



January 15, 2010

Subject : THE AYLNER HEALTH COOP IS HERE TO STAY

The Aylmer Health Coop of which you are one of the 9500 members, came into being almost six years ago to stop the loss of medical services in our city, (which has since become our sector). In 2004, we were left with only four doctors and there was a general concern as to whether many of us would be able to find a family doctor at a time when the population of Aylmer was growing rapidly.

It was at that time that the Coop was created through memberships such as yours and by the work of a handful of volunteers who gave of their time, administrative skills and passion to 1) ensure that we would all be assured of the medical services to which we are entitled, and 2) to offer ourselves the community services that the government does not provide.

Over the past six years, your board of directors has been able to accomplish a remarkable turnaround without any financial assistance other than revenues from your purchase of shares (refundable), charitable donations and the contribution of our doctors. We have been able to grow from four to nine doctors. We have also gone from one to three nurses with the recognition of the clinic as a Family Medicine Group. Equipment, such as examination tables, blood pressure gauges and more, have been added or replaced thanks to the contributions of local social clubs, and we have done some renovations to the premises to make them fresher and more attractive, again with the help of volunteers.

Every day is a struggle to pay the mortgage, to handle the numerous patients who attend our walk-in clinic without appointment (more than 20,000 visits in 2009), to deal with the upkeep of an aging building, to provide services to all our members who need them, to make room for our new doctors and to try and recruit others who will replace those who choose to retire. There is no doubt it would be easier to recruit if we had both the means and the accommodations to attract them.

The Coop took a weakened clinic and kept it in operation with very limited financial means; however that is not sustainable. Our finances are depleted, our volunteers cannot do more and it is becoming harder to recruit new doctors. The space we have is too restrictive,



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out-of-date and not well adapted to the practice of medicine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is our doctors who assume the operating costs, but there is a limit to how much we can ask of them if we want them to stay.

The Coop wants to offer you the services that your family needs. To do that, we must have larger premises, that are better designed and equipped, where we can properly accommodate more doctors. That is how we will be able to provide a family doctor for more of our members. We must also begin to offer the community services one should expect from a health cooperative – preventive medicine programs, information programs on women's, children and seniors' health, early detection of medical conditions such as cancer, diabetes and child and adolescent obesity, free or reduced cost vaccination clinics, and more.

Your board of directors has decided to take action before it is too late. We already have an architect's study of the potential expansion of the existing clinic building and we are also exploring the availability of other commercial locations in the area. A decision respecting one approach or the other will be taken shortly. Once we know how we will proceed, it will be easier to put in place the other measures described above.

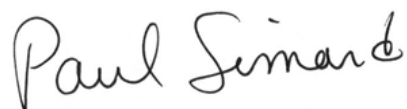
After studying several alternatives for giving us the financial means to take action, we have had to conclude that it is necessary to put in place an ANNUAL FEE for every member. For the year 2010, the fee has been set at \$100 (plus taxes). This year, a sliding scale of reduced fees has been established for families and the basic fee will be reviewed each year and set based on Coop needs. Every person who wants to maintain their membership privileges must pay the annual fee starting in January 2010. You are invited to consult the Coop website at <http://coopsa.org> for further information. There you will find the answers to your questions regarding the annual fee. You can also obtain information by calling 819-684-7574.

### **Membership in the Health Coop has its advantages!**

- You are a shareholder in a medical centre that will include as many as 12 family doctors, a number of specialists and other services
- You have priority access to the Coop's emergency services when you need them
- Your best chance to get or keep a family doctor
- You will soon be served in a larger, modern and better equipped facility.

The enclosed invoice and envelope indicate the methods of payment and the amount owing depending on your family situation. Your board of directors thanks you for your understanding and wants to assure you that the funds generated by this annual fee will be managed wisely in the best interests of your health and that of your family. THANKS TO YOU, THE HEALTH COOP GOES ON !

Yours sincerely



Paul Simard  
President