

Ontario Health Coalition

MEDIA
RELEASE

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Reveal Secret Information on For-Profit Hospital: Health Coalition Challenges Eves/Clement

Toronto - The Ontario & Brampton Health Coalitions co-sponsored a press conference today to challenge Health Minister Tony Clement & Premier Ernie Eves to come clean about the corporations bidding to own the Conservatives' planned for-profit hospital in Brampton. The coalition called for public consultation and debate about the planned P3 - public private partnership - hospital in which a for-profit consortium designs, builds, owns and operates the hospital - including all of its support services - and leases it to the public. Noting that this is a radical policy change, the coalition pointed out that Brampton's new hospital is planned to be the first for profit hospital in Ontario since Medicare's inception. But precious little information is available to the public about the government's plans. The coalition challenged Eves and Clement to stop downplaying their plans and demanded that they reveal critical information about the new hospital.

"At every stage, the Health Minister and the hospital board have hidden vital information from public scrutiny", said Dora Jeffries, Brampton Coalition Co Chair. "We challenge the Health Minister and the Premier to come clean and tell us which for-profit corporations, banks and financiers are vying to own and operate our hospital. Prove that your P3 funding model is better in both the short and long term for the people of Brampton and Ontario, before you go ahead with irreversible changes that threaten Medicare."

"Our members have been subjected to a campaign of misinformation and intimidation", added Ed Schmeler of the Brampton Coalition. "We have been accused of saying things we never said, we have been searched on our way into the only public meeting that has ever been held on this issue. As a citizen, I am appalled at the lack of democracy and the arrogance of the Conservative government and our hospital board. Its time that they let the public know what they are up to."

The Ontario Health Coalition expressed concerns that the disastrous P3 for-profit model for hospitals will be spread across the province as quickly as possible before the provincial election call. "Tony Clement keeps declaring that the Eves government won't privatize unless it is cheaper, better, faster. But the government refuses to release

information that would substantiate their claims. How can they make these claims when P3 hospitals have cost more, led to huge staff and bed cuts and have a shocking record of shoddy facility construction around the globe?" said Natalie Mehra of the Ontario Health Coalition.

Among the key questions the coalitions want answered:

1. what corporations are bidding to own and operate the planned hospital?
2. will Eves/Clement subject the lease deal and accounting process to the scrutiny of the public auditor before signing any agreements?
3. will the clinics in the hospital be operated on a for profit basis and what other services will be privatized?
4. what incentives have the corporations been given to make the ownership and the operation of the hospital profitable for them?
5. what profit rate are they seeking?
6. what new user fees will patients have to pay?
7. do the Conservatives plan to privatize all future hospitals?
8. how many for-profit hospital deals do they plan to sign before the election?

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