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Suggestions to the Ontario COVID-19 Command Table

Posted by Randy Hillier [169.60sc](#) on April 26, 2020

Fighting COVID-19 by not using healthcare- Who would have thought?



Although it has become unfashionable to be critical or even to scrutinize governments' response to the current pandemic, and instead has become virtuous to respond only emotionally in support of their decrees regarding COVID, I invite serious consideration of the following facts and suggestions.

All of our hospitals in Ontario are presently operating at a historic low capacity. Just over two months ago hospitals were at 100-120% capacity;

while speaking with Hospital Administrators in my area I was informed many are at or below 60%; beds are empty, procedures and diagnostics postponed, and ER rooms empty.¹

Public Health Ontario, at the beginning of this outbreak, began by emptying hospitals while diverting necessary PPE to them. However, those at higher risk in contracting COVID at LTC home, were left without for far too long.²

While Ontario was quick to spend money in building and staffing COVID assessment centres to test people throughout Ontario³, our private labs were idled. Throughout my inquiries, I have come to understand the Ministry of Health and Public Health Ontario didn't even bother to ask our over 500 private medical labs for assistance. Even though these labs are located in both small towns and major urban centres, and would have been able to identify more local outbreaks more quickly, they weren't and aren't being utilized.

Physicians in private family practices, clinics, and medical specialists in private practice are all essentially closed following the outbreak.

Does anyone else find it strange if not paradoxical that during the greatest pandemic we have ever faced, we have shut down all of our private health care services and medical professionals, and the public ones were left operating just above 50% capacity?

Could we not better utilize our many healthcare workers and resources during this time? There is a multi year wait for many elective surgeries; cataracts, hip and knee replacements to name just a few⁴, yet our hospitals remain unfilled, and our physicians and surgeons idled.

I am filled with gratitude for the nurses, doctors, hospital workers, personal support workers, and other essential service workers risking their health in the fight with COVID, especially the workers at LTC homes who have been forced to face and carry the brunt of this pandemic, however we have seen the many social media posts⁵ of hospital workers engaged in dancing and playful activity as they have little to do while our LTC and developmental

community homes are straining under unbearable conditions trying to keep up. Couldn't some of our under utilized public hospital workers be deployed to LTC homes?

Apparently the solution is to call in the Military to work in LTC, while many of our healthcare workers are idle and hospital staff stand unutilized. Seems bizarre to me.

It has been an absolutely confusing time, listening to the "experts". Banning long-distance travel doesn't stop the spread, but banning short-distance travel to your cottage will; going to beer stores is fine but having a stroll in the park is a punishable offence; it's too dangerous for well paid public servants and elected members to be at work, but not too dangerous for PSW's and grocery clerks; wearing masks are bad one day then necessary the next; closing the borders with the USA is needed, but planes can continue arriving from China? These actions and contradictions are indicative of governments not being rational or thoughtful in discharging their responsibilities.

While this pandemic has created a great many contradictions, along with panic and fear. Public policy must be developed without contradictions, without panic and fear, in order to serve the people in the most beneficial and practical way, and it should always be examined in this light.

Finally, this is surely the only time in the history of humanity that the best line of defence against a pandemic has been to expand governments' arbitrary authority while diminishing oversight and accountability; to suspend civil liberties and constitutional guarantees while delegating the UN, WHO, and Public Health to set public policy; and to borrow money to such an extent that we will invariably lower our standards of living, diminish prosperity and become a debtor nation, while paying money to people not to work. It is only further evident that these are more reactions rather than solutions, as we've seen in the health care sector.

We must call on all elected representatives and the Premier to better use our Hospital resources.

Please call or email the Premier here: premier@ontario.ca or 416-325-1941

¹<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/04/01/capacity-but-how-much-inside-the-covid-19-patient-load-at-ontario-hospitals.html>

²<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/covid-19-ontario-long-term-care-timeline-actions-deaths-1.5542214>

³<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-significantly-expanding-covid-19-testing.html>

⁴<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1728368707598>

⁵<https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/9939770-video-of-icu-team-at-markham-stouffville-hospital-dancing-sparks-a-debate-online/>

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