

May 31, 2021

Hon. Doug Ford, MPP
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford,

On behalf of Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada (VLRC), I write to you today with concern that OHIP will no longer provide Ontarians with proper eye care, as millions of eye exams will cease to be offered this autumn.

As you know, the Ontario Association of Optometrists (OAO) has appealed for much-needed funding and stated that many optometrists across Ontario would stop accepting OHIP on September 1, 2021, because underfunding has compromised their businesses. As a result, millions of children and seniors, already impacted by the pandemic, will not be able to receive OHIP-insured eye exams. **This will have unnecessary consequences on the vision health of Ontarians and long-term financial implications.**

Without access to OHIP-insured eye exams, preventable eye conditions will remain undetected, and in many cases, cause irreversible damage. Proper vision health care and rehabilitation services can reduce these consequences and prevent hospitalizations due to dangerous falls, social anxiety, depression, comorbidity, learning delays, job loss, and costly long-term increases to the province's health budget. These consequences will cost Ontario in the future.

The Ontario government needs to act now. The current underfunding situation will force people to try and seek alternative care from their family doctors or hospitals, who do not have the capacity or existing expertise to compensate for the work of optometrists. Ontarians should not be caught in the middle of a conflict between two groups responsible for helping them.

We ask your government to intervene and find a permanent resolution with the Ontario optometrists. A solution today will save the expenses of tomorrow. We look forward to hearing from your office shortly.

Respectively,



Patrick Levesque
President and CEO
Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada

cc:

Hon. Christine Elliott, Minister of Health
John Magill, Board Chair, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada
John Rafferty, President and CEO, CNIB