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McGUINTY GOVERNMENT AND ONTARIO'S DOCTORS ACHIEVE GROUNDBREAKING DEAL

Doctors Give New Four-Year Agreement Ringing Endorsement

TORONTO – The agreement between the McGuinty government and the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) that was strongly endorsed by Ontario doctors today will bring more physicians to Ontario and help doctors reduce wait times and keep patients healthy, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“We have achieved a groundbreaking agreement with Ontario doctors that will improve health services for patients beginning immediately and for years to come,” Smitherman said. “Doctors across Ontario will be able to keep their doors open longer for their patients. More Ontario patients will have a doctor of their own close to home.”

The four-year agreement, which was ratified by 74 per cent of OMA members on March 30, 2005, will:

- Relieve the doctor shortage by bringing more doctors to underserved communities
- Support doctors who spend more time treating seniors, including helping them manage chronic conditions like diabetes
- Further reduce wait times
- Encourage physicians to provide preventive care like helping people quit smoking, screening for cancer and flu shots
- Support doctors who work as a team with nurses and other providers to deliver comprehensive care to patients.

“This agreement makes Ontario a very attractive place to practise medicine,” said Smitherman. “Now we’re ready to move full steam ahead together with Ontario doctors on our health priorities – shorter wait times, more doctors in communities and healthier Ontarians.”

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