



dialogue

September 7, 2006

A bi-weekly update on issues
affecting health care in Ontario

Surgical Tourism Canada
<http://surgicaltourism.ca/>
OPSEU Health Care Divisional Council
<http://www.opseu.org/bps/health/splash.htm>

Company sends queue jumpers to India for surgery

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First it was manufacturing jobs, then service jobs — now hospital workers are seeing their work exported abroad. Surgical Tourism Canada arranges for private surgery at hospitals in India. Queue jumpers can hop on a plane, stay at a four or five star resort, and be attended to day and night. "...wages are cheaper in India," states one on-line testimonial, "so there is always a staff person looking to help you." The site also suggests that Surgical Tourism Canada is exploring funding for these off-shore procedures from the provinces and workers' compensation boards (WSIB). Provinces have already funded up to 100 per cent of these trips for medically-necessary procedures unavailable at home. More than 150,000 patients come to India each year while many of India's poor go without. And Indian taxpayers may even be subsidizing these visits: surgical tourism is eligible for Indian export incentives. However, complications from this surgery are often the responsibility of the Canadian health care system, and most countries offering surgical tourism have weak malpractice laws.

Central LHIN to release draft IHSP at meetings

The Central LHIN (North York to Lake Simcoe) is presenting its draft Integrated Health Service Plan at a series of meetings from September 11 to 21. The IHSP will be the basis for decision-making by the LHIN for the next three years. It is anticipated that many of the LHINs will be providing an opportunity to review their draft IHSPs before submitting them to the Ministry at the end of October. Locals are encouraged to review and provide input into these regional plans.

OPSEU Health Care Divisional Council tour

Representatives of the Health Care Divisional Council are attending local meetings in October and November to shed light on changes to Ontario's health system. The meetings will include a lively presentation on the government's initiatives and what it means for OPSEU members. It will also be an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on OPSEU's response. A tentative schedule of dates is posted on the Council's web page. If you would like to arrange a presentation for your local, contact Rick Janson at OPSEU Head Office.

EORLA lab begins while nearby hospital pulls out of similar model

The Ottawa Hospital labs are finally moving into their new regional facilities between September 22 and October 6th. The new regional facility will be the hub lab of the multi-hospital Eastern Ontario Regional Lab Association (EORLA). EORLA states workers at the new lab will maintain their current employment status until a human resources plan can be completed. EORLA has yet to consult the union regarding details of such a plan. The delay in occupancy was due to defective electrical wiring, which had to be removed and replaced. Meanwhile, the Winchester hospital is pulling out of its pilot project with the Kingston-area Hospitals In Common Labs, concluding that it was not financially viable. Despite the lengthy roll out, will many of the regional hospitals in EORLA eventually come to similar conclusions?

Feedback

"Who Moved
the Cheese"

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"I particularly appreciated the side bar article about the mice and the cheese. I think that idea (sadly) translates to what is happening in children's mental health! Personally, I have always held to the analogy that we are all like Lucy and Ethel in the "Chocolate Factory" episode, just trying to do our jobs with management changing the pace/rules without consultation." - Deb Gordon

FAC Workshops

The Ontario Federation of Labour is conducting province-wide workshops for hospital members serving on their fiscal advisory committees. Dates, locations and forms have been sent out to all hospital locals and are posted on the Council web site. For more information, contact Rick Janson at OPSEU Head Office.