

BULLETIN

BC Health Coalition: Health Authority appointment raises serious concerns about governments commitment to defend Medicare

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The BC Health Coalition is calling into question the provincial governments commitment to defend public health care in the courts in the wake of the recent appointment of Kip Woodward as chair of Vancouver Coastal Health ... the provinces second largest health authority.

Mr. Woodward is a former Board member of the for-profit Cambie Surgery Centre and his family investment firm, Woodcorp Investments Ltd., is an investor in the controversial private clinic run by Dr. Brian Day.

Cambie Surgery is at the centre of the pivotal BC Supreme Court case launched by Day and a consortium of private for-profit clinics against the BC Medical Services Commission and the provincial government. The clinics aim to have key provisions of provincial health legislation declared unconstitutional so that they can sell necessary health services to patients who can afford to pay a premium to jump the queue and open up BC to US-style health insurance.

-Mr. Woodward is a known advocate of privatized, for-profit health care," said BCHC Co-chair Rachel Tutte, referring to recent letters written by Woodward last fall to Health Minister Kevin Falcon on Woodcorp letterhead, but in the capacity of Chair of Providence Health Care. In these letters Woodward stated that Providences previous relationship with Vancouver Coastal -held us back" and he expressed a desire for -new funding models and new delivery processes."

One of the letters goes on to outline numerous -revenue generating" and -cost recovery" schemes that could not possibly avoid violating Medicares principles of accessibility and universality and that would further advance the interests of for-profit health care investors.

-Health minister Kevin Falcon has a responsibility to defend our public health care system in the courts and to protect patients from this attack on BCs Medicare laws," said Tutte. -Now, he is appointing an investor in one of the key players in this legal attack on public health care to run our Medicare system."

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