



Provincial Election 2007



Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)

In the summer of 2004, the Liberal Cabinet quietly approved a plan to implement 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). The purpose of the LHINs model, according to the government, is to plan, integrate and fund the delivery of health services in a particular region. However, the whole LHINs initiative was marked by a lack of meaningful public input into their mandate, mission and structure.

First Nations communities, for example, tried to have input into the LHINs. First Nations from across Ontario asked for and proposed amendments to LHINs, which were brought forward by the NDP. The McGuinty government voted down their amendments. Ontario Regional Chief Angus Toulouse said the McGuinty government amendments to the LHINs “do not reflect the necessary partnership with First Nations.” Toulouse said a real government-to-government relationship means First Nations should have more say than merely “providing advice” to the Minister.

The process of choosing local LHINs Chairs and Board of Directors was also flawed. The LHINs are not local, nor based on communities or even communities of shared interest. The LHINs structure erodes even further, any idea of community control over health care. Integration of services by the LHINs will result in disruption of services in the community and in disruption in the lives of workers who are providing these services. The LHINs initiative has been opposed by many Ontarians as a threat to locally accessible health care.

Yet the provincial Liberals have not given up trying to cut costs on the backs of workers. They intend to expand the price-based funding introduced through the so-called wait times strategy to all services purchased by the LHINs. That means bringing commercialization, competitive bidding, and undercutting to all health services in the province.

Ask your Local Candidates:

Will you publicly support the local election of members of the LHINs Board of Directors to ensure that it reflects the needs and diversity of the community?

Will you publicly support discussions with health care unions to develop a province-wide human resources adjustment program to address the negative impact of the LHINs integration of services?

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