

Within minutes of the Supreme Court of Canada Decision on Health Care, the National Media was calling AIMS for comment and explanation.

Across Canada newspapers depend on The Canadian Press (CP) for the latest national and international news. On



Thursday, June 9th, within minutes of the Supreme Court ruling, CP reporters were lining up comment on the ruling and what it means for Canadians. Among the first to be called was the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS). In an article that appeared in newspapers across the country, AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley put the ruling in context.

“What the Supreme Court decision has said is that politicians can’t get away with something they have been getting away with for years, which is to take our money, promise us health care service, not deliver that service and then say ‘Oh by the way, you cannot use your own money to buy those services which we are refusing to provide for you.’”



On ATV evening news and later on CTV NewsNet, the anchors started the story by explaining that the ruling of the Supreme Court was generating a heated debate. It reported that people on both sides of the issue of private health care agree on one thing though - the decision will eventually have an impact on health care across the country. Again the network turned to the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies for comment.

Brian Lee Crowley:

“What the Supreme Court said is it's a violation of Canadians' rights to take their money, make promises to them about what the health care system is going to do and then not deliver. Then on top of that, forbid Canadians to use their own money to go and buy the health care services the government is failing to deliver.”

BN WIRE AND AUDIO

Broadcast News is the wire service for radio and television stations across Canada. It conducted an extensive interview with AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley in the wake of the Supreme Court ruling and was quickly sending quotes across Canada.

“The decision is welcome. It does not signal the end of the public system as we know it. The decision will change the way health care is delivered by providing new options for those wanting access to timely medical help.”

“This is a warning for the governments. What the Supreme Court is saying is that there has been a violation of Canadians’ rights. It’s a violation to take our money, promise us services, not deliver those services and then prevent us from using our own money to buy those services they have refused to provide us.”

“This is not the end of the public system as we know it. This decision just provides new options for the way health care is delivered.”



On CFRQ in Halifax, the following news story was carried most of the day.

“Premier John Hamm is not sure what to make of the courts decision. He says he has asked the province’s legal people to determine whether or not the decision has any impact in Nova Scotia.

Meanwhile, the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies is welcoming the top court's ruling. Brian Lee Crowley says it will change the way health care is delivered but he doesn't believe it will signal the end of the public system as we know it, only providing new options for those wanting access to timely medical help.”



Rick Howe hosts the most popular call-in show in Halifax each week day on CJCH. He turned to AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley to explain the impact of the Supreme Court decision. Here is a transcript of part of their conversation:

“The Supreme Court has not asked us to “Americanize” Canadian health care, but rather to “Europeanize” it. In many European countries, such as France, the UK and Sweden, there is a large public sector that provides the vast bulk of the health care and often provides more coverage than Canadian medicare. But there is also a small private system on the margins of the public system where people may spend their own money if they wish. The result is that extra capacity is made available to the public system, because when the queues get too long, the public sector merely buys services from the private sector. This works to everyone's advantage. The Supreme Court listened to the arguments of the medicare dogmatists who claim the sky will fall if the private sector is allowed to compete with the public sector and they said these arguments are unconvincing. They're right. Let's hope that this signals the end of fear-mongering and the beginning of a reasoned debate about how to make public health care better, including by giving patients more choices when they want them.”