

Free...At Last!

On December 21, 2000 history was quietly made in the Legislature of the Province of Ontario, Canada. A law was passed that is significant to us all, no matter where we live. It is "Bill 2, An Act to amend the Medicine Act, 1991.

" It is a rarity for private member's bills (not sponsored by the Government) to pass. This one passed unanimously. Monte Kwinter, Liberal MPP, the bill's author, comments, "(it is) sublime in its wording but profound in its impact." Very true, health care will never be the same!

This is the official explanation of the Act: "The Bill ensures that physicians who provide non-traditional therapies or alternative forms of medicine are not found guilty of professional misconduct or incompetence unless there is evidence that proves that the therapy poses a greater risk to a patient's health than the traditional or prevailing practice."

Ontario doctors are now unshackled. They can now advocate nutraceuticals and other alternatives for their patients without fear of reprisal. This is a new day!

Mr. Kwinter explains, "(the bill has) only has 68 words, and it says:

'A member (of the College of Physicians and Surgeons) shall not be found guilty of professional misconduct or of incompetence under section 51 or 52 of the Health Professions Procedural Code solely on the basis that the member practices a therapy that is non-traditional or that departs from the prevailing medical practice unless there is evidence that proves that the therapy poses a greater risk to a patient's health than the traditional or prevailing practice.' The bondage has been broken!

As long as an Ontario doctor advocates nutraceuticals (which are completely safe), now there is complete freedom to do so. Before, there was the threat of being charged with professional misconduct and/or incompetence, of all things, even though doctors had been forced to prescribe toxic, dangerous pharmaceuticals!

This is a great day for freedom!

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P. 2 MEDICAL CHANGES

To Mr. Kwinter's credit, this was the third time he presented the bill. He first introduced it on May 8, 1997, and again on October 29, 1998. He explains that much of the difficulty in getting the bill passed arose from the resistance of the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons, which oversees medical practice in Ontario. In the Colleges' own words, "Executive agreed that while the college has already made clear its opposition to the bill, we will prepare to speak out strongly against it again should it be called before the committee for further consideration."

However, to their credit, the College is now seeing complementary medicine in a new light, and is making changes accordingly. Mr. Kwinter's terse comment is that the College's opposition to the bill had "fallen silent." About time!

Mr. Kwinter acknowledged with obvious gratitude that the United States has given leadership to the world regarding complementary medicine: "The United States Congress passed legislation that's going to change the face of health (care) in that country forever."