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Attn: Assignment Editor

For Immediate Release

Coalition Warns Health Minister: Privatization of Ontario's Health Systems for Patient Records and Information Will Incite Massive Public Opposition

**Banking Executive is Not Trusted to Protect Patient or Public Interest,
Especially After Hydro Privatization Debacle**

Toronto –This afternoon, the Wynne government has made public a formal invitation from the Health Minister to Ed Clark to “assess and validate the value these [health data, e-health records and related intellectual property and infrastructure] systems have created for Ontario and to recommend ways to take them to the next level”.

Ed Clark is the former President and CEO of TD Bank – a bank deeply involved in P3 privatization in Ontario. TD's economics branch was used by the McGuinty government to generate a pro-privatization health care report. The former head of TD Economics, Don Drummond, wrote the pro-privatization and pro-public-service-cuts Drummond Report. Top former and current leaders of Infrastructure Ontario – the P3-privatization entity of the Ontario government -- have come out of TD. Ed Clark recently recommended the deeply unpopular privatization of public hydro in Ontario. He is the father of Bert Clark, the current President and CEO of Infrastructure Ontario.

The Coalition is deeply concerned that the bias of this “valuation” exercise will be towards for-profit privatization. The Ontario Health Coalition is responding by warning the Wynne government of the following:

- The privatization of patient records puts the confidentiality of patient records in jeopardy of being compromised. The U.S. Patriot Act enables U.S. security agencies to access private records of companies that operate in the United States, including international private records held by those companies. This has already been ruled on by the Privacy Commissioner in B.C.
- Public data, infrastructure and records should be owned and operated in the public interest. Any decision-making process regarding these must include robust consultations with experts who do not represent financial interests and with the people of Ontario whose personal records are at stake. We will accept as neither credible nor acceptable a process that takes one person's opinion – deeply tied to pro-privatization and financial industry interests – and turns it into government policy imposed on Ontario's patients.
- Announcements of this sort should not be made by issuing an electronic media statement on a Friday afternoon leading into a long weekend. Choosing to reveal these plans with such a process leads to the appearance that the government is trying to avoid public scrutiny.

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