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Swann forces Stelmach to allow Health Quality Council investigation of compromised ER care

Edmonton – Minutes ago, Premier Ed Stelmach finally agreed to allow the Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA) to undertake an investigation of 322 cases of compromised care in the emergency room.

Gene Zwozdesky, Minister of Health, has stonewalled for months, offering a limp Alberta Health Services review of the circumstances behind compromised care. That solution isn't working because health care professionals, fearing a government witch hunt, aren't stepping forward, as indicated by Dr. Paul Parks, Head of the Emergency Section of the Alberta Medical Association.

But Zwozdesky has finally backed down, saying that he will direct the HQCA to investigate emergency wait times and cancer cases.

Alberta Liberal Leader David Swann has been unrelenting in his calls for the government to pursue such an investigation, and is elated that the government is finally doing the right thing – so long as it takes the next step and gives Dr. Lorne Tyrell and his HQCA board members a stronger mandate for independent investigations.

"The government has ignored this serious issue for three years," Swann says, "Meanwhile, I've been pushing them to investigate. Now perhaps these patients and their families can find some closure. And just as importantly, we'll learn more details about the continuing ER wait time crisis and perhaps get enough data to develop solutions."

"We are the party of public health care," Swann continues. "This is a significant victory for public health and for Alberta Liberals. We will continue to offer solutions and hold the government accountable for their ongoing mismanagement of Alberta's most valued public institution."

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

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