



45 Sheppard Ave E, Suite 900
Toronto, Ontario, M2N 5W9
Tel: (416) 412-1474 or 1-866-495-4346
Fax: (416) 412-7297 or 1-866-495-4349
www.cofp.com

Dedicated to Ontario's Family Physicians and Their Patients

To All Ontario Physicians: Please share this letter with your colleagues and patients

June 10, 2009

The eHealth Scandal

Government continues to tighten its stranglehold on the medical profession suffocating much needed innovation that could occur from the ground up while it heaps hundreds of millions of dollars at the feet of eHealth, the agency responsible for the task of creating an electronic health record for all Ontarians by 2015.

Unfortunately, millions of dollars are being wasted in untendered contracts given to acquaintances of various eHealth leaders such as Dr. Alan Hudson. Yes, the same Dr. Hudson who is involved in the Wait Time Strategy and who plans to penalize hospitals to the tune of millions of dollars if they are not able to meet their ER wait time targets; the same Dr. Hudson who blames family doctors for creating the wait for diagnostics; and the same Dr. Hudson who has been quoted as saying that nurses can do large amounts of what physicians do, but fails to identify any cost-savings in this approach.

What kind of leadership is that?

When a scapegoat was to be found for the troubles at eHealth, Dr. Hudson served up CEO Sarah Kramer. It has been reported that eHealth, whose Board is chaired by Dr. Hudson, had lost confidence in its ability to move forward under her leadership given the circumstances even though he had a role in her hiring. The real culprits continue at the helm of health care transformation gone crazy including eHealth.

Why is Ontario's political leadership hoodwinked by transformationists who must hire consultants from Alberta to be flown in for bi-weekly meetings?

Why is Michael Decter, who was involved in the slashing of medical and nursing school positions in the 1990s and for which we are paying dearly now, sitting on the eHealth Board? In fact, why is he involved in health care at all after his role in this disastrous decision for which he openly admits responsibility?

Why are the OMA and other physician representatives not speaking up about the lack of ground up innovation that is required to make Ontario health care efficient and accessible to patients at a time when Ontario's resources are increasingly strained?

Could it be that various physician organizations are beholden to the government for their very existence and whose ties with government are so close that they fail to speak out? Why is the waste and lack of accountability at eHealth occurring while we alone speak and while patients languish on wait lists or without a family doctor or timely access to emergency care?

We are at a cross-roads in transformation where one path is carved out by seemingly entitled individuals who appear content to waste hundreds of millions of taxpayers' hard-earned money and who are not held accountable --- not even the Minister of Health, David Caplan, as he turns a blind eye to the shenanigans of his trusted leaders at eHealth who show up over and over again in various health care organizations with a trail littered with costly programs but questionable results.

The COFP calls on Dr. Hudson and Michael Decter to resign from eHealth and for the Minister of Health and Long Term Care, Mr. David Caplan, to step aside. New leadership is required.

The Coalition of Physicians of Ontario is your objective voice in health care and remains at arm's length from government. We believe this is the best way to positively transform healthcare in Ontario to meet the needs of patients and physicians alike.

Yours truly,

Douglas Mark MD, President
and the Board of the Coalition of Family Physicians of Ontario

THE COALITION OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS OF ONTARIO

45 Sheppard Ave E, Suite 900, Toronto, Ontario, M2N 5W9
Tel.: (416) 412-1474 Toll Free Tel.: 1-866-495-4346 Fax: (416) 412-7297 Toll Free Fax: 1-866-495-4349

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June 10, 2009

Hon. David Caplan
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for Ontario
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4
Tel: (416) 327-4300
Fax: (416) 326-1571
Email: ccu.moh@ontario.ca or dcaplan.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Dear Hon. Minister Caplan,

I am a concerned Ontario citizen.

I am sending you this letter out of my great concern with the situation pertaining to recent news about the **eHealth Ontario scandal**. It appears that millions of my hard-earned tax dollars have been squandered and continue to be squandered paying off the former CEO Sarah Kramer's contract.

I am truly disappointed.

To make matters worse, you continue to allow the eHealth Board's Chairman, Dr. Alan Hudson, to remain. It is obvious that he is not competent to perform this role.

Minister Caplan, you owe it to the people of Ontario to immediately remove the Chairman of eHealth Ontario, Dr. Alan Hudson.

Yours truly,

Name, City/Town