

Stop two-tier privatization of health service delivery

The Vision

“Health care is clearly a public concern, and it is a personal right of all citizens. By its very nature, it is fundamentally different from most other goods and services distributed in commercial markets. ... Markets are simply not designed to deal effectively with the delivery of medical care, which is a social function that needs to be addressed in the public sector. ...

“I would favour the elimination of all for-profit facilities and health care businesses. Yes, over the long run. I am an evidence-driven person... The facts are that no one has ever shown, in fair, accurate comparisons, that for-profit makes for greater efficiency or better quality, and certainly have never shown that it serves the public interest any better. Never.”

-- *Arnold Relman, MD, Professor Emeritus Harvard Medical School*
www.healthcoalition.ca/relman.html

The Plan of Action

1. **Federal Funding:** Restore federal cash transfers to at least 25% of total health care costs with strings and conditions so the money strengthens and expands non-profit delivery of health services.
2. **Canada Health Act:** Enforce the five criteria of the *Canada Health Act* (public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, portability, accessibility) and the two conditions prohibiting extra-billing and user fees. Correct deficiencies in monitoring provincial compliance, reporting to Parliament, and enforcing compliance.
3. **Diagnostic services:** Apply the conditions and criteria of the *Canada Health Act* to diagnostic services (including MRIs and CT scans). Contracts for diagnostic services will be awarded to not-for-profit organizations, including the renewal of existing contracts.
4. **Hospitals:** Prohibit all for-profit hospital “partnerships” (P3s). No outsourcing of clinical services, and ancillary services that impact on patient safety and public health, such as housekeeping and food delivery.
5. **Home care / Long term care / Outpatient Rehab:** Enforce tendering rules with a right of first refusal to not-for-profit organizations, including the renewal of existing contracts. Governments must also actively support the not-for-profit sector.
6. **Primary health care:** Base reform of health service delivery on non-profit community clinics and or practitioner-owned clinics such as GPs and nurse practitioners. Prohibit investor-owned clinics.
7. **Trade agreements:** Protect the health system from the rules of all trade agreements by negotiating a general exclusion for health services and health insurance.

