

Cambie Corp vs B.C. - Prescribing Truth

After 104 witnesses, almost 180 days of testimony and over 30,000 pages of evidence, Brian Day's challenge to our public health care system is almost over! Closing arguments took place over 3 weeks, from November 18 - December 6, 2019. After hearing the case in full, we believe that the plaintiffs have not convincingly argued that our health care legislation is unconstitutional: public health care exists to ensure everyone receives care based on need, not ability to pay. But now, it is in the hands of the judge.

Along with others in our Intervenor group, the BC Health Coalition continued our involvement with the case throughout the year. In addition to keeping a close watch on courtroom developments, we've been active in front of the national and local media and keeping our allies up to date on the case and campaigns.

In the spring, the Defense brought forth their evidence. This included both our expert witnesses taking the stand:

- In May, our first expert witness, Marie-Claude Prémont, provided evidence on what happened in Quebec after Chaoulli v. Quebec, a court decision in Quebec that allowed for more private health insurance options in that province, and emphasized how vital strong health

care legislation is for health equity. Prémont's evidence was critical for the court to hear because the changes to our health care system sought in the Cambie case have a wider potential impact than the Quebec-bound Chaoulli case.

- In June, our second expert witness, Dr. David Himmelstein, offered a comparative analysis of the U.S. and Canadian health care systems. He gave evidence on the dangers of introducing private insurance into single-payer health care systems such as Canada's, and the risks of allowing for-profit organizations to operate in health care (including worse patient outcomes, high administration costs, and over-prescribing of 'lucrative' procedures).

We hosted events with both Prof. Prémont, and Dr. Himmelstein, alongside Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, for our coalition and intervenor members.

Health care is a human right and, in this province and across this country, we value helping our neighbour. We continue to reject Day's argument that those who can pay out of pocket should get faster service while the public system gets starved of doctors, nurses, and technicians, and wait times only get longer.

Thank you to everyone who have supported us throughout this process. Thank you for your donations, your letters to the editor, your emails to government, your attendance in the courtroom, your interest and involvement. It has been a heroic effort and a job well done by all of us. Now, we will wait for the judge's decision and we will be there to move forward, whatever the decision. But we believe the law is on our side.



Keep up-to-date on the case at
www.savemedicare.ca

BC Health Coalition, 302 - 3102 Main Street, Vancouver, BC V5T 3G7 www.bchealthcoalition.ca

"I have seen coalition members rise to the challenge together many times over the past nine years. I'm so grateful that you are here to meet the challenges ahead." -Adam Lynes-Ford



The BC Health Coalition thanks Adam Lynes-Ford for nine years of dedication, solidarity and hard work. We also welcome Ayendri Riddell who is stepping into the Campaigner role and is already continuing the work of defending and strengthening our public health care system. Many thanks to Nadine Nakagawa for her impactful work at BCHC as she moves on from the Organizer role. We wish her well!

We welcome Hornby & Denman Community Health Care Society, Protect Public Health Care - Sunshine Coast, Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice and West Coast LEAF joining the 800000 + strong membership and are actively connecting with individuals and organizations around the province.

Want to help improve public health care for yourself and your community? **Contact us to get more involved**

BCHealth Coalition BCHC Steering Committee

BC Federation of Labour

BCGEU

CCPA BC

Check Your Head

COSCO

Council of Canadians

CUPE BC

Hospital Employees' Union

Health Sciences Association

Metro Van Cross-Cultural Seniors Network

MOSAIC BC

MoveUp

Support our Health Care Society

UFCW 1518

BCHC Staff

Terrie Hendrickson, Coordinator

Adam Lynes-Ford, Campaigner (until June 2019)

Ayendri Riddell, Campaigner (from June 2019)

Nadine Nakagawa, Organizer (until November 2019)



BCHealth Coalition



Annual Report 2018-2019



Campaign Highlights

Equity is a key value that we strive for in all the work that we do, and our key campaigns this year definitely fill that brief.

Community Health Centres

Across the province, our members, allies and advocates from many different communities joined together in support of Community Health Centres. CHCs are responsive, team-based primary care that is community-led and that has proven very effective in addressing the unmet needs of vulnerable populations, as well as the broader neighbourhoods and communities where they are situated. The primary health care services offered at CHCs create a space to focus on the social determinants of health and equitable access.

MLA lobby

Across the province, BCHC members have been reaching out to their MLAs to share the importance of CHCs: and the need for appropriate funding options and community development processes.

Community Health Centre Roundtable Public Events

On February 1, 2019, the BC Health Coalition, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and Health Sciences Association of BC convened an invitational roundtable followed by a packed public event with panelists from the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in Oregon; Ottawa's Centretown Community Health Centre, Saskatchewan's Saskatoon Community Clinic; as well as local advocates from the CHC community. Over 70 people from a broad range of community non-profit, government, and health sector organizations participated.



Pharmacare

Canada is the only country with a universal health care system that doesn't include pharmacare. Public health care advocates have been pushing for pharmacare for decades, and now we are closer than ever in getting it - if there is enough political will.

In January 2019, public health care advocates from across the country, including BCHC, met with MPs in Ottawa to lobby for universal pharmacare. In June, we celebrated the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare's recommendation to create a full universal public pharmacare program. BC Health Coalition members continue to push our federal political parties to implement the report's recommendations - sending emails, asking questions at All Candidates Meetings and writing letters to the editor. With the new political landscape in Ottawa, we will continue to work with our national allies to ensure full, universal pharmacare becomes a reality.

Seniors Care

In the up-coming year, BCHC will be developing a seniors' strategy - there is much at stake as we continue to hear about situations like the poor conditions in foreign-owned long-term residences. With leadership from COSCO, BCHC advocated for more consultation in the development of assisted living regulations, and improvements were made and came into force on December 1, 2019. Research on the Assisted Living sector in BC was completed in partnership with BCHC, CCPA and HEU. The report will come out in 2020, along with recommendations on next steps.



Building Community

We continue to build relationships and support groups to advocate for themselves:

CARES for Equitable Health

The Community Alliance of Racialized Ethnocultural Services for Equitable Health (CARES for Equitable Health) is a group of organizations and individuals who work with ethnocultural communities and are interested in connecting more closely with the health system. CARES for Equitable Health supports the government's initiative to reform primary care and shift to a team-based model of care delivery. They are working together to share with MLAs how these reform initiatives could be organized in ways that will improve care for BC's ethnocultural communities.

BC Youth For Health

BC Youth For Health is a group co-hosted by Check Your Head and the BC Health Coalition that sees youth involved in public health care advocacy. The group takes action advocating for youth concerns about our public health care system, including mental wellness and the social determinants of health.



Continuing Successes

Thanks to your hard work over many years, we continue to see successful steps forward from the Ministry of Health:

Decreased wait times - CIHI report

Last year, the BC Government announced its surgical strategy that included many of the solutions BC Health Coalition members have been calling for. In March, The Canadian Institute for Health Information released its latest report on wait times in Canada showing that BC is one of the few provinces where wait times are going down for surgeries. However, we know there is still much to do. We continue to push for deeper systemic changes such as centralized intake, assessment and triage.

Buying MRI clinics and machines

The BC Health Coalition welcomed the Minister of Health's September 2018 announcement that the province bought two private, for-profit MRI clinics which will reduce wait times for MRIs in Fraser Health by providing 10,000 more exams annually. The government is also building new MRI suites and seeing improved wait times in all of the health authorities, especially in the north.

Building hospitals without P3 model

As the government continues to make big capital investments in building and improving new hospitals, we are glad to see them rejecting costly Public-Private Partnerships (P3s), opting instead for the cheaper, more efficient Design-Build model. This includes the Royal Columbian Hospital revitalization and the construction of a new St Paul's Hospital.

