

Canadian Alliance of  
Community Health Centre  
Associations



Regroupement canadien  
des associations de centres  
communautaires de santé

Association of Ontario Health Centres  
Community-governed primary health care



Association des centres de santé de l'Ontario  
Soins de santé primaires gérés par la communauté

# ONTARIO PROVINCIAL ELECTION 2011

Responses to Questionnaire Submitted by CACHCA and AOHC to  
the Leaders of the Liberal Party, Progressive Conservative Party,  
New Democratic Party and Green Party

SEPTEMBER 2011

**SIGN ONLINE PETITION TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE IN ONTARIO**

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/expand-access-to-community-health-centres-now.html>



September 10, 2011

Ms. Jane Moloney

Chairperson, Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centre Associations  
& Executive Director, North End Community Health Centre  
c/o North End Community Health Centre  
2165 Gottingen Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 3B5

Ms. Adrianna Tetley

Executive Director, Association of Ontario Health Centres  
500-970 Lawrence Avenue West  
Toronto, Ontario M6A 3B6

Dear Ms. Moloney and Ms. Tetley:

Thank you very much for the Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centre Associations and the Association of Ontario Health Centres' 2011 provincial election questionnaire. I am pleased to provide you with the attached response, which outlines the Ontario Liberal Party's position on these issues of key importance.

Ontario Liberals are the only party with a positive plan to move Ontario forward. Together, we got through the recession the Ontario way: we protected education and health care, stood by workers in the hardest hit industries, and worked together to find new opportunities for our province and our families. Our strong leadership, experienced team and thoughtful long-term plan are getting results for Ontario families.

Eight years ago, during the dark days of Conservative cuts and conflict, Ontario was moving backwards. Today, our schools are rated among the world's best, our health care ranks first in Canada, and old jobs are coming back while new jobs are being created in emerging industries like advanced manufacturing and clean energy. Our plan is getting results and Ontario is turning the corner out of recession. Ontario is

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back on track. The Hudak PCs would take us off track and put our fragile recovery at risk with their reckless schemes. We need to keep moving forward, together.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centre Associations and the Association of Ontario Health Centres' 2011 provincial election questionnaire — and please accept my best wishes.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dalton McGuinty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dalton McGuinty  
Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party Premier

Enclosure

**Questionnaire Response: Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centre Associations / Association of Ontario Health Centres**

**1. Commit to negotiating a renewed 2014 Health Accord in collaboration and concert with the other Provinces and Territories and the Government of Canada**

In 2004, provincial leaders came together with the federal government to shape an historic 10-year Health Accord. Ontario Liberals were a driving force behind that agreement and we are proud of the progress that has been made. In 2004, the major issue undermining confidence in the public health care system was long surgical wait times. The 2004 Accord provided stable funding to tackle wait times and placed clear accountability on provinces to deliver. The progress across the country, and particularly in Ontario, has been amazing. Our province now has the shortest surgical wait times in the country, with almost every surgical procedure delivered within the clinical benchmark. These results were delivered because we came together as Canadians and set clear priorities, made investment available and focused on results.

Ontario Liberals believe that we must build on the success of the 2004 Accord with a new 10-year agreement between our federal, provincial and territorial partners. While impressive progress has been made in recent areas like primary care reform and tackling wait times, our health care system still faces major challenges that will require strong and coordinated political leadership. Canada's population is aging and the demand for service is growing each year. More Canadians suffer from complex chronic disease than in the past. For our health care system to remain strong we need to realign our focus to address the increasing complexity of patients. We will work with our federal, provincial and territorial colleagues to negotiate a renewed Health Accord to meet this challenge.

The PCs will be forced to make deep cuts to health care to fill the \$14-billion platform hole.

**including:**

**a. A requirement from your government that the Government of Canada fulfill its stated commitment to a six percent increase in health transfers to the provinces and territories for the 10 -year duration of the new 2014 Health Accord**

Ontario Liberals believe that the federal government needs to enter into a new long-term deal with the provinces and territories to help realign our system to deal with the demographic challenge. Since the founding of medicare, federal funding has slipped from covering 50 per cent of all health care costs in Ontario to only 23 per cent today. As costs continue to escalate, this erosion in federal funding must be reversed. Ontario Liberals are calling on the federal government to commit to durable, long-term annual increases in health transfers. To date, the federal government has only committed to increase funding by six per cent for two years beyond the expiry of the 2004 Health Accord. This is not acceptable. The only way we can strengthen our health care system is with long-term planning and long-term sustainable funding. Ontario Liberals will continue to work on behalf of Ontarians to ensure the federal government assumes its responsibility to preserve a strong health care system and commit that the six per cent escalator will continue for the length of a new 10-year accord.

