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Consultants like E&Y are not hired by governments to find efficiencies so as to improve the delivery of health care. Their role is to provide a pretext for restructuring of the state and handing over public services to private interests. Their "reports" are completely predictable -- contract out services, attack workers' working and living conditions, reduce services, and impose additional user fees on the people. Workers are declared to be a "cost" which is to be cut to the bone in order to pay the rich, both by diverting funding from health care and by increasing the amount of the remaining funding paid to the parasites through lucrative contracts. The details of these contracts are never published, as the government says they are private business information.

Health care funding comes from the portion of the added-value created by workers claimed by governments. Privatization and cuts to health care funding are an attack not only on the health care workers but also on the living standards of the working people as a whole. To call this "savings" is nonsensical. To speak of the human factor, the workers who provide health and services as a "cost" is completely irrational when there would be no health care system without them. But this is how the rich see things -- anything that does not go directly into their pockets is a "cost."



The pandemic has provided yet more proof of the terrible consequences of private control over seniors' care residences, where the majority of deaths from COVID-19 have occurred. Study after study has shown the increases in infectious disease when housekeeping in hospitals has been privatized. Communities across Alberta have fought to get the food monopolies out of long-term care so their loved ones could have nourishing and culturally appropriate food. The conclusion that there should not be a penny of private profit in health care and seniors' care is clear. But governments accept no responsibility

for the tragedies that occur as a result of their anti-social offensive, or the hardships the working people face. Jason Kenney declares that bringing COVID-19 under control is a matter of personal responsibility, although apparently not his own.

A health care "insider" told *Workers' Forum*, "E&Y doesn't know anything about health care; they don't know anything about Alberta. Other than that, it was a good report." Never mind patient suffering and staff burn-out, we just provide the numbers and are well paid for it is their refrain. But it is no joke. The pandemic has shown who can be trusted with decision-making and who cannot. It has shown that the Kenney government cannot be trusted. It has shown that private operators motivated by maximum profit cannot be trusted. And it has shown that it is the health care workers who can be trusted, who know what is needed, who are fighting for the conditions needed to bring the pandemic under control, and who put themselves on the line every day to care for the people. Who decides is the crucial question.