

Liberals dawdling on move to e-health

It's a big issue, but one that the McGuinty Liberals don't want to take on.

For several years we've known that there are substantially more valid OHIP cards than there are valid Ontarians. There are about 12 million Ontarians and at last count perhaps 15 million OHIP cards in circulation.

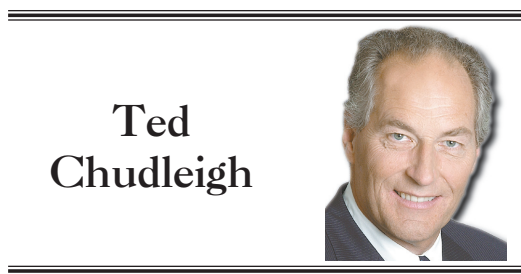
Now in all likelihood most of those three million stray cards belonged to people who have passed away so the cards have been effectively removed from the system. However, our health system does not require that the cards be returned upon death or relocation out of the province.

As you might imagine a valid Ontario health card is worth far more than its weight in gold to a foreign national or even a one-time Ontarian who has moved to another jurisdiction.

When in government, we tried to clean up the problem by introducing the idea of smart health cards. These cards had a two-pronged purpose. They would have included a proof of identity and residence as well as personal health care information to give health care professionals easy access to a patient's medical history. Roadblocks regarding the privacy of personal information and the cost of implementing the program proved large and stalled our plans. By the time of the 2003 election we had addressed some of the privacy concerns.

During their three years in office the McGuinty government has ignored this issue. They have put all their efforts into reducing wait times on some procedures and are struggling so much with that, they've forgotten every other concern.

Four years ago the move to e-health care was a key recommendation of the Romanow



Ted Chudleigh

Report to the federal government on the future of socialized medicine. The Liberals have ignored it.

They have also ignored the need to establish clearly who is in charge of public health in a flu pandemic.

Yet, without a formal strategic direction to pursue it, there has been no meaningful progress even on the relatively modest concept of making health records electronically accessible, according to a recently released internal government report on the issue. It's time the Ministry of Health at least produced a plan to enter the 21st century.

Health care costs are soaring so you would think the government would jump at any potential savings to taxpayers. Now, I can understand the hesitancy to pursue technological solutions given the speed which technology changes, however simply moving to digitizing records would be helpful while we decide on how best to access those records.

And then there is the need to address the real problem—making sure all valid OHIP cards are being used by real Ontarians not Ontarians of convenience. Surely it is time to insist that all valid OHIP cards include a photo and name and address while we pursue a more comprehensive solution.

—Ted Chudleigh is the MPP for Halton

FUTURE SHOP

CORRECTION NOTICE

Sandisk 4gb SD HC Memory card with Card Reader 10081602. There is an issue with the card reader bundled with the 4gb SD memory card. As a result, shipments have been delayed and we will not have this product available as advertised on page 13 of the January 19th flyer. We will have the ATP 4gb SD memory card (sku 10080427) available instead. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.



The families of **JEFF FEERO** and **CYNTHIA CHRISTIE** would like to congratulate them on their recent engagement which took place December 24th at the Grand Canyon.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

BUY 1 TICKET AND GET SECOND FREE
OPENING NIGHT 'FEBRUARY 8 ONLY'

GEORGETOWN LITTLE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

Feb. 8 - 10 & Feb. 14-17
John Elliott Theatre at 8 p.m.

"Rehearsal For Murder"
Adapted by D.D. Brooks from the television play by Richard Levinson & William Link

For more info see www.georgetownlittletheatre.ca
For tickets tel: 905-877-3700

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

... Lend Me Your Ears

By Cory Soal R.H.A.D.

TINNITUS

Or ringing in the ears, does not cause hearing disorders, it may accompany decreased hearing and other ear symptoms such as pressure, unsteadiness or dizziness. Often, it occurs alone.

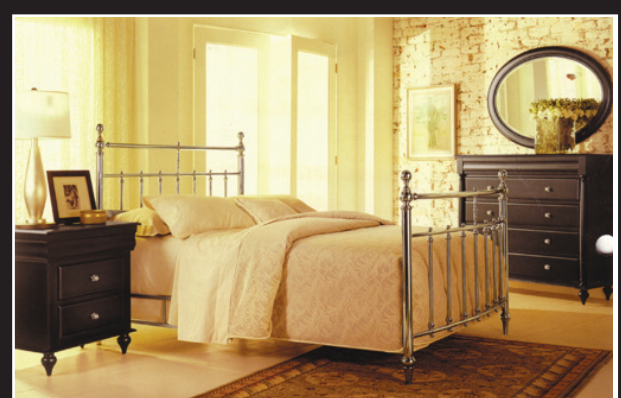
Tinnitus arising from the inner ear frequently indicates more permanent and serious disease. Exposure to a sudden loud noise - a gunshot or explosion, for example results in tinnitus that subsides to a low level of ringing for an extended period of time. Disorders affecting the cochlea (hearing center) of the inner ear can cause tinnitus.

To find out more about this common problem call...

The Georgetown  **HEARING CLINIC**

We care about your hearing!

Professional Arts Building
99 Sinclair Ave., Suite 210
Georgetown
(905) 873-6642



FLOOR MODEL SALE CONTINUES!



Emerald
ISLE



HOME DECOR
Home consultation service

265 GUELPH ST., GEORGETOWN 905-873-2753

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK