

MEDICAL REFORM GROUP

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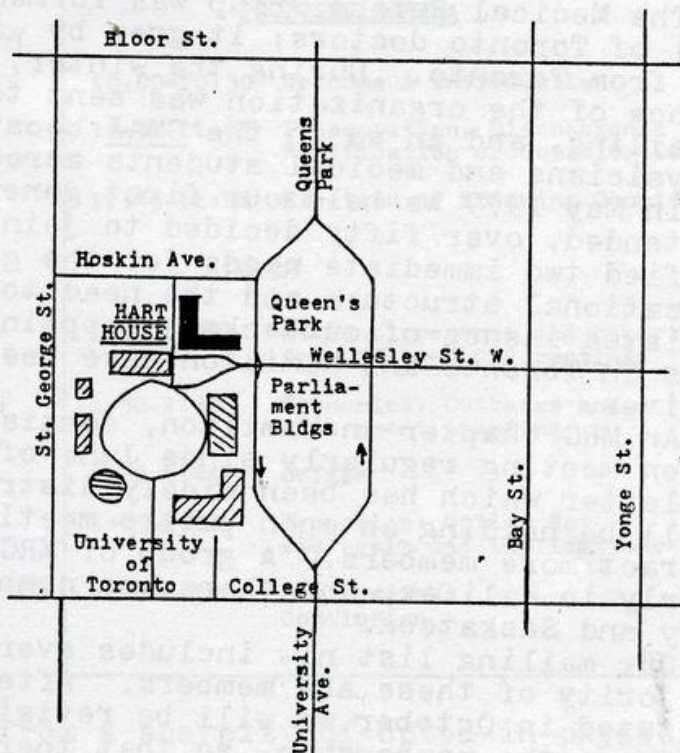
General Meeting

Time: Sunday, October 14
10:00-16:30 hrs

Place: Debates Room
Hart House
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

MRG PARTY:

Saturday October 13
20:00 hrs on



Dear MRG Member or interested physician;

An important general membership meeting of the Medical Reform Group has been planned for Sunday, October 14, in Toronto; we hope you will be able to attend.

Over the summer, MRG chapters in Toronto and Hamilton have been meeting to draft a constitution and to develop a preliminary position on the issues of opting out and other threats to medical care, and cutbacks in government spending. The draft constitution is enclosed with this mailing.

On October 14, we will be meeting to formally constitute the group, to elect a steering committee, to adopt a position on opting out and cutbacks, and to chart the future directions and priorities of the MRG. We plan to issue our first press release following this meeting.

We have chosen October 14 as the date for the meeting to coincide with two other important events (both, unfortunately, scheduled for October 13)- the Canadian Medical Group of Amnesty International's seminar called "Doctors Confront Torture" and a conference on medicare sponsored by the Ontario Federation of Labour and entitled "Medicare in Crisis". Details of these two events later in this mailing.

In order that we can prepare adequately for the general meeting, we would greatly appreciate your filling out the enclosed orange form indicating whether or not you plan to attend. Even if you cannot come, please return the form: it is crucial for us to define our membership and to get a sense of the MRG's support country-wide.

MRG UPDATE: What's Been Happening.

A brief history of the MRG, especially for new members and those outside Toronto and Hamilton...

The Medical Reform Group was formed in the fall of 1978 by a handful of Toronto doctors; it grew by word of mouth to about 25 members, mostly from Toronto. During the winter, a mailing announcing the existence of the organization was sent to all physicians in Toronto. This mailing, and an ad in the CMAJ boosted our mailing list to about 100 physicians and medical students across the country.

In May 1979 we held our first general meeting. Of the 60 doctors who attended, over fifty decided to join the organization, and the meeting identified two immediate needs for the group: the need to develop an organizational structure and the need to develop a public position on the related issues of cutbacks and opting out. Over the summer, MRG members in Toronto and Hamilton have been meeting to achieve these objectives.

An MRG chapter in Hamilton, consisting of over forty members, has been meeting regularly since June of this year. They have published a newsletter which has been widely distributed to Hamilton area physicians, and will be holding an open public meeting on September 19 in an attempt to attract more members. A group of MRG members has been meeting regularly in Halifax, and there are numbers of members in Vancouver, Calgary and Saskatoon.

Our mailing list now includes over 150 physicians across Canada; the majority of these are members. After the group has been formally constituted in October we will be revising the mailing list and working to increase the membership, so that there is a strong, progressive voice for Canadian doctors.

The Medical Reform Group is a decentralized organization with most of its activities and decisions taking place at the regional level. Membership is based solely on agreement with the principles of the Group, as elaborated in the Constitution.

