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MAPLE FAMILY HEALTH TEAM IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN KINGSTON AND SURROUNDING AREAS

New Foot Care Nurse Joining the Team

KINGSTON – The McGuinty government is further expanding the range of services that will be available at the Maple Family Health Team by providing funding for a nurse to provide foot care services, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“We are creating Family Health Teams because we know they’re going to mean better access to better care for Ontarians,” Smitherman said. “The Maple FHT is going to offer one-stop shopping for different health services to the people of Kingston and the surrounding areas, and that’s what it’s all about.”

The Maple Family Health Team features a core group of 19 physicians. It is part of the first wave of 69 FHTs (52 individual teams plus three networks that include 17 FHTs) announced last April. The second wave will be announced this Fall, and 150 will have been created by 2007-2008.

The foot care nurse will begin working part-time this fall, increasing to full-time hours in January 2006. The nurse will co-ordinate and deliver foot care services at the Family Health Team offices as well as in patient’s homes and long-term care homes.

“The foot care nurse is the first of several additional health care professionals the Maple Family Health Team plans to add so that we can serve more patients,” said Dr. Kathryn Lockington, Lead Physician, Maple Family Health Team.

Family Health Teams are designed around the needs of each community. They can include physicians, nurse practitioners and nurses, working with other health care providers such as dietitians, pharmacists, physician specialists, mental health workers and many others - depending on the need.

Family Health Teams also provide comprehensive care 24 hours, seven days a week. After hours, patients can call a registered nurse through the Telephone Health Advisory Service.

“Family Health Teams are the next evolution in primary health care services and are changing the way health care is being delivered in Kingston and right across the province,” said Kingston and the Islands MPP and Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing John Gerretsen. “They mean a stronger health care system now and for generations to come.”

The FHT initiative is 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 improving access to doctors and nurses.

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