

Right to Healthcare Coalition

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To the members of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

Re: Toronto Public Health's Pre-budget consultations brief

The Right to Healthcare Coalition is a network of over 40 organizations in Toronto advocating for the reduction of barriers to healthcare faced by immigrants and refugees in Ontario. We are writing in support of the brief submitted by Toronto Public Health to the Government of Ontario's pre-budget consultations. Toronto Public Health plays a critical role in the health and well-being of residents of Toronto, delivering key services at the community level to high need populations as well as leading in knowledge creation and policy development. This is particularly evident in the past years where TPH has prioritized the issue of racialization of poverty and health disparities experienced by disadvantaged groups.

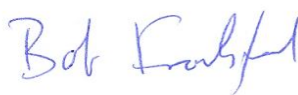
The elimination of the three month wait for OHIP experienced by newly landed residents arriving in Ontario is a key objective for many organizations, community groups and individuals. While there is no compelling evidence regarding the basis for this restriction, we **know** that prevention and health promotion are key factors in maintaining good health and reducing or preventing downstream costs on the health system. Nowhere is this more true than in early identification and treatment of diseases such as tuberculosis. Restricting access to OHIP for new residents in Ontario for three months is not saving the government money, merely delaying and ultimately increasing them. Early identification and management of disease will arrest its' progress, reduce symptoms and prevent transmission to community.

Ontario is one of the few remaining provinces in Canada to retain this unnecessary and counterproductive restriction. Toronto Public Health, as the largest public health agency in Canada, is committed to the health and wellbeing of residents of this city and we support their endeavours to remove this barrier to access to services. We urge you to carefully consider their evidence.

Yours very truly,



Axelle Janczur
Coalition Co-chair



Dr. Bob Frankford
Coalition Co-chair