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ONTARIO HEALTH MINISTER RELEASES CORY REPORT ON MEDICAL AUDIT PROCESS

Says Government Will Respond By Summer

TORONTO – Ontario Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today released a report by former Supreme Court Justice Peter Cory on Ontario’s medical audit system.

“I want to thank Justice Cory for leading this important review and for his ideas about Ontario’s medical audit system,” Smitherman said. “This report will help us to create a system that is fair and accountable to Ontarians, doctors and the government. We will continue to work with physicians to develop a process that our doctors can have confidence in,” Smitherman said.

Cory’s report acknowledges that the government along with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) and Ontario Medical Association (OMA) have already taken steps to improve the medical audit system – including resolving audit cases more quickly and strengthening claims and audit education for physicians.

Smitherman said the government will need time to carefully review the report and consult with the OMA and the CPSO. The report contains 118 recommendations and proposes fundamental changes to how physician payments are audited. Smitherman said the government will provide a plan to respond to Justice Cory’s report in the summer.

“We listened to the concerns of doctors and their families, and we made a commitment last spring to improve the way we audit physicians’ billings,” Smitherman said. “Our plan will build on the positive actions taken by our government and Ontario physicians to educate doctors about good billing practices.”

The Medical Review Committee (MRC), a committee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario independent of the ministry, examines physicians’ billings when there is a disagreement between the physician and Ontario Health Insurance Plan about the accuracy of those claims. The MRC then directs the government to take appropriate action. The MRC was suspended while Justice Cory conducted this review and was replaced with a transitional physician audit panel. This panel will remain in place while the government reviews this report.

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