

Medicare: Accountable... Accessible... Public.



Ethical health care means public delivery

Private health care costs more and delivers less

Handing health care delivery over to the private sector is a bit like putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. For-profit clinics exist to provide care but also to make money. These goals can often prove to be contradictory and it's the patient, as well as taxpayers who pay the price.

Consider the following:

- A survey conducted in Canada in 2003 found that administrative costs for private insurers was 13.2%. In comparison, administrative costs make up only 1.3% of costs in the public sector.
- The United States, which does not have a national public health system spends 16% of its GDP on health care compared to the 10% of Canadian GDP spent on health care.
- A heart bypass costs \$23,921 in the US and \$12,000 in Canada (Can. dollars).
- A whole slew of studies in the US have revealed that for-profit hospitals bill more for the same services offered in public hospitals.
- The American group, Physicians for a National Health Program, recently compiled a list of civil and criminal fines and settlements paid by for-profit health insurance companies. Infractions included billing fraud, patient abuse, price-fixing, suppressing research data, faulty equipment – totalling hundreds of millions of dollars.

For-profit health care providers have an incentive to cut corners. Why should we believe that they would put patients before profits? Experience in those countries, and even in Canadian provinces, where private services have been allowed has consistently demonstrated otherwise.

Ask the candidates

Will your government stop the funding of for-profit health care services with public dollars?



Public Service Alliance of Canada
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada
