



For immediate release

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## Accord ignores for-profit health care – doesn't even require an accounting

Ottawa: While analysts pour over the details, what's clear is that the 2003 First Ministers' Accord on Health Care Renewal is silent on for-profit health care delivery.

"Yes, the emphasis on primary care, home care and catastrophic drug coverage is good," said Kathleen Connors, RN, and President of the largest organization of nurses in Canada.

"But we are disappointed that the Accord fails to require that public health care dollars be spent on public health care delivery. Private hospitals are operating or on the drawing boards in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario. These provinces are also encouraging the further growth of other kinds of for-profit health care delivery.

"Most shocking is the fact that the Accord doesn't even require the accounting of public monies going to for-profit health care. Accounting will go on anyway – **so it would have been easy to require the not-for-profit and for-profit distinction.**

"This would have allowed Canadians an opportunity to judge for themselves the quality and the cost effectiveness of for-profit delivery. While for-profit delivery won't remain hidden, many pertinent details will.

"Will the extra money now provided to health care make it a more attractive investment for Canadian and American entrepreneurs? Without any prohibition against the growth of for-profit medicine, ironically this new money may hasten health care's privatization.

"Roy Romanow began his study of health care focused on Canadian values. Doctor and hospital services have been delivered in Canada on a not-for-profit basis for two generations and, for all the system's trials, Canadians rate it as good to very good. Why change the system's core values from care-centered to profit-centered?" Connors asked.

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