

The Creeping Privatization of Health Care in New Brunswick

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONCTON - The New Brunswick Health Coalition is extremely troubled about a recent trend by our government to privatize aspects of our health care system. In order to get a better picture of the privatization schemes occurring within the province, as well as the potential risks involved, the coalition hired academic researcher Tracy Glynn to investigate what is occurring, evaluate the evidence and produce a report of the findings.

This report, "*The Creeping Privatization of Health Care in New Brunswick and Recommendations to Strengthen Public Health Care*" outlines the dangers of privatization and contains 17 recommendations from the NB Health Coalition for alternatives that would mean a more efficient health care system and better health outcomes for New Brunswickers.

"The challenges faced by our health care system are real, but we don't believe they can be solved by opening our system to more privatization," said Jean-Claude Basque, co-chair of the New Brunswick Health Coalition.

"Our report serves as a wake-up call for citizens to better understand the scope and consequences of turning over part of our public health system to the private sector," added Basque.

"We hope that government will take the recommendations in the report seriously and see that there are better alternatives to improve our public health care system without resorting to privatization," said Norma Robinson, provincial secretary for the Coalition. Glynn's report found privatization occurring in **long-term care facilities**, through public-private partnerships; **Extra-mural care** management set to be turned over to Medavie EMS; provincially funded **prescription drug coverage** being administered by Medavie/Blue Cross; for profit paid **Blood Plasma** collection clinic set to open in Moncton; and **kitchen, cleaning and portering services** management being handed to the multinational corporation, Sodexo.

Evidence indicates this privatization will lead to negative impacts for patients, health care workers, rural areas, seniors, women and bilingual service delivery.

An executive summary of the report accompanies this press release. Please contact the NB Health Coalition to request a copy of the full report.

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