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MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT INCREASES ACCESS TO HOME CARE AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

54,100 More Clients To Benefit From Care In Their Homes And Communities

TORONTO – A significant new investment by the McGuinty government will mean that more than 54,000 Ontarians who require care can receive it at home or in the community, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Very often the best kind of health care is the care that is delivered in the community,” Smitherman said. “This investment will ease pressure on our hospitals, allowing them to better provide the acute care services they are so good at providing, while ensuring that whenever possible Ontarians receive care where it will do them the most good – at home or closer to home.”

Smitherman announced new funding of \$112.7 million, which includes:

- \$87.8 million – an increase of 6.7 per cent over last year – for home care services to benefit 45,100 additional acute care clients this year who would otherwise have to seek care in the hospital.
- \$24.9 million – an increase of 6 per cent over last year – for community support services that will help over 9,000 additional clients this year. These are clients who would very likely have required institutional care.

This funding is part of the government’s \$1.9 billion overall investment in home care and community services this year.

More than 430,000 Ontarians will be receiving home care services this year – which include personal support/homemaking, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language therapy, social work and dietetic services.

“Community Care Access Centres across Ontario greatly appreciate the announcement of this new funding, which will enable CCACs to provide high quality home care services to thousands of new clients this year. The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care understands that the people of Ontario want to receive more health care in their homes,” said Ross McCrimmon, Chair of the Ontario Association of CCACs. “It also recognizes the significant role CCACs play in relieving pressure on hospitals.”

Community support services include adult day programs, meal programs and community transportation, as well as assisted living services in supportive housing for adults over 16 years who require 24-hour access to on-site assistance.

“On behalf of the clients of our service agencies, I am pleased to see that the government is committed to improving access to community support services for seniors, frail elderly and people with disabilities,” said Valerie Bishop-de Young, President of the Ontario Community Support Association. “While much work is still needed to attain that goal, today's announcement shows the McGuinty government is committed to making progress on this front.”

These initiatives are part of the McGuinty government's plan to build a health care system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

- 30 -

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