

Paul S Ziter MD,
200-2462 Howard Avenue
Windsor, Ontario

Sept. 7, 2003

Wake up Ontario!

As a provincial election draws near, it is fitting to ask our local politicians where they stand on the very important Health Care issue of Public/Private Partnerships'.

Aren't you fed up with the long wait for medical investigation and treatment?

Are you not discouraged by the exodus of well trained medical experts to the U.S. largely due to Ontario's brand of third world medicine?

How do you feel about living in a region where new medical technological advances are not available to the general population?

It's time to stop being the polite, complacent citizens whom our politicians have had the luxury of representing.

Public-Private Partnerships could exist between the Ministry of Health and the private sector allowing the development of Independent Health Facilities. These facilities would contract to perform investigation and treatment for the Publicly Funded system. This allows the private sector to invest much needed capital and management skills into our failing system. Operating rooms, endoscopic suites, CT scanners, MRIs, PET scanners, and other new technologies would be available, eliminating waiting times and filling voids we now have in health delivery. Clients would not incur "out of pocket" charges since these *services* would be funded by OHIP when deemed necessary by a physician.

To my knowledge we are the only country other than North Korea and Cuba that does not allow Public-Private Partnerships in Health Care. In fact BC with its Liberal government, Alberta with its Conservative government, and even Manitoba with its NDP government, all had the wisdom to experiment with Public-Private Partnership Pilot Projects. The word on the street is that these "new kids on the block" are very efficient, and save their governments and tax payers a great deal of money.

Our local politicians and union leaders seem to think that our waiting lists are manageable and that we don't require new technology in Health Care. If the province feels it can't afford a facility or a treatment it is automatically prohibited. I find this position to be unethical and immoral.

The refusal of timely medical care and/or treatment for our citizens is transforming our once prized Health Care System into that of a developing nation. Many of our politicians and union leaders are naïve and misinformed when they assert that these partnerships will be the demise of our Health Care System. The present system is bankrupt, inefficient and antiquated.

Their fiscal arguments are also flawed. Our provincial and local economies have flourished for the most part because of the contribution of the manufacturing sector. Ontarians have enjoyed a disproportionate number of high paying manufacturing jobs in relation to the total of goods they purchase. We build and export more cars than we buy.

The Big Three found it to be lucrative to do business here because our work force was efficient and we had a bargain rate Health Care System. Witness the exodus of auto plants and other manufacturing centers with jobs to other locations because we have lost that competitive edge.

Our work force is rapidly becoming unproductive due to the considerable WSIB claims. A minor work injury can mean months off work waiting for x-rays, a CT scan, an MRI, or surgery. A timely return to work by an injured auto worker is the exception not the rule.

If your pet is ill you have access to immediate diagnostic tests and treatment. You must also pay to have these tests performed. If you or your loved ones get sick, you can expect to wait hours in the Emergency room, months waiting for investigations or to see a specialist. Many patients wait a year or more for surgery. Many Ontarians do not even have a Family Physician to help guide them through the maze of waiting lists and out of town referrals.

If you can afford it you may choose to go to Detroit or elsewhere to receive the medical attention you require. However, if you are a politician, a union leader, a doctor, a lawyer or someone of importance, you will jump queue and have the treatment you need right here because you have connections. There is no incentive for them to change the system because they rarely have to suffer its inefficiencies.

If you are an American citizen you can pay privately to receive medical treatment here at a discount with shorter waiting times. Canadians are prohibited from doing the same thing.

I personally find the status quo to be immoral and unethical yet many people choose to remain in denial and propagate the lies.

We have the BEST trained Health care professionals in the world, yet we do not have timely access to therapeutic expertise nor newer technological advances that are offered in most other countries of the world. Must we continue to wait or go elsewhere for timely health intervention? Ask the political candidates how many MILLIONS of dollars OHIP spends to have our citizens treated in the USA?

WAKE UP PEOPLE!!!!

Mr. Duncan, Ms. Papatello, and politicians of all political parties, brothers Parent, Lewenza, Vince and all union leaders please consider exporting cars instead of our doctors and nurses!

Our skilled citizens should have the right to partner with our Ministry of Health in order to build an efficient network of facilities that will supplement our depleted public system. Let's eliminate the endless waiting times. Let's join the rest of our country with meaningful reform!

I most respectfully remain,

Paul Ziter, MD