

Isaacs, Tamiko

From: dot.klein <dot.klein@persona.ca>
Sent: January 19, 2020 10:59 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: dot.klein@persona.ca; sud.editorial@sunmedia.ca; mgentili@sudbury.com; ohc@sympatico.ca; West-CO, Jamie
Subject: Standing Committee:Pre-Budget Submission

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January 19, 2020
Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, Ontario
Pre-Budget Submission
Room B-304 Whitney Block
Queen's Park, Toronto ON M7A 1A2

TO: The Standing Committee on Finance & Economic Affairs
ONTARIO Pre-Budget Written Submission
(deadline January 24, 2020)

The primary goal of the Sudbury Chapter of the Ontario Health Coalition is to improve the health care system in Sudbury and contribute to improved health care in Northeastern Ontario and in the province of Ontario as a whole. We work to honour and strengthen the principles of the Canadian Health Act. We are led by the shared commitment to core values of equity, democracy, social inclusion and social justice; and by the five principles of the Act: universality, comprehensiveness, portability, accessibility and public administration. We are a non-partisan public interest activist coalition and network.

Priority Recommendations for Sudbury and Northeastern Ontario Health Care System

1) Health Care Funding must be improved and proper capacity planning restored to provide services based on need and stop rationing, cuts and downsizing.

From January 1, 2019 to March 31 2019, the Sudbury Chapter of the Ontario Health Coalition circulated a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It read:

" **Whereas** the planned cut to more than 150 full-time equivalent staff at Health Sciences North, including nurses, health professionals & vital patient support staff is unsafe and puts both patients and staff at an unacceptable risk;

Whereas Sudbury has already seen three hospitals closed and replaced by only one hospital;

And Whereas people already are left waiting for days on stretchers in hallways & other inappropriate places because there is not enough capacity in our remaining hospital to meet local & regional needs;

And Whereas wait times are already too long and our hospital is virtually always running at more than 110% capacity - meaning that there are not enough resources to provide for needs;

And Whereas Sudbury's hospital funding per patient is lower than the rest of the province and Ontario already has the lowest funding in the country.

Therefore, We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately stop the proposed cuts at Health Sciences North, to improve funding to meet the average of other provinces in Canada, and to restore and rebuild our public hospital services to meet the public need for those services."

Over 7,000 residents of Greater Sudbury signed the petition. This petition was presented in the Ontario Legislature by France Gelinis MPP NDP Health Critic on April 1 2019. I understand that HSN received "one time increased funding" a few months later. The amount or how it was used was never made public. Conditions at HSN remain critical (Exhibit 1). Neither Mr Dominic Giroux nor his public relations team has responded in a meaningful way. Mr Dominic Giroux President and CEO HSN wrote and published a letter in the local media January 3 2019 (Exhibit 2) titled "CEO says 2018 challenging for HSN, but 'the worst is behind us'". In that same letter, Mr Dominic Giroux promised "Good things to come"

HSN is a community hospital supported by public funds and community donations, The people of Greater Sudbury are seriously disappointed by the performance and leadership of Mr Dominic Giroux. Health care in Greater Sudbury and in Northeastern Ontario has deteriorated and continues to decline. Mr Giroux's "good things" are not measurable in health care and health care services for the residents of Greater Sudbury or Northeastern Ontario. We are repeatedly told that plans are underway. We are given promises but no measurable improved health care results. This is not acceptable. The public needs to know that the provincial elected leaders have listened and have responded to the public's concern about health care and health care funding in Greater Sudbury and in North Eastern Ontario.

2) Stop devastating hospital cuts and rebuild capacity in our public hospitals in Northeastern Ontario to meet the needs of people who live in Northeastern Ontario.

3) End "Hallway Medicine" (Exhibit 3)

4) Improve funding for long term care homes and require a minimum level of 4 hours of hands on daily care per resident, provide enhanced funds to improve wages and working conditions for PSWs and provide reduced tuition, grants and access to daycare for PSW courses.

Staffing in long term care continues to be critical in Greater Sudbury and in Northeastern Ontario. Safety for residents is a serious issue.

5) Create a sound fiscal plan to fund the expansion of long term care to meet population needs.

Waitlists are several years for those needing public-funded long term care.

Community home care is sporadic and lacks coordination in Greater Sudbury and in Northeastern Ontario.

There has been little to no progress to address home care issues in a meaningful way. This has been going on for decades. Those needing public-funded home care do not have their needs met and are put at an unacceptable health and safety risk.

Conclusion:.

Under the Canadian Health Act, medically needed hospital and physician services are to be provided without a financial barrier on equal terms and conditions to all Canadians. Provincial governments are expected to uphold the principles of Public Medicare for all. The long trend of downsizing and rationing of Ontario's vital health care services must end. It is time to rebuild our public health care, to re-establish sound planning, to build capacity and to restore compassion.

Dorothy Carolyn Klein R.N. B.Sc.N.
Co-chair Sudbury Chapter Ontario Health Coalition

1714 Bancroft Drive Sudbury Ontario P3B 1S1
705-566-9072
dot.klein@persona.ca

(:hard copy with 3 exhibits will be hand-delivered or sent by postal mail to ensure delivery before or by Friday, January 24 2020)