

December 14, 2021

Hon. Ross Romano
Minister of Government and Consumer Services
College Park, 5th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Romano,

We recently became aware of the inequity in the ability to renew the Ontario health card online. We ask the government to make the online renewal system equitable and accessible for all OHIP-eligible Ontarians who hold a government-issued driver's licence or photo card.

The ability to renew the Ontario health card online is currently only available to people who can drive, despite the Ontario driver's licence and the Ontario photo card offering identical proof of identity and residency.

It is concerning that those with disabilities are disproportionately affected by this and are required to renew their health card in person. There are many medical circumstances that can prevent people from driving, such as mobility challenges, vision impairment, developmental disabilities, dementia, and epilepsy. There are also conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, which can keep a person from driving while also making them immunocompromised. The government is not thinking about these people and their needs or keeping in mind that these already vulnerable individuals should not be required to expose themselves to further risk by going to crowded ServiceOntario offices.

This discrimination is one example of an inequitable system, which has been laid bare during the pandemic. We call on your government to think about all Ontarians and fix this inequity.

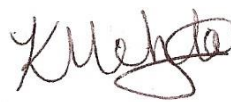
We ask you make the online renewal option available by the end of January to all OHIP-eligible Ontarians with an Ontario driver's licence or an Ontario photo card. This will give people the month of February to renew their expired cards before the renewal deadline of February 28, 2022.

Thank you for your action. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Sarah Hobbs
CEO, Alliance for Healthier Communities



Kavita Mehta
CEO, Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario



Caroline Lidstone-Jones
CEO, Indigenous Primary Health Care Council



Katie Hogue
President, Nurse Practitioner-led Clinic Association

cc:

Chris Scott, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office, Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (MGCS)

Michael Bonner, Director of Policy, Minister's Office, MGCS

Antony Niro, Senior Director, Digital and Information Technology, Minister's Office, MGCS

Renu Kulendran, Deputy Minister, MGCS

Manish Agarwal, Chief Information Officer, Government Services Integration Cluster, MGCS

Hillary Hartley, Chief Digital and Data Officer, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance

Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier, Minister of Health

Heather Watt, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office, Ministry of Health

Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health

Patrick Dicerni, Assistant Deputy Minister, Executive Officer & General Manager, OHIP, Pharmaceuticals, and Devices Division, Ministry of Health

Dr. Jill Andrew, MPP, Toronto-St. Paul's