

MEDICAL REFORM GROUP

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CMA PRESIDENT BETRAYS CANADIANS

The Medical Reform Group today expressed profound disappointment over CMA president Albert Schumacher's support for two-tiered American style care in Canada.

"Doctors who are on patients' side will support universal, publicly funded health care," said MRG spokesperson Gordon Guyatt. "Doctors who understand the evidence, and realize that publicly funded health care is more efficient, will support universal publicly funded health care."

In his publicly quoted comments in the Toronto Star, Dr. Schumacher lumps publicly insured and uninsured services together. We already have insurance available for uninsured services such as dental care, and as long as these remain uninsured that is appropriate. Insurance for publicly insured services, on the other hand, will severely undermine equitable care for all.

"An upper tier of care will suck physicians and other resources from the publicly funded system," said another MRG spokesperson, Dr. Irfan Dhalla. "The result will be an increase in problems, including wait times, for publicly funded care."

The questions Canadians should be asking themselves is if they want high quality care for all, or only for those with higher incomes. Roy Romanow found out that Canadians place a high value on equity. The current assault on publicly funded health care is a move toward a more selfish, less compassionate American model.

"Dr. Schumacher is advocating better care for the wealthy, and changes that will lead to worse care for the rest of us," Dr. Guyatt concluded. "In doing so, he is putting himself on the side of the privileged and profiteers ready to take millions of dollars that should go to health care and put it in their pockets. In doing so, he is betraying the ordinary Canadians whom doctors should be protecting."

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The Medical Reform Group is an independent association of doctors and medical students who believe that all Canadians should have equitable access to high-quality health care.

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