

HOW & WHY HEALTHCARE CUTS WILL AFFECT PATIENTS

By now, most people have heard at least some grumblings about the dispute between Ontario's doctors and the Liberal Government. Some people sympathize with doctors; some understandably do not. Very few people, however, actually understand what is really going on. Even fewer appreciate how exactly these cuts will directly affect them.

Imagine the following scenarios. Which option would you chose:

Scenario #1:

Option A: You work 50 hours per week and get paid \$1000 weekly.

Option B: You work 40 hours per week and get paid \$1000 weekly.

Answer: This is not trick question. By human nature, most people will chose Option B. You work fewer hours, but get paid the same amount of money.

Scenario #2:

Option A: You have to perform 20 chores to get paid \$100.

Option B: You have to perform 15 chores to get paid \$100.

Answer: Again, this is not a trick question. Most people will chose Option B because you will get paid the same amount for doing less work.

These are the exact same scenarios that Ontario's Doctors are facing due to the Government's repeated cuts to healthcare services, as will be explained below.

Another Scenario:

- Imagine it cost \$1 million last year to pay firefighters to put out all the fires in Ontario.
- Every year, the weather is getting hotter and dryer. Because of this, it costs *more* money each year to put out Ontario's fires.
- Therefore, we know that it will cost about \$1.3 million this year to put out fires in Ontario.

- The government knows this, but they say they will only budget \$1.1 million for fires this year, and not a dollar more!
- They knowingly set a budget for less than they know will be required!
- Then the government says that for every dollar that goes over the \$1.1 million budget, they are going to make the firefighters pay for out of their own pockets!

*Would you expect the firefighters to accept this? Probably not.
Would *you* accept this in your job?*

Yet this is the exact same situation as the government is forcing on Ontario's Doctors! The government has purposely set a budget limit lower than will be required.

Ontario's population continues to age and grow, so the costs for healthcare continue to grow and go over the Government's budget.

What happens when they go over budget?

The government heavy-handedly forces another round of cutbacks on doctors. They say to doctors, "in order to get back on budget, from now on we are only going to pay you \$30 for seeing a patient instead of the old \$35 that we agreed to last year".

This is basically what has been happening with the healthcare cuts that occurred early this year, and again on Oct 1st.

Still, the population will continue to age and grow, and the healthcare costs will continue to go over budget. Accordingly, the government will continue to force the cost of these cuts onto Ontario's doctors.

How does this all affect patients?

The only way to stop going over budget is for doctors to *SLOW DOWN* the amount of work they do; and slow down the care they offer to patients.

This means:

- Reducing the hours they work.
- Seeing less patients per day

Which results in:

- Even less access to family doctor visits.
- Even longer wait times for specialists.
- Even longer wait times for tests.
- Even longer wait times in the ER.

Ontario's population is growing and even *more* care is required. Unfortunately, with the way the Government is treating doctors right now, the *MORE* doctors work, the more the government will *CUT* them and the *LESS* they will get paid for their services.

So, go back to Scenario #1 and #2 at the beginning of this article ... Who doesn't chose Option B?

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