

From Queen's Park by Sylvia Jones MPP ? Auditor General's report highlights gross mismanagement by government

Ontario's Auditor General released her annual report Nov. 30 on 13 value-for-money audits, as well as a follow-up of value-for-money audits from the Auditor's 2012 annual report.

This year's report highlighted a number of concerns about government spending across many ministries, including health care, transportation and the environment.

The Auditor General raised a number of concerns with the government's management of the province's health care system. The report found that patients are being forced to wait hours for emergency surgeries. Additionally, patients that are admitted have to wait an excessive period in the emergency room before being transferred to the appropriate care unit. The report also noted that more than 4,000 patients are using hospital beds even though they no longer need them, while waiting to receive home care services or until a long-term care bed opens up.

Another major concern the Auditor General found is with the government's lack of oversight regarding the construction of infrastructure. Some rogue contractors have paved Ontario roads with substandard asphalt. Instead of weeding out the poor performers, the government is giving the same contractors second and third chances. Not only are some roads being poorly built, but parts of bridges are being installed upside down! The government has continued to reward bad behavior, unfortunately on the taxpayer's dime.

The Auditor General also found that after 13 years and three reports, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services is still not ensuring mental health services are being delivered appropriately. The Auditor General raised concerns with the fact that similar issues identified in this year's report were also raised in 2003 and 2008. However, the government has still not addressed issues regarding the lack of oversight of the delivery of services. Since 2008/09, there has been a 50 per cent rise in hospitalization of children and youth with mental health issues. During Question Period Dec. 1, I called on the Minister to act on the recommendations made by the Auditor General and the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions.

Whether it is our province's health care system, infrastructure or plan to combat climate change, the Auditor General's report clearly shows that life is more expensive under this Liberal government. That is why my colleagues and I will continue to hold the government accountable to ensure Ontarian's hard earned money is being used in the best possible manner.

