

Cross-Border Health System Fictions: Mischievous Misperceptions and Outright Lies

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Common but Erroneous Views from Canada

- US has little to no public health care funding or coverage
 - Per capita public spending
- Universal health coverage has been consistently opposed by almost all interests and groups
- You can't get an urgent hospital-based intervention without insurance or paying in advance
- The federal government is entirely responsible for publicly funded health coverage
 - Policy
 - Programs
 - Money



Per capita Spending, Current Prices, 2016

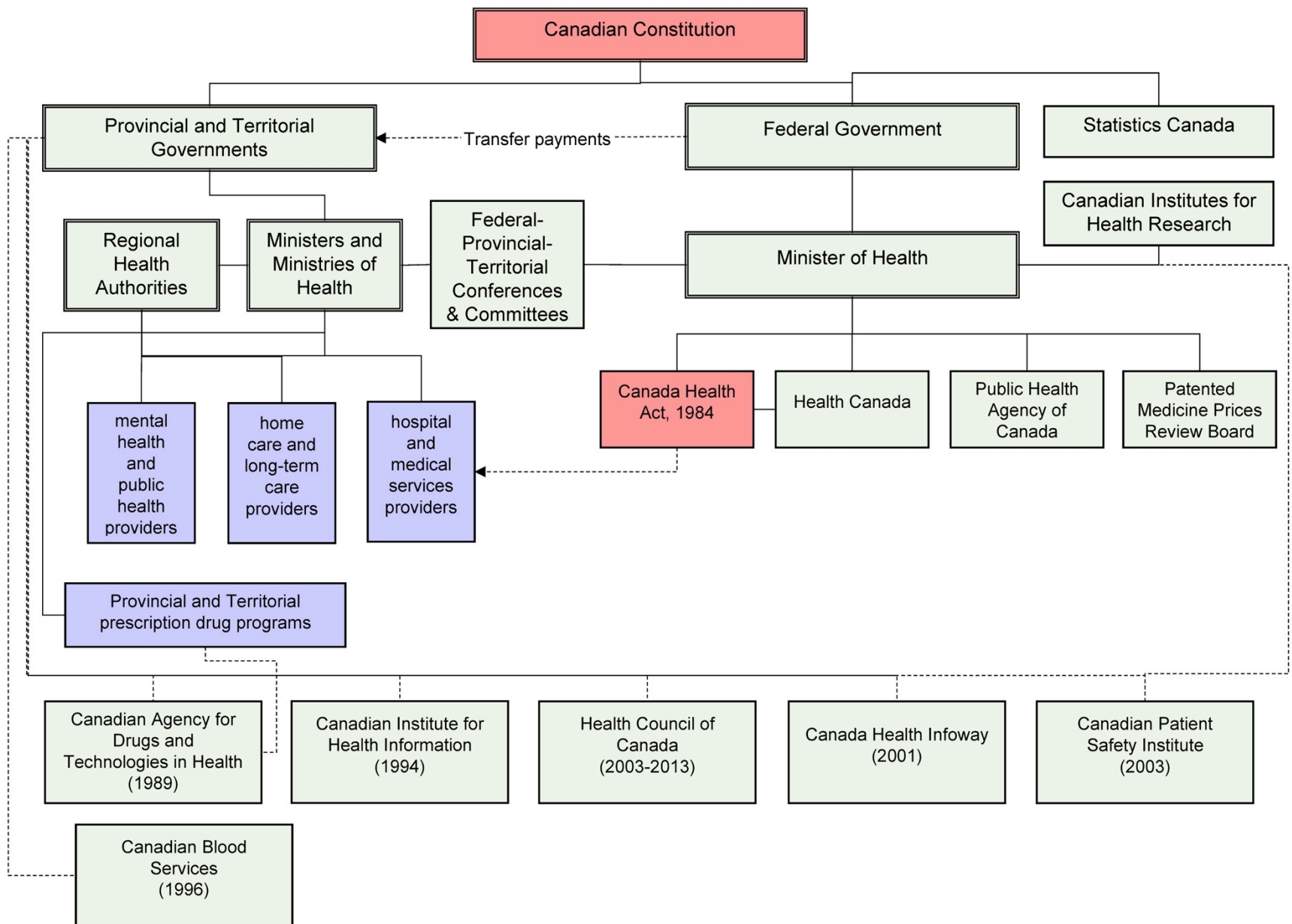
(OECD.stat data, \$US purchase power parity)

	Total	Public (Government/Compulsory)
United States	9,892	4,860
Canada	4,644	3,249
United Kingdom	4,193	3,320
Germany	5,551	4,695
France	4,600	3,626

Common but Erroneous Views from the US



- Canada has a single, national single-payer system
- Universal health coverage (Medicare) covers almost everything
- There is no private health insurance (it is banned)
- There are long wait times for everything no matter how urgent
- There is no private delivery in Canada
 - Doctors work for the government
 - Hospitals are owned and operated by the government



Public-Private Interface in Three Layers of System

	Funding	Administration	Delivery
Public & Universal (Canada Health Act) hospital, diagnostic and physician services	Public taxation (general revenue funds of governments)	Universal, single-payer provincial systems. Private self-regulating professions under provincial legislative framework	Private professional and for-profit, not-for-profit and public arm's length facilities and organizations
Mixed goods and services, including most prescription drugs, home care, and long-term care	Public taxation, private (often employment-based) insurance and out-of-pocket payments	Public services that are generally welfare-based and targeted, and private services regulated in the public interest by government	Private professional, private not-for-profit, for-profit, and public arm's length facilities and organizations
Private goods and services including dental and vision care as well as over-the-counter drugs and alternative medicines and therapies	Private insurance and out-of-pocket payments including full payments, co-payments and deductibles	Private ownership and control; private professions, some self regulation with state regulation of foods, drugs and natural health products	Private providers and private for-profit facilities and organizations

Fictions Common to Both

- We have the best health care in the world
 - Quality (US)
 - Access (Canada)
- Our health system is unique
 - Difficult to draw useful policy lessons from other countries
- Our health system has become impossible to change
 - Interests are too powerful to allow for meaningful change
 - Governments lack the political will to make long-term change that is disruptive in the short-term



Avoidable Mortality Rates and Rank:

Canada and Selected OECD Countries (OECD 2011)

	Last available year of data	Avoidable mortality rate (age-std avoidable deaths per 100,000 pop)	Rank among 31 OECD countries	Annual rate of change in AM from 1997 to last available year (%)
Australia	2004	68	7	-5.1
Canada	2004	74	11	-3.1
France	2006	59	1	-2.8
Sweden	2006	68	5	-3.3
United Kingdom	2007	86	19	-5.2
United States	2005	103	24	-1.7

Healthcare Quality and Access Index

(Results using 2015 data)

- Mapped causes amenable to personal health to 32 Global Burden of Disease causes ➡ 30
- Created single HAQ Index that removed environmental and behavioural risks
- HAQ related to quality of, and access to, healthcare services
- A high-level measure of health system performance focusing on health interventions (what ministries of health actually do)
- Scale of 0 to 100
- The higher on the scale, the better the performance

Country	HAQ Index
Switzerland	92
Sweden	90
= Australia	90
= Netherlands	90
Japan	89
France	88
= Canada	88
Germany	86
= New Zealand	86
= Denmark	86
United Kingdom	85
United States	81
Taiwan	78

Source for HAQ Index



- GBD 2015 Healthcare Access and Quality Collaborators
- Immense effort with huge team covering 195 countries
- *The Lancet*, Vol. 390, no. 10091, July 2017, pp. 231-66
- [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)30818-8/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)30818-8/abstract)



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