

April 25, 2005  
2005/nr-041

## **FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS BRINGING BETTER CARE TO OTTAWA**

*McGuinty Government Approves Two New Teams In Ottawa*

**OTTAWA** – The McGuinty government is providing better access to better health care in Ottawa with the creation of two Family Health Teams, part of the 52 Family Health Teams and three networks of Family Health Teams approved province-wide, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

Family Health Teams (FHTs) include doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and other health care professionals working together to provide comprehensive care day and night, seven days a week. This includes access by phone to a registered nurse. Physicians working in an inter-disciplinary team model can provide care for up to 52 per cent more patients than those working in a solo practice.

“We’re changing the way health care is delivered in Ottawa by making it more responsive to the needs of the community,” said Smitherman. “More patients in this city will now have access to a family doctor and health team of their own to help keep them healthy and treat them when they get sick.”

Smitherman made the announcement at the Ottawa Hospital Academic FHT – one of three Family Health Teams being created in the Ottawa-Carleton area. The other two FHTs are Bruyere Academic FHT and Eastern Ottawa FHT.

The Ottawa Hospital Academic FHT will include a core group of up to 17 physicians working with nurse practitioners and registered nurses. In addition, local health care providers and community leaders are proposing to include health professionals such as social workers, pharmacists, dietitians, psychiatrists, mental health counsellors and physiotherapists. This FHT will work closely with The Ottawa Hospital, the Community Care Access Centre, public health unit and other local public health resources to ensure that residents receive comprehensive care.

Thirty-five of the new Family Health Teams will be located in communities designated as underserved with respect to family physicians.

“What this means is that thousands of so-called orphan patients, who do not have access to the most basic health care, will soon be receiving treatment not only from a doctor but from a whole team of dedicated health care professionals,” said Smitherman.

Today’s announcement is part of the McGuinty government’s comprehensive plan to improve health care in Ontario. It’s a plan that includes creating Family Health Teams, reducing wait times for key procedures, increasing the number of doctors and nurses, and investing heavily in community-based health care services to ease the pressure on hospitals and deliver health care where patients need it most — closer to home.

For further information:

Members of the media:

David Spencer  
Minister's Office  
(416) 327-4320

Dan Strasbourg  
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
(416) 314-6197

Members of the general public: (416) 327-4327, or (800) 268-1154

This news release, along with other media materials, such as reprintable articles and audio clips, on other subjects, are available on our website at: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca> under the News Media section.

For more information on achievements in health care, visit: [www.resultsontario.gov.on.ca](http://www.resultsontario.gov.on.ca).