The PCs will be forced to make deep cuts to health care to fill the \$14-billion platform hole.

**b. A requirement from your government that any new health transfers to the provinces and territories within the 2014 Health Accord not be subtracted by the Government of Canada from other, existing social transfers to the provinces/territories; and**

Any increase in health transfers cannot come at the expense of existing social transfers to Ontario. There needs to be a net increase in fiscal transfers from the federal government, not simply a realignment of existing funding.

**c. Including a provision within the Health Accord re-committing all Provinces, Territories and the Government of Canada to the five principles of the Canada Health Act; and**

Ontario Liberals believe that a future accord must continue to adhere to the core principles of the Canada Health Act, principles that Ontarians overwhelmingly support. Some on the right argue that Canada can no longer afford a strong universal public health care system and that —experimenting|| with private options is necessary to improve health system performance. Ontario Liberals reject this. There is a reason why health care is consistently identified by Ontarians as the top priority — one that they want their government to focus on. They understand the importance of being able to access the care they need when they need it regardless of their ability to pay. Ontario Liberals believe we can and must meet the growing demand for care. Where there are opportunities to do things differently or better, we are taking them. Since 2003, for example, we have led two major reforms of our provincial drug program, saving Ontarians almost \$1 billion per year. We are now working with other provinces to explore common pricing for pharmaceuticals to reap further savings. It is these types of innovative reforms within the public system that can deliver efficiencies — but these cannot come at the expense of protecting universal access and high-quality care for Ontarians.

Tim Hudak would put our public health system at risk by his openness to illegal user fees. He would refuse to crack down on illegal user fees.

**d. Including a provision within the Health Accord adopting the following seven principles for health system transformation, as recommended by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) and the Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centre Associations (CACHCA): “patient-centred”; “quality”; “health promotion and illness prevention”; “equitable”; “sustainable”; “accountable”, and “community-oriented”; and**

As we did in the 2004 negotiations, Ontario Liberals will focus on shaping a renewed accord that champions the values and priorities of Ontarians. We will continue to deliver change that improves patient outcomes with clear accountability for results. We will continue to transform health services within the principles of the Canada Health Act and maintain universal access to non-profit care.

**e. Including a provision within the Health Accord identifying “access to appropriate primary health care” as a priority area for federal and provincial action, along with development of federal standards for primary health care and targeted funding to help provinces and territories achieve these standards.**

A renewed 10-year Health Accord will ensure our health system remains strong through the next decade. During the next 10 years, 1.6 million Ontarians will retire. That is twice as many as retired between 1981 and 1991. As a population we are getting older, we are living longer and we are having fewer children. We need to ensure our health care system evolves to meet the changing needs of our population. Traditionally funding and attention were focused on the institutional care sector — hospitals and long-term care homes. Ontario Liberals believe that confronting the challenge related to our demographic shift will require us to move more care to the community and focus on ensuring smooth patient transition between providers. We have already begun this process through our \$1.1-billion Aging at Home Strategy. We are calling on our federal, provincial and territorial partners to work with us in shaping a new accord to make even more progress in this area.

We believe that building a strong coordinated primary care system will be critical to the success of health system transformation. Compelling evidence suggests that jurisdictions with strong primary health systems have better population health and lower health costs. In Canada, primary care has, for too long, operated with little interaction with the rest of the health care system. While we have made significant progress in this area since 2004, Ontario Liberals recognize that more needs to be done to coordinate primary care, and integrate it into the rest of the care system.

The PCs will be forced to make deep cuts to health care to fill their \$14-billion platform hole.

