



CANADA'S HEALTHCARE UNION

March 25, 2020

SENT VIA EMAIL

Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Hon. Christine Elliott, Minister of Health
Hon. Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health

Dear Premier, Ministers, and Chief Medical Officer of Health:

Directive to Override Collective Bargaining Agreements in Ontario's Hospitals

As unions representing Ontario's healthcare professionals, we write to collectively voice our concern over the March 21, 2020 directive to override contract protections for staff in Ontario's hospitals.

Respectfully, if there are concerns or problems that need to be addressed, they are best worked out through dialogue, not by directive, and certainly not without consultation.

Our members have proven their value, contribution and commitment to providing high quality care. They are rising each day to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our members do so with great risk to their own health and safety, and that of their families. The lack of protective masks, face shields and other personal protective equipment, have already put these members at a heightened risk of COVID-19 infection. These workers already have limited ability to refuse unsafe work, nor do they have the legal right to withdraw their labour.

Healthcare workers need to be protected while doing their jobs. They deserve to be consulted on any needed changes in their workplaces.

We find the decision to proceed with such measures, disrespectful and an unnecessary attack on these healthcare professionals - many of whom are already feeling the burden and mounting pressure of responding to this crisis. Even under the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in today, there has been no difficulty in transferring or assigning staff, as required, to assessment centres or wherever they are needed to meet demand.

Let us be clear, the government must not seek an extension to this order. This current order must expire, as indicated, and as scheduled.

Premier, consult and seek guidance from the very frontline workers you are reliant on to keep Ontarians safe, and to get the job done. Our members have proven their commitment to providing the highest quality care possible. Commit to engage with us, include us - in all decisions related to the health and safety of our members and their working conditions.

The challenge ahead will require our collective efforts. The work of our members will be critical to our success.

Sincerely,



PATTY COATES

President, Ontario Federation of Labour



MICHAEL HURLEY

President, Ontario Council of Hospital Unions



FRED HAHN

President, CUPE Ontario



SHARLEEN STEWART

President, SEIU Healthcare