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McGUINTY GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP OF CENTRAL WEST LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORK

LHINs Will Allow Greater Community Involvement In Local Health Care Decisions

BRAMPTON – Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today named the three founding board members of the Central West Local Health Integration Network who will lead the start up of the network in their community. Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) will be responsible for planning, integrating and funding local health services to make it easier for patients to access the care they need.

“We are creating LHINs because local health services are best planned at the local level, by people familiar with the needs of a community,” Smitherman said. “You can’t micromanage a \$33 billion health care system from an office in Toronto. We need local expertise from right across Ontario to help plan and co-ordinate health care services that are right for people in different communities.”

Smitherman today announced that Brampton will be the location of the headquarters for the Central West Local Health Integration Network. The LHIN, which includes Dufferin County, the northern portion of Peel County, part of York Region, a small western part of the City of Toronto, is expected to open later this summer.

The Central West LHIN is one of 14 being created in Ontario. LHINs are local entities designed to plan, integrate and fund local health services – including hospitals, community care access centres, home care, long-term care, mental health, community health centres as well as addiction and community support services – within a specific geographic area.

Smitherman announced that Joe McReynolds of Caledon East will be the LHIN board chair, with Terry Miller of Brampton and Kuldip Kandola of Brampton serving as founding board members. There will be a full complement of nine board members by the end of the year.

“Leadership is the key to making any significant system change work,” Smitherman said. “The founding board members for our LHINs have impressive records of service in their communities. They bring diverse leadership experience in the private and public sectors to the task of improving the way we manage our health care system.”

In his first official duty as chair, McReynolds named Mimi Lowi Young as the CEO.

“Mimi is an outstanding leader who has more than 20 years of experience in the operations and planning of health and social services,” McReynolds said. “Her experience will be vital as we establish the Central West Local Health Integration Network.”

“I am delighted to have been chosen as the first CEO of the Central West Local Health Integration Network,” said Lowi Young. “I am looking forward to the challenge of bringing my years of health and social services experience to launching this new local health organization.”

The roles of LHINs will be phased in over time. Subject to the passage of legislation, they would begin by working with the local community and health care providers to set priorities and plan health services in their area. They would then move to integrating local systems and co-ordinating services, and eventually, to determining and providing funding and resources.

“LHINs will make it easier for patients to access all of the different health services they need in their own communities, because these services will be co-ordinated in those communities,” Smitherman said.

This initiative is part of the McGuinty government’s plan to build a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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