

June 24, 2013

Honourable Deborah Matthews
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block
10th Floor
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto ON M7A 2C4

Dear Honourable Deborah Matthews,

On behalf of Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer (OPACC) and our membership, we are writing to draw your attention to our collective concerns of the under dosing of chemotherapy at London Health Sciences Centre, Windsor Regional hospital, Lakeridge Health and Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer has an overall goal of being the parent voice for families in Ontario with children diagnosed with cancer. As such, we advocate on behalf of families to assist in the improvement of care across Ontario.

London Health Sciences Centre is a tertiary Paediatric Oncology centre that has been providing under dosed chemotherapy since March 1, 2012 to both children and adults. As a result, and in our role of advocating for our children and their families, we are very concerned about the future repercussions to the children who received the under dosage of Cyclophosphamide over a period of one year.

As you are aware, the great improvements in the cure rates in childhood cancers have been solely a result of strict adherence to well-designed protocols. However, when children are not treated according to protocol, there is a risk of relapse and possible death when the recommended doses are not received as per their treatment protocol.

It is the responsibility of the government to implement strategies that provide a voice for families when a system of care is ineffective. As your constituents, we are deeply concerned about the lack of independent oversight of Ontario's Hospitals. Allowing these publicly funded institutions to oversee themselves and providing limited Provincial Review Boards that lack investigative powers, in our opinion, is insufficient.

We are aware that Ontario is the only Province in Canada that does not allow independent investigations of these institutions. We urge you to take the lead in protecting your most vulnerable constituents, our children, by expanding the Ombudsman mandate to include Hospitals.

Finally, in order to maintain the integrity of care delivered to children in Ontario, we urge that all three political parties work in a non-partisan manner to ensure treatment errors do not happen in the future by implementing accountability measures without delay.

We will be following up with a telephone call to your office to discuss our concerns further and ensure that our message is heard. In the meantime, if you would like further information or to speak to with a representative of OPACC, please feel free to call us at 705-828-7965.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David Munro
President and Chair

Cc: Tim Hudak, MPP (Niagara West--Glanbrook)

Andrea Horwath, MPP (Hamilton Centre)