



March 31, 2023

Hon. Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
[premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

Hon. Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Health  
[sylvia.jones@ontario.ca](mailto:sylvia.jones@ontario.ca)

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Jones,

As representatives of the paediatric healthcare community in Ontario, we are writing to urge the Government of Ontario to extend the Physician and Hospital Services for Uninsured Persons program and work with health care providers to develop a provincial strategy to ensure that everyone living in Ontario has access to essential healthcare services, independent of insurance status.

In March 2020, your government removed long-standing barriers to essential healthcare services for people in Ontario by facilitating hospital and physician payments for medically necessary services provided to patients without insurance under OHIP or another provincial plan. This initiative saved lives, reduced the spread of COVID-19, and helped to ensure care was available to all those who needed it. The decision to end this program effective March 31, 2023 will be a significant step backwards and will widen gaps in access to care, especially for population groups that are already most marginalized.

Without public health insurance, we know that children and their families are less likely to seek or receive necessary health care. In fact, when uninsured individuals present at emergency rooms, their health conditions are 43% more likely to be classified as severe in comparison to insured individuals. Turning patients away or denying needed services increases moral distress in healthcare providers, many of whom are already experiencing significant levels of stress and burnout. No child in Ontario should be forced to suffer unnecessarily, be denied care, or have their health and well-being compromised due to a lack of insurance.

The pandemic has made the importance of a strong and accessible public healthcare system for all abundantly clear. We therefore strongly urge you to extend supports for uninsured Ontarians and work with the healthcare community to build a long-term strategy that will ensure access to essential healthcare services for uninsured people in the province.

Sincerely,

Mark Feldman MD, FRCPC  
CPS President

Kim Dow, MD, FRCPC  
CPS Board Member

Eddy Lau, MD, FRCPC  
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