

Ontario Health Coalition

MEDIA
RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **Attention: Assignment Editors**

Health Care watchdog slams privatization of cancer treatment in Ontario

TORONTO- The Ontario Health Coalition responded to the opening of the privatized cancer treatment centre at Sunnybrook hospital today by accusing the provincial Conservative government of creating a crisis in cancer care in order to privatize the service. The coalition pointed to the government's record since 1995: the over 3 year delay in the construction of cancer treatment centres in Ottawa and Mississauga; the delay of the expansion of other centres; the freezing of the cancer care budget; and the cutting of the training program for radiation therapists when there was a projected 40% increase in patients who needed care.

"The Harris government created a crisis in cancer treatment by cutting training, freezing budgets and delaying construction of treatment centres," stated Irene Harris, Coalition Co Chair. "The problems in cancer treatment today are not a natural or necessary outcome of public service delivery. They are a result of deliberate and poor decisions on the part of the Conservative government."

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"The privatization of this clinic continues the trend of spending public money on for-profit healthcare," continued Ms. Harris. "Leaving aside the close relationship between Dr. McGowan and Cancer Care Ontario, the key question is how much profit is Dr. McGowan taking from precious resources that should go to patient care."

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