**2. Commit to fully funding all new Community Health Centres announced by the Government of Ontario in 2005, and commit to expanding access to Community Health Centres for 250,000 more Ontarians by 2015.**

Ontario Liberals believe in the Community Health Centre (CHC) model. We know that CHCs are uniquely designed to meet the needs of complex patients, particularly those from marginalized communities. In 2005, we moved to nearly double the number of CHCs in the province — from 54 to 103. To date, 101 are operational. Twenty-one are in new, custom-built facilities, four are in various stages of capital development — and, on August 19, 2011, we announced that another seven would receive approval to proceed with their capital projects in the 2011/12 fiscal year. We are fully committed to ensuring that all the CHCs announced in 2005 are completed and serving their target patient populations.

We recognize that there is further community demand for CHCs. While our priority is to fully operationalize the previously announced new CHCs, we will explore ways to meet emerging community needs. Our Platform Forward.Together. includes a commitment to continue improving access to family health care in the province. We have allocated an additional \$65 million per year to improve same-day and after-hours access to care, bring back house calls, improve access to telephone and online consultations, and increase efficiencies to enable physicians and nurses to see more patients.

Ontario Liberals believe that Community Health Centres are well placed to help deliver these enhanced services to Ontarians – in fact many CHCs are already providing services such as house calls. We look forward to working with CHCs and other community partners to improve family health services across the province. The PCs \$14-billion platform hole means they will be forced to make deep cuts to health care and Community Health Centres.



## CACHCA QUESTIONNAIRE

Bearing in mind the foregoing, CACHCA is asking if you and your party will commit to the following measures if elected to form the next Government of Ontario. Please indicate whether you and your party will:

1. Commit to negotiating a renewed 2014 Health Accord in collaboration and concert with the other Provinces and Territories and the Government of Canada, including:
  - a. A requirement from your government that the Government of Canada fulfill its stated commitment to a six percent increase in health transfers to the provinces and territories for the 10 -year duration of the new 2014 Health Accord; and
  - b. A requirement from your government that any new health transfers to the provinces and territories within the 2014 Health Accord not be subtracted by the Government of Canada from other, existing social transfers to the provinces/territories; and
  - c. Including a provision within the Health Accord re-committing all Provinces, Territories and the Government of Canada to the five principles of the Canada Health Act; and
  - d. Including a provision within the Health Accord adopting the following seven principles for health system transformation, as recommended by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) and the Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centre Associations (CACHCA): “patient-centred”; “quality”; “health promotion and illness prevention”; “equitable”; “sustainable”; “accountable”, and “community-oriented”; and
  - e. Including a provision within the Health Accord identifying “access to appropriate primary health care” as a priority area for federal and provincial action, along with development of federal standards for primary health care and targeted funding to help provinces and territories achieve these standards.

**Response:** Ontario’s New Democrats are proud supporters of our public health care system. It is one based on need and not the ability to pay. New Democrats believe we have an obligation to strengthen this system so that it provides reliable and high-quality care for generations to come. Fundamental to this strength is the ability of the provinces to negotiate a renewed Health Accord in 2014. If elected to form the next Government of Ontario, New Democrats would prioritize the five measures CACHCA has outlined. The maintenance of adequate funding and the improvement of primary care are essential to our system of universally accessible health care.



2. Commit to fully funding all new Community Health Centres announced by the Government of Ontario in 2005, and commit to expanding access to Community Health Centres for 250,000 more Ontarians by 2015.

**Response:** New Democrats are committed to expanding access to community-governed, interdisciplinary health care and Ontario's Communities Health Centres are a shining example of this. The Ontario NDP has long called for the adequate funding and timely roll-out of the previously announced Community Health Centres and it is disappointing that the McGuinty government has not fully delivered on their promise. New Democrats have a plan to bring reliable, primary care to all Ontarians.

We will roll out 50 new family health care centres. Rather than create a new model, Community Health Centres and Nurse Practitioner-led clinics will comprise these 50 new centres. They will offer a range of primary care and health promotion services that will address the social determinants of health and work alongside diverse communities to improve their health and wellbeing. We will also forgive the student debt of 200 new physicians who choose to practice in under-serviced communities. Taken together, these commitments will bring expanded access to CHCs and primary care to over 600,000 Ontarians by 2015.





September 16, 2011

Adrianna Tetley  
Executive Director, Association of Ontario Health Centres  
500-970 Lawrence Ave. West  
Toronto, ON, M6A 3B6

Dear Ms. Tetley,

Thank you for your letter about Canada's Community Health Centres and for the opportunity to tell you about some of the many ways *changebook* proposes to put Ontario patients at the centre of our public health care system.

