

Ontario Health Coalition

15 Gervais Drive, Suite 305, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8
tel: 416-441-2502 fax: 416-441-4073 email: ohc@sympatico.ca www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

November 14th, 2006
Attn: Assignment Editor

Media Advisory

16 Ontario Communities Chosen to Host National Campaign "Medicare Works: We Can't Afford Private Health Care"

The Ontario Health Coalition today launched 16 major town halls, the Ontario leg of a 32-community national tour called "Medicare Works," sounding the alarm about the gathering threat to the public health system.

"Medicare Works will mobilize Canadians to defend and strengthen our public health system," said Michael McBane, coordinator of the Canadian Health Coalition. "We're urging Canadians to stand up and say, 'Medicare Works – keep it public, keep it fair'."

Public health groups are warning Canadians across the country about the open violations to the Canada Health Act including two-tiering in Quebec and British Columbia, as well as the recent election this summer of Dr. Brian Day - owner of the country's largest for-profit hospital - as president of the Canadian Medical Association. The Harper government is not enforcing the Canada Health Act and has held out Quebec's two-tier initiative as a model for the rest of the country to follow. The coalitions have called the town halls as the first stage in the largest national campaign to protect and extend public Medicare in recent years, leading into the federal election expected this spring.

"At the national level the Harper government is not protecting equal access to health care and enforcing the Canada Health Act. At the provincial level, we need to stop the for-profit privatization of hospital services, homecare and new nursing homes. The future of our health system relies on protection of our non-profit public services. We simply can't afford private two-tier health care," said Natalie Mehra, director of the Ontario Health Coalition.

Contact: Ontario Health Coalition, 416-441-2502

Heart Attack Cost in US Private System

Intensive care room: \$8-12,000/day

Angioplasty: \$6-7,000

Defibrillator Implant: \$27-\$35,000

Average Annual Insurance Premium (basic family): \$11,480

All amounts in US dollars, from US hospital price lists

Backgrounder
Ontario Tour Dates & Locations:

Kingston

Wed, Nov 15, 7 - 9 pm, Rm 201 Kingston Hall, Queens University.
Featuring: Tom Kent, Steven Shrybman, Natalie Mehra.
Contact: Ross Sutherland, 613-374-5258

Ottawa

Mon, Nov 20, 7 - 9 pm Ottawa Library, 120 Metcalfe St.
Featuring: Steven Shrybman, Allan Maslove, Mike McBane, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Marlene Rivier, 613-722-6521 x6608

Sudbury

Tues, Nov 21, 7 - 9 pm, Finlandia Village Nursing Home, 233 4th Ave.
Featuring: Gerry Lougheed, Rick Grylls, Natalie Mehra.
Contact: Anne-Marie McInnis, 705-698-7655

Sault Ste. Marie

Wed, Nov 22, 7 - 9 pm, Auditorium, Algoma University
Featuring: Lynn Watson, Norm Rivard, Mike McBane, Natalie Mehra.
Contact: Natalie Mehra, 416-640-2402

Thunder Bay

Thurs, Nov 23, 7 - 9 pm, Public Library Auditorium, 285 Red River Road.
Featuring: Alvin Fiddler, Norm Rivard, Mike McBane, Natalie Mehra.
Contact: Evelina Pan, 807-344-5027

Peterborough

Thurs, Nov 23, 7 - 9 pm, Evinrude Centre, 911 Monaghan Rd.
Featuring: Dr. Michael Rachlis, Cathy Graham, Eduardo Sousa.
Contact: Roy Brady, 705-745-2446

Kenora

Sat, Nov 25, 11:30 am - 2:30 pm, Rotary Meeting Rm, Recreational Centre, 200 5th St. South
Featuring: Rory McMillan, Colin Wasacase, Mike McBane, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Cassie Miller, 807-468-1862

Sioux Lookout

Sunday, November 26, 7:00-9:00pm, Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, 52 King St.
Featuring: Dr. Claudette Chase, Laura Wynn, Mike McBane, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Susan Barkley, 807-737-1148

Brantford

Mon, Nov 27, 7 - 9 pm, Polish Alliance Hall, 126 Albion St.
Featuring: Dr. Gordon Guyatt, Richard Carpenter, Eduardo Sousa
Contact: Natalie Mehra, 416-240-6402

St. Catharines

Tues, Nov 28, 7 - 9 pm, Russell Avenue Community Centre, 108 Russell Ave.
Featuring: Eduardo Sousa, Terry Wade, George Addison, Eduardo Sousa
Contact: Sue Hotte, 905-932-1646

Parry Sound

Tues, Nov 28, 7 - 9 pm, West Parry Sound District Museum, 17 George St.
Featuring: Dora Jeffries, Natalie Mehra, Hilda Swirsky
Contact: Natalie Mehra, 416-240-6402

London

Wed, Nov 29, 7 - 9 pm, Legion, Br. 263, 499 Hill St.
Featuring: Maude Barlow, Nancy McMurphy, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Jim Kennedy, 519-646-6000 x65736#

Kitchener

Thurs, Nov 30, 7 - 9 pm, Kitchener Public Library, 85 Queen St. N.
Featuring: Maude Barlow, Paul Moist, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Orville Thacker, 519-893-3974

Toronto

Fri, Dec 1, 7 - 9 pm, St. Andrew's Church, 73 Simcoe St.
Featuring: Maude Barlow, Naomi Klein, Ana Gladys, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Natalie Mehra, 416-441-2502

Hamilton

Mon, Dec 4, 7 - 9 pm, Lakelands Centre, 180 Van Wagner's Beach Rd.
Featuring: Dr PJ Devereaux, Linda Haslam Stroud, Rolf Gerstenberger, Natalie Mehra
Contact: Lois Boggs, 905-317-6678

Scarborough

Tues, Dec 5, 5 - 8 pm, Malvern Library, 30 Sewells Rd.
Featuring: Paul Moist, Natalie Mehra, Hilda Swirsky
Contact: Effie Vlachoyannacos: 416-443-7662

Across Canada:

New Brunswick

Saint John, Wed, Oct 18

Newfoundland & Labrador

St. John's, Thurs, Oct 19

PEI

Charlottetown, Tues, Oct 24

Nova Scotia

Halifax, Wed, Oct 25

Shelburne, Thurs, Oct 26

Quebec

TBA

Manitoba

Winnipeg, Monday, Nov 6

Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, Friday, Nov 17

Alberta

Edmonton, Mon, Oct 20

Red Deer, Tues, Oct 31

Calgary, Wed, Nov 1

Lethbridge, Thurs, Nov 2

BC

Vancouver, Wed, Nov 15

Courtenay/Comox, Thurs, Nov 16

Port Alberni, Fri, Nov 17

NWT

Yellowknife, Sat, Nov 4

Yukon

Whitehorse, Sat, Nov 18