



May 26, 2020

Dear Albertans,

Due to the government's changes to the previous billing schedule and introduction of new, inadequate billing codes, we have been incurring financial losses. I injected personal money to sustain the clinic. Sadly, I had to layoff half of my staff today.

I have been advocating for publicly funded primary health care. For that, I had the distinct displeasure of being berated by the health minister and his wife at my own residence, in front of my family and neighbours. He could have called me, as he had my number.



Figure 1: Dr Zaidi in his clinic

To add insult to injury, the premier's statements have done a huge disservice by mischaracterizing the meme. He has attacked my integrity, certainly defamed me, and we fear for our safety and security. I fear for my family as a husband and as a father. The premier has not apologized, nor has he retracted his statements as of this writing.

Let history be witness that during a pandemic, doctors in Alberta were not only fighting COVID 19 at the front lines, putting their family, loved ones and staff at risk. But they were also fighting the health minister, premier, and twenty plus staffers. For some of the premier's staffers, it appears their jobs are to create misinformation and cultivate hate against physicians.

At a time when there is no money for physicians, teachers and nurses, the health minister has hired a former UCP executive director as the province's health advocate, with a six-figure salary. It appears her job may include misleading the public about how the health minister is alienating physicians. The Minister of Health gained sweeping powers with Bill 21 and ripped up the contract with doctors. Our medical students find no future in Alberta, as they understand Alberta is no longer a stable, attractive or even safe place to work as a physician. Clinics are closing, physicians are leaving the province, and being forced into early retirement, thus leaving thousands of Albertans without family doctors.

If this continues, the rich and elite will have access to private health care, which will benefit the private insurance brokerages and people who have shares invested. Whereas, the elderly, poor, racial minorities and marginalized communities will have access only to online physicians with no continuity of care, adding to their morbidity and mortality. Excluding the richest Albertans, the rest of the population will find it very difficult to find a family doctor and specialists for their care.

We will fight for you as long as we can, but please take your turn and write to your MLA, to request the Minister of Health stop destroying public health care and sign a contract with the Alberta Medical Association, which has had a track record of honesty and integrity for more than one hundred years (sadly, the same cannot be said for this government).

Stay Healthy and safe,
Dr. Mukarram Zaidi
Family Physician, Alberta Doctors for Patients
[#abdocs4patients](#)

See video [here](#) by Dr. Mukarram Zaidi