

**Ontario Health Coalition**  
**Royal Ottawa Hospital: Ready or not?**  
*November 2, 2006*

**Much has been made of the Royal Ottawa Hospital opening ahead of schedule but what are the facts?**

Despite public reports, construction of the building is incomplete and cannot proceed until existing buildings are demolished to make room for further construction.

Although a large proportion of hospital staff moved into the new facility on November 1 the building was not operational.

The wireless environment failed and although staff were assured that phones would operate independently in the face of computer crashes this did not prove to be the case. Even hospital issued cell phones were inoperable in the wireless environment.

As a result, staff had no means to report any emergency situations compromising the most basic safety considerations.

Promised personal alarms have not arrived which could have served as back up to the main system failure.

Switchboard was not provided with an alphabetized list to locate staff as needed.

Office furniture was not configured in compliance with best safety practice despite assurances to the contrary.

Incorrect signage made it difficult to navigate through the building.

Operations in the main security office and training of security personnel is incomplete.

On site training of emergency responders commenced today after staff were deployed to the facility.

Washrooms have not been equipped with soap and paper products raising infection control concerns.

The ceiling of the Chief of Psychiatry Office was damaged due to a burst pipe delaying his move .

Patients are scheduled to move in on November 6. There are significant safety and communications concerns as well as continuing construction which will not be completed or resolved by that date.

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