

Speaking Notes for C. Duncan  
Romanow Hearings  
March 12, 2002

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Sent to BCNU  
for their  
Presentation  
BCHC did not  
get to Present!

- VWHC – who we are
  
- BCHC – who we are - includes:
  - Seniors – Old Age Pensioners' Org, COSCO, Seniors Network of BC
  - Students and Youth – CFS, Check Your Head
  - Community Groups – BCPWA, YouthCo, BC Forum, COC, ELP, VWHC
  - Community Health Centre – Reach Clinic
  - Health care workers, nurses, government employees
    - Unions – HEU , BCNU, BCGEU, HSA

### FOCUS ON USER FEES

- Only BC and Alberta charge a user fee to access health care
  
- In BC the MSP premiums will increase by 50% May 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Single person – MSP premium \$54 month (up from \$36) when income reaches \$24,000 = \$648 MSP premium/year
  - Families – MSP premium \$108 month (up from \$72) when combined family income is \$33,000 = \$1,296 in MSP premiums a year, or \$432 more a year
  - Couples – MSP premium \$96 month (up from \$64) when combined income is \$33,000 a year = \$1,152 MSP/year

- Those with an income below \$16,000 do not pay the MSP premium
- When an individual's income is above \$16,000 a year she pays a portion of the premium to 100% of the premium when her income reaches \$24,000
- For Couples and Families, they begin paying a portion of the premium when their combined income is \$25,000 and pay 100% of MSP premium when the combined annual income reaches \$33,000

### AT THE SAME TIME...

- MSP no longer covers:
  - Physiotherapy
  - Chiropractic care
  - massage therapy
  - naturopath
  - podiatry
- We must now pay for 100% of the cost of these health services
- Everyone between 19 and 64 must now pay for 100% of the cost of eye examinations
  - Note: Those on MSP premium assistance are now allowed only 10 visits per year for these health services, previously people on income assistance received up to 12 visits per year for each of these services.

### MESSAGE:

1. User Fees = MSP premiums. MUST be abolished!
2. The Federal Government must return to a 50/50 cost sharing arrangement for health care with the provinces!!!

Hi Lorna

ok?

604-421-4499

Romanow  
extract.

We are writing to express our interest in presenting at Health Commission hearings in British Columbia. The following is an abstract of what we wish to present.

The British Columbia Health Coalition is a coalition of community groups, advocacy organizations, health care workers and labour unions who've joined together to defend and strengthen Medicare in British Columbia. The Coalition has been active in BC for over ten years.

The fight to preserve and modernize medicare is at a crossroads in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada. We believe the Commission must take leadership in preserving medicare for Canadians. The five basic principles of the Canada Health Act need to be maintained and the public system strengthened and improved.

**On the issue of privatization and globalization:**

- The Commission must oppose public-private partnerships for hospitals, long-term care and other health services.
- The Commission must oppose the contracting out and privatization of home care and ancillary services within public health care facilities and regions.
- The Commission must oppose efforts to expand the use of private surgery clinics.
- The Commission must recognize that the privatization of health care will result in the irreversible destruction of medicare due to globalization.
- The Commission must ensure that all health services are publicly funded and delivered by non-profit and/or public agencies.

**On the issue of accessibility and affordability:**

- The Commission must support National Home Care and Pharmacare programs
- The Commission must oppose user fees
- The Commission must acknowledge and address the adverse impacts of increased health care costs which will most severely affect low income people including many seniors

**On the issue of primary care reform:**

- The Commission must promote the delivery of primary care through community health centres.
- The Commission must support a better use of the whole health care team.
- The Commission must recommend an end to the inefficient fee-for-service method of compensating physicians.
- The Commission must make the links between the social determinants of health, good health care outcomes and health care costs.

The Commission must affirm that health care is a public good - it is not for profit or for sale. The trend to privatization of health care must be reversed. Privatization is not the answer. The health care system must be more accountable. All citizens should be treated fairly and consulted with when they feel it is necessary through democratic participation and governance at all levels. We look forward to speaking directly with Mr. Romanow about all of our concerns.

Sincerely,

Lorna Gunn  
Co-chair, British Columbia Health Coalition  
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