



Canadian Health Coalition Coalition canadienne de la santé

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MEDIA RELEASE

June 30th, 2006

Harper Government urged to act on Federal Advisor's Report on Wait Times

Heed warning on 'care guarantees'

OTTAWA – The Canadian Health Coalition today welcomed the *Final Report of the Federal Advisor on Wait Times* and called on the Harper government to act on its sound comprehensive advice instead of pursuing the policy of 'care guarantees', a misguided solution to a complex problem.

“Dr. Postl describes the Québec decision to adopt a care guarantee as an experiment that warrants close attention because it could seriously damage the public system. This is in sharp contrast to comments from Prime Minister Harper and Health Minister Clement referring to Québec’s proposal as a model for the other provinces,” says Connors. The CHC summary of the report is available online at: <http://www.healthcoalition.ca/report-summary.pdf>

“Canadians expect the federal government to follow the advice of Dr. Postl and fix the wait time problems in the public health care system rather than encourage the growth of a parallel, for-profit system. Dr. Postl performed an extremely important service to Canada in working between different levels of government to identify solutions to wait time problems. His approach is in keeping with the Romanow findings that Canadians want both levels of government to end the squabbling and work together to find solutions for the challenges facing Medicare,” says Kathleen Connors, CHC Chairperson.

Dr. Postl described wait times as a systemic problem that requires a systemic solution. The solution is better management of wait lists to ensure that patients get the right care at the right time. He is encouraged with the progress: “The effort and enthusiasm that is being applied to the management of wait times in Canada is very encouraging. The partnerships that are being created across the country, as wait times focus the energies of health regions, professions, institutions and facilities, are producing important results.”

“The role of the Federal Wait Time Advisor is extremely important and should be maintained. The Canadian Health Coalition would like to see Dr. Postl kept on in this position. He has demonstrated a strong commitment to Canada’s public health care system. Furthermore, Canada needs his integrity and abilities as a physician and senior manager to encourage a culture of change, improvement and efficiency in Canada’s public health care system,” said Connors.

The Canadian Health Coalition is a public advocacy organization dedicated to the preservation and improvement of Medicare. Membership is comprised of national organizations representing nurses, health care workers, seniors, churches, anti-poverty, women and trade unions as well as affiliated coalitions in 9 provinces and one territory.

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