

Edmonton Examiner Column #2 – May, 2010

Greetings on behalf of the constituents of Edmonton-Gold Bar!

Last week the private health care facility known as the Health Resource Centre or HRC, was put into receivership by Alberta Health Services, as a result of a lawsuit undertaken by creditors of Network Health Inc., HRC's parent organization. This action leaves hundreds of patients in Calgary in limbo as to the status of their hip and knee replacement surgeries. The Grace Hospital in Calgary, closed by the Province over 12 years ago and now occupied by HRC, once played a pivotal role in delivering public health care in Calgary. Now it serves no useful purpose whatsoever.

Last month, the Province cancelled the contracts of several eye surgery clinics throughout the Province and reassigned the patients in line for surgery to new facilities. Hundreds of patients, including several constituents of Edmonton Gold Bar, have now had their cataract surgeries cancelled or re-scheduled. There was no plan in place to manage the transition for patients who were already waiting for cataract surgeries. Ironically, several private clinics such as the Gimbel Eye Centre have lost their contracts with Alberta Health Services, and these facilities are now sitting idle while patients who had been waiting for surgeries at these clinics have now had weeks if not months added to their wait times!

These events clearly demonstrate that the Alberta Government doesn't have a handle of how to deliver public health care. We seem to be lurching from one mess to another. People across the constituency want consistent, reliable health care, and don't understand why this Government wants to increase private health care delivery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hugh MacDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "H" and "M".

Hugh MacDonald, MLA
