis of the issues.

Colin Leys *professor emeritus Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario; hon. Professor Goldsmith's University, London, U.K.; author of numerous books including the 2011 "Plot Against the NHS [Britain's National Health Service]".* Colin Leys will share his expertise on the impact of the private clinics introduced to compete with local hospitals in the U.K. and the fight back campaign.

Jim Stanford *economist, columnist for the Globe and Mail and regular on CBC's news panel; chair of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Ontario Advisory Board; author of "Paper Boom" and "Economics for Everyone".* Jim Stanford will explain what is going on with Ontario's budgets and suggest alternatives to austerity.

Judith Wahl *executive director and senior lawyer, Advocacy Centre for the Elderly.* Judith Wahl will speak on access to care and protecting public health coverage as patients are downloaded or offloaded from hospitals.

and, our own:

Mike McBane *National Coordinator of the Canadian Health Coalition; Ross Sutherland R.N., M.A., Chair of Ontario Health Coalition & Natalie Mehra Executive Director of Ontario Health Coalition*

Name _____ Email _____ #of people attending _____

Organization _____ Additional Names _____

Street Address _____ City/Town _____

Postal Code _____ Tel (day) _____ Tel (evening) _____

SATURDAY ASSEMBLY

Registration Fee \$0 - \$40 per day sliding scale x _____ # of people attending = \$_____ Subtotal A

SUNDAY CONFERENCE

Registration Fee \$0 - \$40 per day sliding scale x _____ # of people attending = \$_____ Subtotal B

For office use only:

____ confirmation sent ____ pkg sent
____ registered ____ db ____ els ____ lists

TOTAL (enclosed as cheque or cash; please mail in separately if you are emailing in this form) Subtotal A + Subtotal B = \$_____



Winter Magic Fête

Midwinter Feast, including tourtière, turkey with allspice, orange and cinnamon, ginger-glazed ham, vegetarian mushroom and leek pot pies, pumpkin scones and other winter treats.

Winter cocktails, including mulled wine, cider and beer, warmed brandy and non-alcoholic cider and hot chocolate with cinnamon and vanilla bean (regular wine and beer will be available). Cash bar.

A “midway” with carnival games and competitions.

Winter solstice masks and lanterns provided to each guest along with a midway game ticket. Additional midway tickets \$2 each.

Wednesday, November 27

6:30 p.m. cocktails, 7 – 8:30 p.m. dinner and fête at the Steelworker’s Hall, 25 Cecil St., Toronto
All proceeds to the Ontario Health Coalition to protect single-tier public medicare for all.

Tickets \$30 per person.

Contact us now to reserve your tickets
416-619-4453 ohc@sympatico.ca