

Ontario Health Coalition

BACKGROUND

ON THE RECORD

Pre-Election Liberal Criticisms of P3 Hospitals & Commitments to Publicly Financed and Owned Hospitals

Ontario Health Coalition, January 11, 2003

PRE-ELECTION COMMITMENTS:

In the lead-up to the election, the Liberal Party campaigned against P3 hospitals. It committed to a fundamental change in direction opposing the "Americanization" and "creeping privatization" of hospitals.

After much equivocating, leader Dalton McGuinty settled on a position that the Liberals would not pay huge penalties to get out of the P3 contracts for Brampton and Ottawa that were in process. Otherwise, he made his opposition to both the private financing and private ownership and operation of the hospitals clear, as did other Liberal MPPs. On the eve of the election, CBC & the Ottawa Citizen reported that Mr. McGuinty committed to building the Royal Ottawa Hospital publicly. Voters were left with the impression that the Liberals opposed the private financing model for hospitals.

POST-ELECTION RENEGE:

Following the election, on November 21, McGuinty and Health Minister George Smitherman announced that the deals with the private consortia for P3s in Brampton & Ottawa would continue with some modifications. This despite disclosure that financial penalties for cancellation of the deals would be minor, if any. The modified deals do not eliminate the private financing and operation that the Liberals explicitly campaigned against as the P3 consortia are still intact. Secrecy continues to surround the model of P3 privatization, costs, details re. contracts already signed, extent of privatization, and timelines. No public debate or information has been allowed regarding this support of hospital privatization.

QUOTES:

The following are several pre-election quotes attacking the private financing and ownership/operation in the P3 deals:

> From the Ottawa Citizen, Wednesday, May 28, 2003, Rod MacIvor:

"What I take issue with is the mechanism. We believe in public ownership and public financing (of health care). I will take these hospitals and bring them inside the public sector." *quote from Liberal leader, Dalton McGuinty. The article continues:*

"Mr. McGuinty warned recently that if the Liberals are elected in the provincial election now expected in the fall, they will stop private sector financing of hospitals, the so-called P3s, which the Conservative government is pushing as the way of the future.

"Mr. McGuinty believes that public-private sector partnerships in health care would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional arrangements. He says such arrangements would be discontinued and the hospitals returned to full public ownership."

> Globe and Mail, September 26, 2003, quote from Dalton McGuinty:

"I'm calling on Mr. Eves to halt any contract signings when it comes to P3s in the province of Ontario," the Liberal Leader said yesterday during a campaign stop in Kitchener. "I stand against the Americanization of our hospitals. Mr. Eves does not have a mandate. He never received a mandate at the time of the last election. He shouldn't be doing these secret deals under cover of a provincial election campaign."

> Toronto Star, Friday, October 3, 2003, Frank Calleja:

Quote from Linda Jeffrey, victorious Liberal MPP Brampton Centre: "The hospital was huge in my estimation. I will do everything I can to make sure that health care in Brampton remains publicly funded," Jeffrey said.

> Ottawa Citizen, Thursday, October 3, 2003, Greg McArthur with files from April Lindgren:

"I'll tell you one thing, and this is important news for the people of Ottawa, we're going to move ahead with that hospital as soon as possible," Mr. McGuinty said yesterday. "But I am not going to do it in the form of a private hospital. I want a public hospital for our city."

> Ottawa Citizen, Wednesday, September 24, 2003, Dave Rogers:

"Ontario Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty has said the ROH expansion will go ahead because Ottawa needs a new psychiatric hospital, but a Liberal government would cancel the deal with the private consortium because public-private partnerships are a waste of money."

> From Hansard, May 21, 2003, Oral Questions, Private Hospitals, Sandra Pupatello to Tony Clement:

"My question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, last week we learned that a preferred bid has been selected for the private hospital plan at William Osler Health Centre in Brampton. From this it's clear that you've decided to push forward with your plans to privatize health care in this province. You still have not tabled any evidence to suggest that this is cheaper, faster or safer for the public in Ontario, and yet you still press forward....Minister, will you agree to stop plans to privatize our hospitals, freeze this contract process and go to the people in an election so that they will tell you they do not want to privatize?"

Liberal Health Care Platform

"The Harris-Eves government opened the door to private MRI and CT clinics and private hospitals....We believe in a universal, publicly funded health care system that gives us all the care we need, when we need it." Liberal Health Care Platform pp. 2.

"The Harris-Eves government is opening the way to private MRI and CT clinics and private hospitals. As the Romanow Commission proved, privatization is a step backward....We will end the Harris-Eves agenda of creeping privatization." Liberal Health Care Platform pp 3.

"The Harris-Eves government has failed to protect public health care because they want to open the door to private, American-style, two-tier care. They have deliberately kept the public in the dark about the quality of care. We will make a legal, binding commitment to public medicare and ensure that you have the information to hold any government accountable for delivering quality health care." Liberal Health Care Platform pp. 3.

[Click here for a table comparing the Liberal government's proposals with the Tory P3 model](#)

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