

WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL Chamber of Commerce

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“Ontario is Ready for Health Transformation”: New Study Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber Leading Conversation about Patient-Focused Health Care 80% of Province Ready for “Broad Reform”

Windsor, ON – In a landmark report released today, the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce (WERCC) in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) has outlined an opportunity to bring real and meaningful change to Ontario’s health care system. The report, *Transformation through Value and Innovation: Revitalizing Health Care in Ontario*, coincides with new survey data showing that the province is ready for health care modernization and service delivery reform.

According to a poll released within the report, 77 percent of Ontarians are concerned about the sustainability of their health care system, and 80 percent agree with the statement that “Ontario’s health care system will need to undergo broad reform in order to meet the challenges of changing demographics”.

“Our single-payer health care system has long been a source of pride to Ontarians, as it should be,” said Matt Marchand, WERCC President & CEO. “But due to demographic shifts and economic challenges, funding that system is becoming an increasing source of concern. Health spending in Ontario represents almost half the provincial budget and as our population ages, it is projected that health care costs to government, individuals and employers will grow well beyond sustainable levels.”

The report marks the beginning of the OCC’s year-long Health Transformation Initiative, which will convene expert stakeholders and industry leaders to develop a blueprint for the future of sustainable health care in Ontario—including an opportunity for a partnership with the private sector within the single-payer model.

While three quarters of Ontarians believe that the provincial healthcare system delivers better outcomes than those of comparable jurisdictions, international health research firm The Commonwealth Fund recently ranked Canada’s health system 10th out of 11 industrialized nations.

“Ontario is ready for health transformation,” said Allan O’Dette, President & CEO of the OCC. “Canadians have a genuine fear of what they perceive as ‘American-style’ health care, but this ignores both the considerable share of health coverage already delivered by the private sector as well as the integral role of industry in other countries with a single-payer model, like the UK and Australia. When it comes to health care, we must work collaboratively across industry sectors and institutions in order to build a system that is sustainable for generations to come.”

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This report comes at a time when system change is being considered, as the federal and provincial governments are on the cusp of re-negotiating the health accords. The Ontario government has also indicated its new priorities for an innovative, patient-first system, including the creation of the Office of the Chief Health Innovation Strategist and naming the province's first Patient Advocate.

In response to this, the WERCC in partnership with the OCC will release a series of reports in 2016 which will outline how Ontario can improve health outcomes, address fiscal challenges and leverage untapped economic opportunity in the health sector. For additional information please visit www.transformhealth.ca.

Results from a survey of 1004 Ontarians conducted on behalf of the OCC by Leger, between February 22 and 25, 2016. The margin of error for this sample is 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

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