

**From:** Ontario Health Coalition via OntarioHealthCoalition

**Sent:** November 24, 2017 10:54 AM

**To:** ontariohealthcoalition@list.[web.net](http://web.net)

**Subject:** [OHC] !! Pls share - fill Galleries at Legislature on Tuesday/hold an event in your town to stop hospital privatization

*Please share this information widely. Apologies to those of you who are not in Toronto. If possible, could you organize actions at your nearest Liberal MPP office to support?*

*Thank you.*

Thank you to all of you who have shared our emergency email and Facebook posts, and for all of you who have called and emailed your MPP. Please keep it up! We have until Wednesday to get the government to withdraw Schedule 9 of Bill 160 which is a piece of legislation that lifts the 44-year ban on private hospitals in Ontario, removes vital patient protections and enables a person in the bureaucracy to vastly increase the number and scope of private hospitals and clinics at any time without having to go back to the Legislature or even Cabinet. I have pasted the urgent alert we sent out yesterday and an open letter to all MPPs below, with more information.

**On Tuesday, November 28 at 9:15 a.m. we will be holding a press conference at Queen's Park in the Main Legislative Building regarding Bill 160 Schedule 9 which lifts the ban on private hospitals and facilitates the expansion of private hospitals and clinics.**

**At 10 a.m. we are asking for our members and supporters to please come to the Legislature and fill the Public Galleries to watch Question Period where the government will have to answer for this Legislation. (Plan to be there til noon.) If you are coming, can you let us know? Pls email us to let us know that you are coming. We are trying to keep track of numbers.**

**If you are not in Toronto and wish to hold events in solidarity, we would love to hear about them! Please let us know what you are doing.**

This dangerous piece of legislation has been introduced as part of an omnibus bill that is now before Ontario's Legislature. There were only 4 part-days of public hearings, only in Toronto and with very little notice. Those who presented at the public hearings were shocked to find out that we were given only 5 minutes to present before the Standing Committee on General Government. The legislation we were providing input on contains 10 Schedules. It enacts or repeals 7 Acts. It amends more than 30 Acts. It is a massive, complex piece of legislation with far-reaching implications. Such is the state of our democracy.

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*Here is the urgent action alert we issued yesterday. It is posted to Facebook on my personal page (Natalie Mehra) and on the Ontario Health Coalition page. I will post the new call-out here later today. Please do continue to share. I see the posts and emails are going far and wide. This is terrific. Thank you so much.*

# **NEW ACT ALLOWS PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT HOSPITALS & MORE PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT CLINICS**

**please share this information widely**

The Ontario government is moving forward with legislation that **lifts the ban on private hospitals**, rolls private hospitals in with private clinics and renames them, offensively, Community Health Facilities, and **makes it easier for private hospitals and clinics to expand and more difficult for the Minister to stop them.**

This legislation was brought in with **no prior public consultation**. It is a massive omnibus bill that repeals or enacts 7 entire Acts, and amends more than 30 Acts. We were given 5 minutes to present to the Standing Committee on this massive piece of legislation. Now we have only four days to try to get the worst part of it withdrawn.

**Without due consideration of the consequences, the government is making a grave mistake that could easily usher in very significant new privatization and threats to our local public hospitals.**

**Please email or call your MPP and ask them to help withdraw Schedule 9 of Bill 160. They need to act by early next week.**

I have pasted the Open Letter that we just issued to all Members of Provincial Parliament below. It provides a succinct briefing. I have also attached a more extensive brief on Bill 160 for your information.

Thank you for your urgent help in this important matter for all Ontarians. The principles that public health care be provided safely, in the public domain, for people not for profit are shared by millions of Ontarians. Please help us make sure that our MPPs understand that this issue cannot be ignored.

*Natalie Mehra*

*Executive Director*

Here is a link to the Ontario Legislative Assembly website where there is a **list of MPPs with their contact information**:

[http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/members/member\\_addresses.do?locale=en](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/members/member_addresses.do?locale=en)

Here is the Open Letter we just issued:

**Open Letter to All Ontario MPPs**

November 23, 2017

Dear Members of Provincial Parliament,

We are writing to urgently draw your attention to a bill before our Legislature that holds very grave implications for all Ontario communities. Bill 160 is an omnibus piece of legislation that repeals or enacts 7 Acts and amends more than 30 Acts. The Bill has been brought in with no prior public consultation despite its far-reaching ramifications. We have a number of concerns with the Bill as it is drafted but we are taking the exceptional step of writing an open letter to every Member of Provincial Parliament because we are deeply concerned about Schedule 9 of the Bill.

Schedule 9 repeals the *Private Hospitals Act*, the *Independent Health Facilities Act* and the *Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act*. It replaces them with euphemistically named “Community Health Facilities”. These changes cover more than 900 private clinics -- more than 98 percent of which are not “community health facilities” but are in fact private for-profit clinics and often chain-owned -- and 6 private for-profit hospitals.

The Private Hospitals Act was brought in in 1973 and banned all future private hospitals. It empowers the Minister of Health to have wide latitude in oversight of private hospitals, and in particular, enables the Minister to revoke licenses and refuse transfers. These powers are critically important. When one of the largest for-profit multinational mega-health companies in the world tried to move in and buy the Shouldice Hospital, advocates were able to ask the Minister to intervene under this Act. Crucially, the Private Hospitals Act has effected a ban on private hospitals for 44 years in this province.

Schedule 9 of Bill 160 lifts the ban on private hospitals and does not replace it. Without due consideration, the government is rolling in private hospitals, which allow admissions and overnight stays, with private clinics which do not. This has very dangerous implications. The definition is left to the regulations. Further, an appointed person in the bureaucracy will have the power, with the stroke of a pen, to bring in new private clinics and, now, since they are rolled into the Act, private hospitals. Problems under the current private clinics regime include: patient deaths; serious safety breaches that have risked, among other things, potential infection of more than a thousand patients with HIV/AIDs; other serious health care quality concerns; for-profit privatization of our local hospital services; new user fees for patients in violation of the Canada Health Act; unnecessary testing, and others. None of the problems under the current legislation is improved under Bill 160 Schedule 9, including oversight, inspections and safety regime, for-profit privatization and user fees for patients. Virtually everything is left to regulation. Key

clauses in the existing pieces of legislation have been dropped, including vital public protection against user fees for patients and safety protections for ionizing radiation (x-rays).

We consider this a top priority issue. If the government lifts the 44-year ban on private hospitals in Ontario and brings in permissive legislation to privatize Ontario's hospital services, we will do our utmost to stop it. We do not want to have to go down that road and are asking for your help in getting Schedule 9 withdrawn at the beginning of next week. Thank you for your consideration of this serious issue.

Kind Regards,

Natalie Mehra  
Executive Director

Ross Sutherland  
Chair

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*~ Protecting Public Medicare for All ~*

Ontario Health Coalition  
15 Gervais Drive, Suite 201  
Toronto, ON M3C 1Y8  
[ohc@sympatico.ca](mailto:ohc@sympatico.ca)

[www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca](http://www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca)  
416-441-2502