THE CONSTITUTION:

A final draft of the Constitution of the Medical Reform Group has been prepared and is enclosed with this mailing. Because the Constitution will define the group - its principles and operation - we urge you to read it carefully in advance of the general meeting, and to bring your comments, amendments (and copy of the Constitution!) to the general meeting.

The Constitution has changed somewhat since the first draft. To summarize its features it:

- defines the principles of the Group, elaborating on those adopted at the May general meeting
- creates three categories of membership:
 - full - Ontario doctors and medical students
 - affiliate - out of province doctors and medical students
 - associate - non-physicians
- creates a provincial organization in which the regional chapters carry the bulk of the decision-making authority and form the basic functional unit
- provides for a provincial steering committee to co-ordinate the activities of the group around the province and edit a newsletter.

We hope that MRG members in other provinces will constitute themselves into provincial organizations similar to that in Ontario, with a view to establishing a national organization as soon as possible. A more detailed discussion of this proposal is being sent to MRG members outside Ontario.

WORKING GROUPS: OPTING OUT & CUTBACKS

A working committee of Toronto and Hamilton area members has been meeting over the summer compiling research towards an MRG position on the issues of opting out and cutbacks. This will be presented and discussed at the October 14 meeting. In addition they have been compiling anecdotal information from MRG members documenting problems faced by their patients or themselves, resulting from a scarcity of opted-in physicians or from cutbacks in health spending. Your contributions are welcome.

A working group on occupational health has been formed in Hamilton. Other working groups will be formed as the interest and energy arises; bring your ideas to the general meeting.

CANADIAN MEDICAL GROUP SEMINAR

Doctors Confront Torture is the title of a seminar to be held Saturday October 13, from 9:00 until 15:30 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, under the auspices of the Canadian Medical Group of Amnesty International.

The Canadian Medical Group has examined over 130 victims of political torture, mainly from Latin America, has published several papers on torture, and has participated in international conferences and anti-torture campaigns. The seminar on October 13 has been organized with two objectives in mind:

- to inform health care professionals and their associates about national and international work against torture
- to organize further specialty and regional medical groups for anti-torture work in Canada

Papers and presentations will be given covering torture and the refugee, legal aspects of the refugee process, physical sequelae of torture, psychiatric aspects of torture, and dental aspects of torture. A Danish researcher will discuss current progress in international anti-torture research. The afternoon will be devoted to small group discussions of current activities, needs, and priorities of the Canadian Medical Group.

Registration fee is four dollars (\$4.00) payable to the Canadian Medical Group, Toronto.

MRG General Meeting

October 14, 1979

PROPOSED AGENDA

- 10:00-10:30 Welcome & Introduction
- 10:30-11:45 Presentation, Discussion & Ratification of Constitution
- 11:45-12:00 Election of Steering Committee

LUNCH

- 1:00-1:30 Regional reports and reports from OPL and CMG meetings
- 1:30-2:30 Economics: Cutbacks and Government spending
- 2:30-2:45 Coffee
- 2:45-4:00 Economics: Opting Out Its basis and implications
- 4:00-4:30 New business Conclusion

To register, or for further information, write:

The Canadian Medical Group, Toronto,
P.O. Box 6196,
Postal Station A,
Toronto, Ontario.
M5W 1P6

MEDICARE IN CRISIS: A CONFERENCE

A conference on the health care delivery system in Ontario is being held on Saturday October 13, starting at 9:00 AM in the Ontario Federation of Labour Building, 15 Gervais Drive (Don Mills Road & Eglinton) Don Mills Ontario. Sponsored by the Ontario Federation of Labour and a number of other concerned organizations, the conference is the first step in an intensive public campaign to defend medicare in the province of Ontario. Speakers include former Saskatchewan premier T.C. Douglas, O.F.L. President Cliff Pilkey, health care economist Alan Wolfson, and many others representing unions, community groups, health workers' unions, and community clinics.

Seating is limited to 300 delegates and so pre-registration as soon as possible is required. Registration is ten dollars. (\$10.00) per delegate, payable to the Ontario Federation of Labour- Option Medicare.

