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FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN PETERBOROUGH AND SURROUNDING AREAS

Network Includes Five FHTs; Nurse Practitioners Being Hired

PETERBOROUGH – The McGuinty government is providing funding for the equivalent of 5.5 full-time nurse practitioner positions in Peterborough and has named the five Family Health Teams that will make up the Peterborough network of Family Health Teams, said Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today.

“We are creating Family Health Teams because we know they’re going to mean better access to better care for Ontarians,” Smitherman said. “These five FHTs are going to offer a range of health services – including access to Nurse Practitioners – to the people of Peterborough and surrounding areas, and that’s what it’s all about.”

The five Family Health Teams in the Peterborough network are:

- Peterborough Medical Centre Family Health Team, located in the City of Peterborough
- Chemong Medical Centre Family Health Team, located in Bridgenorth and Lakefield
- Peterborough Clinic Family Health Team, located in Peterborough
- Peterborough Palliative Plus Family Health Team, located in Peterborough
- VON Havelock-Belmont-Methuen Family Health Team, located in Havelock

The five Peterborough Family Health Teams are 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 funding announced today will enable two of the Family Health Teams in Peterborough – the Peterborough Clinic Family Health Team and the Chemong Medical Centre Family Health Team – to begin operating earlier than expected.

The Peterborough Clinic Family Health Team is adding three nurse practitioners, two of which are being transferred from the nurse practitioner programs at the Peterborough County-City Health Unit. The Chemong Medical Centre Family Health Team is adding the equivalent of two and a half nurse practitioners.

These new positions will improve access to health services for over 5,000 patients.

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.

“We are pleased to be able to increase the number of nurse practitioners in Peterborough,” said Dr. Donald Harterre, Physician Lead, Peterborough Office of Primary Care. “This will make it easier for patients to get the services they need in our community.”

“Family Health Teams are the next evolution in primary health care services and are changing the way health care is being delivered in Peterborough and right across the province,” Smitherman said. “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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