



Dear

The amount being spent by governments on health care has been diminishing as the costs of delivering that health care have increased. In many ways this can be attributed to the way we have become accustomed to reacting to ill-health and not preventing the onset through the proactive means at our disposal. Now is the time to consider an initiative that will relieve pressure on the public purse, provide for reasonable access by Ontarians, and stimulate the economy through spending and taxation.

An investigation into health care delivery in Ontario is required, as several branches are scrambling at an ever shrinking funding pie. Options for preventative health care should be available to residents of Ontario, supported through the use of a tax credit. Preventative health care would benefit all Ontarians and relieve pressure on the current public health care system, opening space for those who need acute critical care. This would also allow individuals who choose to access preventative care, some return on their expense and the freedom to consult with their complementary and alternative health care practitioners who are a part of the Regulated Health Professions Act.

Over the past decade, access to extended health care has been increasingly limited through the capping of services throughout the insurance industry in Canada. Though massage therapy is being used more widely than ever before, the use of massage therapy may be at risk as the population ages and access to extended health care through work place insurance is reduced.

Current tax law allows for health receipts to be claimed if the claimant earns at or below the poverty line, or the receipts are in excess of \$2,000.00. The amount exceeding \$2,000.00 is paid back at a small percentage of the actual expense. Health spending that can be claimed as a deduction is spending that is critical for basic survival. This practice is reactionary as opposed to proactive.

Proactive spending is instituting a tax credit for preventative health care. Proactive spending is allowing claims on health services provided by professionals listed under the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA). Proactive spending allows for more space in the current system as the average population maintains its health.

A great many of the members of the Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario see individuals for a variety of different conditions and mainly through the extended health care offered through their workplace. As retirement sets in, out of pocket costs of extended benefits will force Ontarians into a single model of healthcare. There is no one-size fits all in health care and we need to provide Ontarians with more choices for their health care.

The current system reacts to health care needs, while a tax credit would initiate preventative health care. This will reduce the use of the single payer system and provide more resources for those that are in need. Increase the choice for Ontarians and translate their care to better compliance which, in turn, will translate to better overall health.

Thank you for your time,

Member of the Registered Massage Therapists' Association of Ontario