For all you pay in taxes, you should be getting the best care in the country. Yet Dalton McGuinty wasted over \$1 billion on the eHealth boondoggle and \$300 million on massive new LHIN bureaucracies that don't provide a single minute of care. We need change to stop the scandals, the waste and the secret deals.

Ontario's health system is struggling to meet the demands of its aging population. Nearly a million Ontario families still don't have a family doctor and are having to wait up to 25 hours in emergency rooms in order to get the care they need. And wait times for seniors needing long-term care or home care are even worse; at 173 days or higher.

This election Dalton McGuinty is offering more of the same.

An Ontario PC government will introduce a series of patient centered reforms that make the patient, not bureaucracies or administrators, the focus of our health system. Health care will be our number one spending priority, and we will grow annual investments by more than \$6 billion by the end of our first term. We will improve health care for Ontario seniors with 40,000 long-term care beds and will bring more doctors to the communities that need them. We will establish wait time guarantees for emergency room visits and will give seniors more control over their home care services. And we will introduce a rigorous system of patient satisfaction and health outcome measures.

It's time to bring services into the 21st century, and put you at the centre of service delivery.

To read more about the change we are proposing for Ontario patients, I encourage you to visit [www.changebook.ca](http://www.changebook.ca) and to contact your local Ontario PC Candidate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Hudak", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Tim Hudak  
Ontario PC Leader



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20 September 2011

Dear Mr. Wolfe;

Thank you for writing to us about the critical issue of health care in Ontario.

The Green Party believes in a sustainable public health care system that provides every Ontarian with access to the quality health care they require, when and where they need it. We support CACHCA's view: our publicly-funded health care system is in need of serious reform to ensure sustainable delivery of quality health services.

Green MPPs will commit to working for the best possible deal for Ontario during negotiations for the renewed 2014 Health Accord. Specifically, we will work to ensure:

- a. A funding model that provides for the needs of Ontarians.
- b. That future health transfers to the provinces do not come at the expense of other social transfers to the provinces.
- c. That all provinces, territories and the Government of Canada re-commit to the five principles of the Canada Health Act.
- d. A focus on the following principles of health care: "patient-centred", "quality", "health promotion and illness prevention", "equitable", "sustainable", "accountable", and "community-oriented".
- e. Making access to appropriate primary health care is a priority area for federal and provincial action, along with development of federal standards, for primary health care.

The Green Party believes that we can create efficiencies, better manage costs, and improve outcomes by making frontline health care more accessible.

The Green Party would invest an additional \$1.6 billion over four years in Family Health Teams, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, Nurse Practitioner led clinics and Community Health Centres; clinics and practices that team doctors with nurses, dieticians, psychologists, counsellors, physiotherapists and others. We would also establish a new goal of providing 50% of Ontarians with access to family care teams by 2016, rising to 90% by 2020.

We also need to use each profession's competencies to the maximum to create more capacity and enhance access to health care services. Ontario's regulation of health care professions hasn't kept pace with the evolution in the education and training of health care professionals nor with practices in other jurisdictions. Expanding each profession's scope of practice to match proven competencies enables the same services to be delivered by the most cost-effective provider, promotes patient choice and helps to address wait lists and the physician shortage. This would provide better value for money in the health care system.

Like CACHCA, we believe that the delivery of primary health care needs to be vastly improved in order to provide more equitable health outcomes for Ontarians.

We need to focus the health care system on programs that will prevent illness in the first place. The Green Party's health care plan includes programs that promote healthy local food in communities and schools and ensures we have clean air, water and food.

In addition, the Green Party will ensure that seniors receive a quality continuum of care. Our health care investment priorities will include tax credits for family members staying at home to care for seniors and case managers as well as an assisted living and affordable housing strategy focused on the seniors population.

While our health care system is under stress, we know there are solutions for the best way forward. The real issue is that these solutions require political leadership, commitment and thinking that extends beyond the four-year election cycle – leadership the Green Party is committed to providing.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our health care priorities. For more information on the Green Party's health care plan, please visit [itstimeforgreen.ca/health](http://itstimeforgreen.ca/health).

Regards,

Becky Smit  
Provincial Campaign Manager,  
Green Party of Ontario