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Where is the government's investigation of 322 cases of compromised ER care?

Edmonton – Alberta Liberal Leader David Swann is repeating his call for the government to authorize an investigation of 322 cases of compromised care at one Edmonton emergency room.

“Our front-line health care professionals are doing an excellent job when they actually have the time and resources to treat patients,” Swann says. “But these extraordinary cases show that top-level mismanagement of the system is making their jobs nearly impossible.”

The 322 cases occurred at a single emergency room in Edmonton in 2008, according to leaked emails from Dr. Paul Parks to then Health Minister Ron Liepert. During the fall sitting of the Alberta Legislature, Swann asked Minister of Health Gene Zwozdesky to give the Health Quality Council the independence to properly investigate the problem, and the minister replied that it was “a suggestion that I’m prepared to take under advisement.”

Swann wants Zwozdesky to direct the Health Quality Council to investigate the 322 cases of delayed, compromised care in order to assess how and why Albertans aren’t getting timely treatment in emergency rooms. He also believes that the Health Quality Council should have more freedom to launch investigations on its own, and that it should report to the Legislative Assembly, not the Minister of Health.

“When assessing problems like this, independent analysis without fear of government pressure or censorship is absolutely crucial,” Swann says.

Swann is also asking Zwozdesky once again to implement *Pulling Through*, Swann’s emergency plan for the emergency room. It calls for the mobilization of all available health care professionals, extended hours for laboratory and imaging services, the opening of mothballed facilities, the immediate provision of alternative long-term care settings and other steps to quickly and significantly shorten wait times.

The Alberta Liberal Caucus... There’s a better way.

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