



Sylvia Jones, MPP
Dufferin-Caledon

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September 27th, 2016

Chair Doug Auld and Members of the Board
Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
474 Wellington Road #18, Suite 100 RR 1
Fergus ON, N0B 1J0

Dear Members of the Board:

I want to make you aware of my private member's bill, Bill 5 - the *Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016*. If adopted, my private member's bill will ensure individuals with hepatitis C will receive greater access to highly effective treatments.

Currently individuals diagnosed with hepatitis C cannot access new treatments that have a 95 per cent effectiveness rate in curing hepatitis C until they meet restrictive clinical criteria that demand an individual's liver be halfway to cirrhosis.

Other provinces including Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick have begun the process of removing or loosening eligibility requirements for individuals to access publicly-funded treatment. That is why I introduced the *Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act*. If adopted, it will ensure every individual in Ontario with hepatitis C will receive treatment upon the recommendation from their physician, no matter what stage their disease is in. No longer will an individual have to wait and let their liver further deteriorate before receiving life-saving treatment.

Please find enclosed a pamphlet with further details about Bill 5. If you support my private member's bill, I encourage you to write a letter of support to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and urge the Minister to adopt this important legislation to combat hepatitis C. In addition I have enclosed a sample letter for your use. I would also appreciate receiving a copy of your letter to the Minister.

With your help, we can eliminate the single most burdensome infectious disease in Canada.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Sylvia Jones".

Sylvia Jones, MPP
Dufferin-Caledon

SYLVIA JONES, MPP

Dufferin-Caledon

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Help Expand Access to Life-Saving Treatments for Hepatitis C

Currently there are approximately 110,000 Ontarians living with hepatitis C, while nearly half of individuals with hepatitis C are unaware they have this disease.

Individuals can live with hepatitis C for many years without experiencing any symptoms, even though the disease slowly damages their liver. If left untreated, hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer, and ultimately death.

Hepatitis C is curable, with new treatments having shown a 95 per cent effectiveness rate in curing individuals with hepatitis C.

While new treatments have shown great promise in curing individuals with hepatitis C, many individuals cannot access these highly effective treatments until they meet restrictive clinical criteria that demand an individual's liver be halfway to cirrhosis.

Ontario is lagging behind in helping bring an end to this viral disease. Provinces including Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and

New Brunswick have begun the process of removing or loosening eligibility requirements for individuals to access publicly-funded treatment.

Without these highly effective treatments that cost approximately \$55,000, an individual with hepatitis C can cost the health care system up to \$330,000 in health costs.

"We have an opportunity to help eliminate the single most burdensome infectious disease in Canada. That is why I introduced my private member's bill, Bill 5 - the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016."

"If adopted, my private member's bill will ensure every individual in Ontario with hepatitis C will receive treatment upon the recommendation from their physician, no matter what stage their disease is in. If Bill 5 is adopted, an individual will no longer have to wait and let their liver further deteriorate before receiving life-saving treatment."

How YOU Can Help

- I would like to hear your comments on Bill 5 - the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016, and would appreciate your support. Please contact my office at sylvia.jonesla@pc.ola.org.
- To get a copy of Bill 5, go online to www.sylviajonesmpp.ca or call 416-325-1898.
- Share this information with friends, family and anyone who supports expanding access to life-saving treatments for hepatitis C.
- If you have questions, please email sylvia.jonesla@pc.ola.org.

Support for Bill 5

“Today we have drug therapies that can cure hepatitis C but if we limit access based on restrictive criteria, we will continue to have low numbers of people treated and ever increasing cases of liver cancer and avoidable deaths. Removing the criteria on treatment access can help save lives and over the long-term save the health care system millions in acute care costs associated with end stage liver disease and transplants. The Canadian Liver Foundation is therefore in full support of the Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act.”

- Dr. Morris Sherman, Chairman, Canadian Liver Foundation

“In the absence of a coherent national plan to fight hepatitis C, Canada cannot fight this epidemic, let alone make good on our commitments to the WHO to eliminate this disease by 2030. Bill 5 is the first instance of a province attempting to take leadership on this issue and stop the needless suffering of hundreds of thousands of Canadians who are not sick enough to be eligible for a cure.”

- Adam Cook, Action Hepatitis Canada

**If you would like more information or have questions about Bill 5,
please contact Sylvia Jones, MPP for Dufferin-Caledon at:**

Room 443, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, ON, M7A 1A8, (416) 325-1898 or
244 Broadway, Orangeville, ON, L9W 1K5, 1-800-265-1603 or
12596 Regional Road 50, Bolton, ON, L7E 1T6

Email: sylvia.jonesla@pc.ola.org

Working For You!

September 27th, 2016

Hon. Eric Hoskins
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block
10th Flr
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto ON M7A2C4

Dear Minister Hoskins:

As you are no doubt aware, approximately 110,000 Ontarians are living with hepatitis C. Individuals can live with hepatitis C for many years without experiencing any symptoms, even though the disease slowly damages their liver. If left untreated, hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer, and ultimately death.

Fortunately there is a cure for hepatitis C, with new treatments having shown a 95 per cent effectiveness rate in curing individuals. While new treatments have shown great promise in curing individuals with hepatitis C, many individuals cannot access these highly effective treatments until they meet restrictive clinical criteria that demand an individual's liver be halfway to cirrhosis.

I was pleased to hear about MPP Sylvia Jones' private member's bill, Bill 5 – the *Greater Access to Hepatitis C Treatment Act, 2016*. If adopted, MPP Jones' private member's bill would ensure every individual in Ontario with hepatitis C will receive treatment upon the recommendation from their physician, no matter what stage their disease is in. If Bill 5 is adopted, an individual will no longer have to wait and let their liver further deteriorate before receiving life-saving treatment.

I am interested in knowing if this is an initiative you will be pursuing. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

(Organization's or Person's Name)