



## President's Message – June 2016

Gerry Graham

It is imperative that we do all we can and save our publicly funded health care, not private clinics for profit which will dig deeper into your pockets. Private clinics are not good for seniors or families as they are there to make a profit.

We are having discussions on getting the Health Care Accord back on the table with the new Federal Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, and Provincial Minister Mario Sergio, Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs in Ontario. We will continue to hold the new federal government to their pre election promises and hopefully they will listen. There will be a lot more of us in the future. Now is the time to be writing letters, talking to your MPs and MPPs across Canada and provincially. There will be ongoing meetings to follow and again your USCO will be front and centre and working closely with both levels of government at these meetings.

As President of the USCO and President of Club 407 we were in agreement along with the provincial government for free Shingles shots. The USCO was invited by Mario Sergio, MPP, to go to Queens Park for a round table talk and at the time that I am writing this message I'm pleased to report they did move forward and they listened and did something about this terrible disease. And now having just returned from the Queens Park 2016 Budget I can now report the vaccine is available to all seniors between the ages of 65 to 70.

On the other hand Pharmacare is really the only answer for the government to keep the cost of drugs down and get the right drugs to all Canadians. We are still waiting for a response from the federal government. We also suggested increasing funding for ageing at home with better home care. We have also been asking for free parking for seniors when they park at hospitals. They did address the issue by capping the parking rate at \$20 and anything over that would be reduced by 50%. The USCO is looking forward to our next meeting with Mario Sergio, MPP, and Federal Minister Jean-Yves Duclos, MP. The USCO is committed working closely with both ministers and hope for the best resolution for a made in Canada solution for an aging population.

Your USCO was also there when grants were suggested for our children. Grants will be prorated for our children's post education for families making \$80,000 or less. If a family income is less than \$50,000 tuition will be free for university or college and they are fast tracking on apprenticeships programs for the next generation. That was passed at

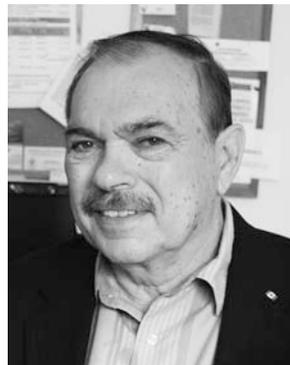
Queen's Park as well. On the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP), we had many talks over the past three years with Mitzie Hunter, MPP, and Mario Sergio, MPP, and as we all know this is now a reality for Ontario workers.

We will continue working with the provincial and the federal governments and other provinces to merge with the CPP as this will double benefits over 7 years and those benefits will be there when our children and grandchildren retire. That won't happen soon but we are talking and listening. We have a lot more work to do. However it was mentioned at the 2016 Budget meeting that Ontario is working with the Federal Government to open up talks to merge the ORPP with the CPP. Moving forward we need pension security for all Canadians.

In closing I would like to say the USCO is excellent nonprofit organization. It's been a challenging time and I thank each board member for rising to the challenge for visiting our clubs. Looking forward will be no different as we continue speaking on behalf of seniors in Ontario and Canada.

As mentioned before we are a nonprofit volunteer organization and more times than not we are visiting clubs all across Ontario. Please help us and keep this great organization going. Over the years you have received many improved benefits that you enjoy today and we will continue to keep on improving them on behalf of the USCO.

***Make a donation today and pay your dues. We care for seniors.***



**President Gerry Graham**

