

Invitation to participate in a National Day of Action for Refugee Health Care

May 24, 2012

Dear colleague,

Our campaign to challenge proposed changes to the Interim Federal Health (IFH) program and protect important health care services for refugees continues! Thank you for your ongoing support. As you know, the action held at Minister Joe Oliver's office in Toronto on May 11 involved 90 physicians from across the GTA. The event attracted significant media and public attention.

The Toronto event was only one such initiative by health care workers across the country that day. Following on this very successful effort to organize health care professionals and raise awareness of the pending health cuts, an informal network of physicians have begun planning a National Day of Action for Refugee Health Care.

The Day of Action is scheduled for **Monday, June 18th** with events taking place in a number of cities throughout Canada. In fact, we are anticipating actions in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, and Montreal. The Toronto event will begin at 1pm in front of the regional office for Citizenship and Immigration Canada (which houses an IFH office) at 25 St. Clair Avenue East. This location at St. Clair and Yonge, on the subway line in mid-town Toronto, will be accessible for participants and should attract the attention of passersby near the end of the lunch hour.

We have chosen this date as it is expected the week of the 18th will be the last week the House of Commons sits before rising for the summer break. The changes to the IFH program are set to take effect on June 30th. We are hopeful that a series of well attended events across the country will sharpen the political debate on Parliament Hill and spur the opposition parties to engage more specifically on this issue. With World Refugee Day following two days later, we expect public attention and momentum to build throughout the week.

This event will be open to all supporters of protecting health care for refugees. The action will focus on the health impacts of the cuts as this approach has served us well in generating public attention to date. To maximum the visual impact of the action and to reinforce the health care message, we are asking all health care providers to wear lab coats or other visual symbols of their roles.

Please let us know if you intend to participate in the Day of Action. We would also appreciate you sharing word of this action with your networks within and outside of the health care community. Please contact us at Docs4refugeeHC@gmail.com so we have a sense of how many people to expect. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you.

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on behalf of Doctors for Refugee Care