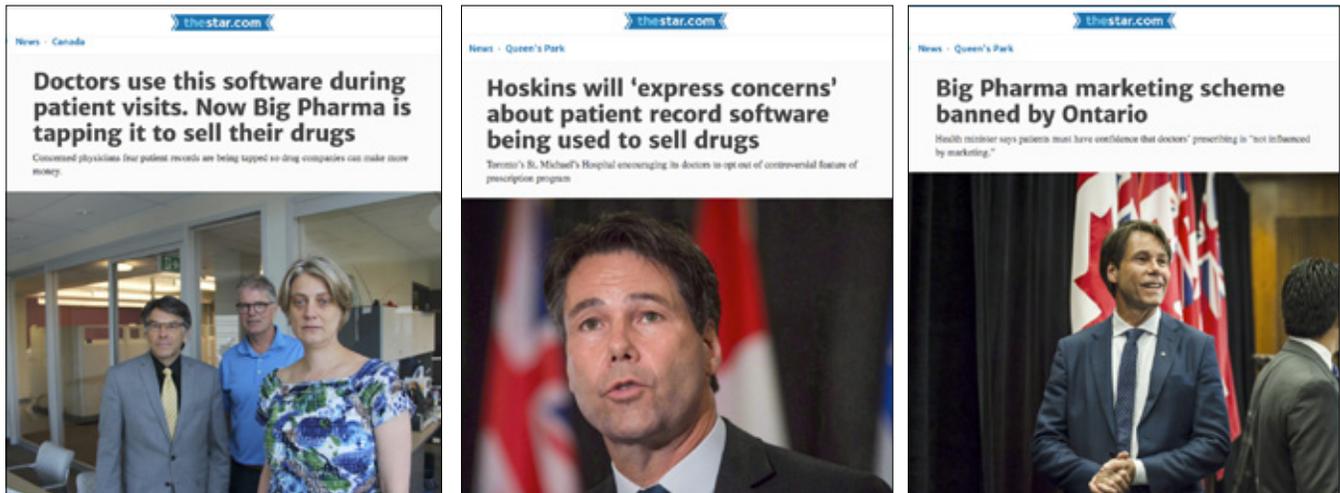


We Advocate for Health and Wellness



Our Lead Physician, Dr. Monica De Benedetti, supported by members of our team and our Board of Directors, publicly voiced our collective concern about the Patient Assistance Program (PAP) feature recently incorporated into doctors' electronic medical records (EMRs).

Under the PAP feature in the EMR, any prescription ordered is automatically converted to a brand name drug when the prescription is sent to the pharmacy to be filled, regardless of the fact that most prescribers and pharmacists often order the lower-cost generic versions of brand name drugs in order to reduce costs for patients. Many prescribers were unaware that the prescriptions they were ordering were being converted from generic to brand name drugs. This feature, presumably encouraged by large pharmaceutical corporations whose interest is profit, raises practical, ethical, and financial concerns.

Upon learning of the PAP feature in the EMR system, the HFHT took swift action to challenge this activity. Physicians received step-by-step instructions on how to turn off the PAP feature in their EMRs. A letter of complaint was written to the EMR vendor responsible for developing and implementing the PAP feature, and concern was raised publicly via an article in the Toronto Star so that other health care providers and patients could be alerted to the concerns the PAP feature raises. The article was well received by readers and created considerable public conversation, and, ultimately, led to the banning of PAP features in EMRs by Ontario Health Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins.

Dr. Monica De Benedetti and others were interviewed by the Toronto Star during their investigation into the PAP feature and again when Dr. Hoskins' statement was released. In each interview, Dr. De Benedetti, on behalf of the HFHT, repeatedly advocated for the health and wellbeing of our patients. In a Toronto Star article published on September 14, 2017, Dr. De Benedetti stated that "Patient information should not be used for marketing purposes — patients aren't ways to make money, they are people we care for and try to keep healthy." She also expressed our pleasure with the fact that the banning of this feature will not only protect our patients, but all patients in Ontario.

Articles featuring interviews with Dr. De Benedetti:

- *Doctors use this software during patient visits. Now Big Pharma is tapping it to sell their drugs* — Toronto Star, July 29, 2017
- *Hoskins will 'express concerns' about patient record software being used to sell drugs* — August 3, 2017
- *Big Pharma marketing scheme banned by Ontario* — Toronto Star, September 14, 2017

