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OMA post-election strategy articulates physician concerns regarding Ontario health-care system:

*Dr. Helena Jaczek and Dr. Kuldip Kular
named parliamentary assistants*

by Christina Perreault
OMA Public Affairs and Communications Department

Since the results of the recent provincial election were announced in October, the OMA has been working to develop a focused and effective post-election strategy that articulates the perspective of Ontario's physicians and patients regarding the health-care system.

Ontario's doctors remain deeply concerned about the future of the health-care system, and its capacity to meet growing patient needs.

The OMA has asked the Liberal government to place a renewed emphasis on ensuring that all Ontario residents have access to a family physician, and that the resources necessary for timely, quality patient care are made available.

It is important for the voice of Ontario's medical professionals to be heard directly by decision-makers in government, and by the political parties that hold the government to account. The perspective that front-line physicians can bring to inform debate and decision-making at Queen's Park is invaluable.

Ontarians honoured three physicians — Dr. Helena Jaczek, Dr. Kuldip Kular, and Dr. Shafiq Qaadri — by electing them as Members of Provincial Parliament on October 10.

On October 30, Premier McGuinty announced the government's new cabinet and roster of parliamentary assistants. As expected, Premier McGuinty has reappointed George Smitherman as the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The following appointments were also announced:

- Dr. Kuldip S. Kular, former environment minister Laurel Broten, and Bas Balkissoon, have all been named parliamentary assistants to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.
- Margaret Best, MPP for the riding of Scarborough Guildwood, and a political rookie, has been named the Minister of Health Promotion, replacing Jim Watson, who has been appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.
- Dr. Helena Jaczek has been named parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion.

Members of the OMA Member Action Network have already begun to meet with the newly elected/re-elected MPPs across Ontario. The Member Action Network comprises physicians from across the province who are working with the OMA to ensure MPPs are made aware of crucial issues and concerns facing the medical community and patients in Ontario.

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To obtain further information on the OMA Member Action Network, visit the OMA website (<https://www.oma.org/man>), or contact Christina Perreault, OMA Government Relations, at (416) 599-2580, or 1-800-268-7215, ext. 3430, or via e-mail (christina_perreault@oma.org).