

Fixing Medicare is the Only Answer

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Re: Allow Private Care: CMA, July 31

The Canadian Healthcare Association (CHA) supports a publicly funded health system that provides access to health care based on health, not ability to pay. However, unlike the CMA, we do not think that the solution to improved access to health services lies in physicians practicing in both public and private systems. To quote Colleen Flood of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law, fewer physician hours spent in the public sector will mean longer waiting lists in the public sector. This is especially true in a system with a limited supply of physicians and other health professionals.

Secondly, the CHA does not believe, as does the CMA, that private insurance is the answer to access problems. The only people who can buy affordable private insurance are healthy and young. By the time they really need it, they will be unable to afford it or will not qualify for it because of their health needs and pre-existing conditions. That is why we have a government insurance system.

Health system leaders across this country are working to resolve the challenges to Canada's health system and to improve access to services. There is no one magic solution like privatization. But there are solutions.

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