

Ontario Health Coalition

Austerity Index Summary

Volume 2, February 25, 2013

Since the release of our last Austerity Index (Volume 1) in December 2012, hospital cuts and privatization have gained momentum. Hospital global budgets have been frozen below rates of inflation, aging and population growth: simply maintaining existing services has pushed many hospitals into deficit.

Across Ontario's largest cities, projected hospital deficits in the tens of millions of dollars are being reported. In smaller communities, draconian hospital bed closures have been announced, ranging from 10% - almost 50% of all hospital beds in some communities. Diagnostics, surgeries and therapies are being privatized at unprecedented levels.

The Ontario health care budget is undergoing a planned >\$3 billion in cost curtailment, according to Ontario's Auditor General. The brunt of this austerity regime is to be shouldered by hospitals and OHIP.

Ontario's funding for hospitals has now dropped to lowest in the country per person. As a result, Ontario has, by far, the fewest hospital beds per person of all Canadian provinces. Ontario's total health care budget ranks 8th of 10 provinces, both on a per capita basis and as a proportion provincial GDP.

Despite the rhetoric of Ontario's Health Minister, health care funding in Ontario is shrinking, not growing, as a percentage of the Ontario budget. It has been shrinking for a decade. Services that are being cut are not being "transformed" or "transferred", they are being cut and closed down. In some cases they are being privatized, including hospital surgeries and other clinical care, despite repeated promises to the contrary.

Summary of Cuts and Deficits by Region

Please note: hospital deficit projections change over time. We have reported the most recent figures that we have been able to find for each hospital. These are the cuts and deficits reported so far this fiscal year as a result of the Ontario government's austerity budget. This is year one in a five-year austerity plan.

Erie St. Clair LHIN

Bluewater Health (Sarnia and Petrolia Hospitals) \$5 million in cuts proposed.

Chatham-Kent Health Alliance (Chatham and Wallaceburg Hospitals) approx. \$4 million in cuts required. 7% of the hospital's beds are being closed down as a result.

Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital (Windsor) \$2.5 - \$5 million deficit this year.

Windsor Regional Hospital \$4.2 million shortfall reported. 30 acute care beds to be closed. Acute Injuries Rehabilitation Centre to be closed. More than 30 nurses and 9 health professionals to be laid off. Outpatient services under review for cuts.

South West LHIN

St. Joseph's Health Care London (Main Campus, Parkwood Hospital, Regional Mental Health (London & St. Thomas), Mount Hope Centre for Long-Term Care) \$6.4 million in cuts proposed for this year.

Cuts include: 15% reduction in medical imaging (MRI, PET, CT, ultrasound); closure of several programs, faster patient discharge, 59 hospital staff positions cut.

London Health Sciences Centre Facing a \$40 million deficit, targeting \$30 million in cuts.

South Bruce Grey Health Centre (Durham, Walkerton, Chesley and Kincardine Hospitals) projected deficit of \$622,000. Previously approved redevelopments of Kincardine and Winham Hospitals cancelled as part of the province's austerity budget.

Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN

Hamilton Health Sciences (Hamilton General, Juravinski Hospital, McMaster University Medical Centre, McMaster Children's Hospital, Chedoke Hospital, St. Peter's Hospital, Juravinski Cancer Centre and urgent care centre on Main St. W.) \$25 million in cuts planned.

Niagara Health System (St. Catharines, Welland, Niagara-On-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Fort Erie Hospitals) \$13 million deficit. Plans to cut \$10 million already underway including closure of operating rooms in Welland, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls for six weeks.

Norfolk General Hospital \$1.3 million deficit projected.

Brant Community Healthcare System (Brantford and Paris Hospitals) 75% of RNs in Complex Care Integrated Program cut, Medical Unit cutting 25% of its RNs, Surgical Unit cutting more than 30% of its RNs.

Joseph Brant Hospital \$2.2 million in cuts.

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton \$7.5 million in cuts.

West Lincoln Memorial Hospital Previously approved redevelopment plan was cancelled as part of the province's austerity budget.

Toronto Central LHIN

Centre for Addictions and Mental Health In August CAMH closed their in- and outpatient physiotherapy services.

St. Joseph's Health Centre Closed its after-hours pain, cardiac, rehabilitation and audiology units.

Toronto East General Closed its physiotherapy services.

York Central Reduced its outpatient mental health program.

Central East LHIN

Campbellford Memorial Hospital Projecting deficit between \$360,000 and \$492,000.

Scarborough Hospital \$17 million in cuts. Proposals include closing all overnight surgeries at Birchmount Campus. Closing birthing, maternal and child care and pediatric surgeries at one campus (undisclosed which one).

Rouge Valley Hospital As of April 1, all cataract surgeries will be eliminated meaning that 1,000 cataract surgeries per year will be cut from this hospital. Patients will have to go to Scarborough or Bowmanville to get their cataract surgeries.

South East LHIN

Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital \$4 million deficit. Cuts include closure of 12 beds (approx. 12% of the hospital's total beds), diagnostic imaging cuts, day hospital cut from 5 days to 3 days per week, pulmonary rehabilitation program eliminated, staff cuts.

Quinte Health Care (Belleville General, Trenton Memorial, Prince Edward County Memorial and North Hastings Hospitals) \$15 million in cuts. Proposals include: closure of almost 50% of hospital beds in Picton and 1 in 6 beds in Trenton, closure of all remaining obstetrics in Picton, closure of all endoscopy outside of Belleville, elimination of all remaining outpatient physiotherapy, diversion of emergency department patients from Trenton Memorial.

Brockville General Hospital Projected deficit of \$2.2 million.

Champlain LHIN

The Ottawa Hospital (Civic, General and Riverside Campuses) Shortfall of \$31 million. Riverside endoscopy unit to be closed, thousands of surgeries to be privatized to a for-profit corporation; more than 1,600 cataract surgeries per year to be cut; 290 full-time nurse, health professional and hospital support staff positions to be cut. The hospital is reviewing outpatient services for cuts next.

Montfort Hospital \$1.2 million in cuts.

Queensway Carleton Hospital More than \$2 million shortfall.

North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare Projected deficit of \$0.8 million this year.

Orillia Soldier's Memorial Hospital Adult chemotherapy services cut. Patients required to travel to Barrie. \$1.3 million projected deficit this year.

North East LHIN

North Bay Regional Health Centre \$14 million deficit projected this year and next. 22 nursing positions slated to be cut so far. All cataract surgeries have been stopped until April 1 due to a 10% funding cut for these procedures.

North West LHIN

Revera Long Term Care and St. Joseph's Care Group 65 long-term care beds closed at Revera long-term care facility. 28 geriatric long-term care beds closed at Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital. Total of 93 long-term care beds closed.