

NEWS RELEASE

SYLVIA JONES, MPP *Dufferin-Caledon*

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Jones Stands Up for Families Without Physicians in Dufferin-Caledon

(Queen's Park) –Sylvia Jones, MPP (Dufferin-Caledon) spoke in the Legislature today about the potential cut to the Underserviced Area Program (UAP).

If the Liberal government proceeds with changes to the Underserviced Area Program, Dufferin-Caledon could lose the financial incentives to recruit and retain much-needed doctors.

“Six years ago, Premier McGuinty promised to recruit and train more doctors. He also promised that no person would go without the needed medical attention,” said Jones. “Six years later, nearly 20,000 residents of Dufferin-Caledon are still without a family doctor.”

In July it was discovered that government is using a new “Rurality Index for Ontario” scale under which communities with a score of under 40 will no longer be eligible to receive incentive funding to attract and keep doctors. Mono (38) and Orangeville's (22) funding would immediately cease because they are below the threshold. Shelburne (40) and East Garafraxa (40) are in danger of losing funding with scores at the threshold. Amaranth (44), East Luther/Grand Valley (45), Mulmur (44) and Melancthon (47) are only slightly better with scores between 44 and 47. Caledon would be automatically excluded because they are part of the Greater Toronto Area.

“The Town of Caledon for example, has experienced the significant population growth and the Central West Local Health Integration Network is projected to be the fastest growing region in the province over the next ten years,” said Jones. “Based on the current physician to patient ratio of 1 doctor for every 1380 people, the recommended number of physicians is 41. By this formula, Caledon is underserviced by 18 physicians.”

The government's own report, prepared by the Central West LHIN, indicates that Caledon is underserviced for primary care physicians. Health studies indicate that access to a family doctor is essential for early detection and management of chronic diseases. It is also the only way a person access the services of the Family Health Teams.

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Sylvia Jones MPP, Working for You