Space is apt to be a problem. If interested, you are urged to contact:

Andre Foucault, Conference Organizer,
Medicare in Crisis,
Ontario Federation of Labour,
Suite 202,
15 Gervais Drive,
Don Mills, Ontario.
M3C 1Y8

as soon as possible. The phone number is:

(416) 441-2731

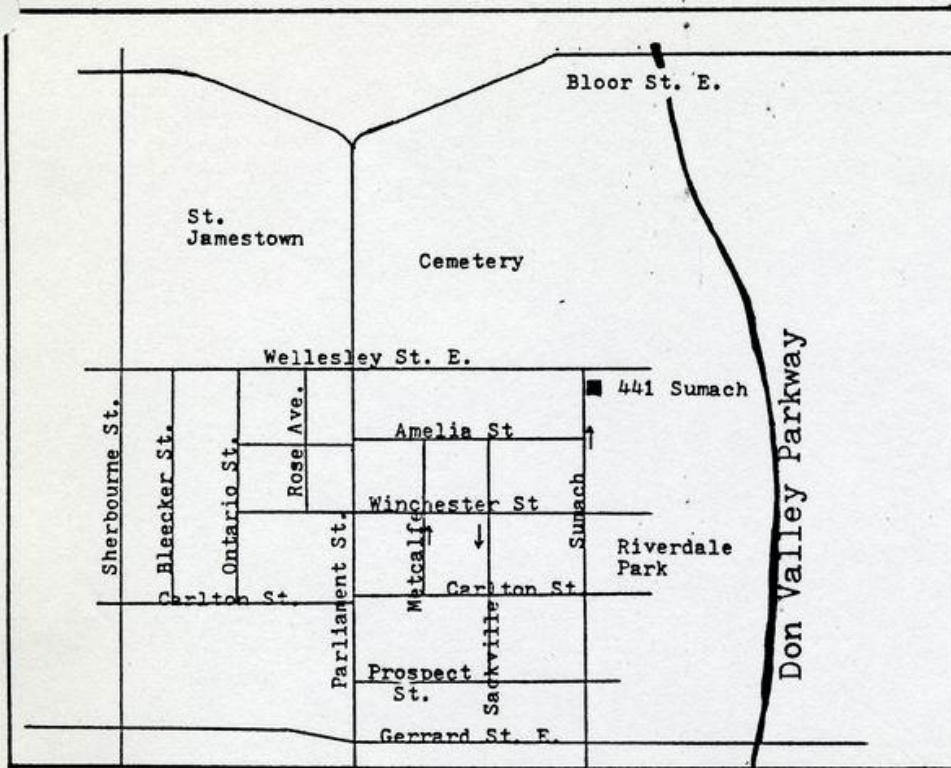
ACCOMMODATION

If you plan to come from outside Toronto for the general meeting, the party (see below), and either of Saturday's two events, we will try to arrange accommodation for you- either through a limited number of billets or at a reasonably-priced hotel. We hope that out-of-town members can make it for the weekend so that we can get acquainted and share ideas.

Please note on the orange form your preference of hotel or billet, and for how many people.

PLEASE LET US KNOW AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE WHETHER
YOU WILL BE COMING TO THE GENERAL MEETING AND
WHETHER YOU WISH TO REMAIN OR BECOME A
MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL REFORM GROUP

MEDICAL REFORM GROUP PARTY



So that we can get to meet each other, and especially for those coming from outside Toronto, there will be a social evening on Saturday, October 13, from 8:00 PM onwards at Dr. Cynthia Carver's home, 441 Sumach Street (see map). Some refreshments will be provided, but contributions would be appreciated. In order to help us plan the evening, we'd appreciate your noting on the orange form if you will be coming.

But even if you don't notify us in advance, come anyway.

We hope to meet you October 13.

AND FINALLY...

The next year will be crucial for the Medical Reform Group. Interest in and support for the organization has been growing at a rate that has exceeded all our expectations: the need for such an organization is unquestionable.

At the same time, the challenge ahead of us is immense as the crisis within the medical profession intensifies.

To accomplish our objective of building a progressive, democratic voice within the medical profession, we need to actively involve as many members as possible:

- to develop research and policy on issues of concern to the group
- to extend our membership to include as many sympathetic physicians as possible
- to promote the principles that we have joined around.

We hope that you will be able to attend the general meeting on October 14, and that we can count on your continued interest and support in the future.

In health,

Toronto Committee
MEDICAL REFORM GROUP

DOCTORS

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THE STATE
OF HEALTH CARE IN ONTARIO?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET WITH
DOCTORS WHO AREN'T, AND WHO
ARE WORKING FOR CHANGE?

The Medical Reform Group of Ontario believes that universal access to medical care is far from the reality it should be, that health care delivery should be controlled by all those involved in a non-hierarchical manner, and that doctors and other health workers must focus more attention on the economic and social problems underlying much ill-health.

We now have about 100 members, and we are meeting in October to discuss and ratify a constitution, elect officers, and begin the public presentation of our beliefs.

Doctors and medical students are invited to become regular members, and other health care workers are welcome as associate members. Come and observe, participate, or join. Your contribution is important.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1979

HART HOUSE DEBATES ROOM

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

10:00-17:00 (WITH BREAKS!)

COME FOR WHATEVER PART OF
THE DAY YOU CAN SPARE