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ONTARIO GOVERNMENT RELEASES REPORT ON TRANSFER OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION PROGRAMS IN NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO

Community Programs Moving To Local Hospitals In Sudbury And North Bay

TORONTO – Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today released a report by Ken White on the transfer of community mental health and addiction programs from the Northeast Mental Health Centre to local hospitals in Sudbury and North Bay.

“I want to thank Ken White for his work in facilitating the transfer of mental health and addiction programs in northeastern Ontario,” Smitherman said. “His work will help us complete the transfer of these services, so that they are not only available to people in their communities, but are also controlled by those communities.”

The report by White, president and CEO of Trillium Health Centre, contains recommendations on the transfer of local programs from the Northeast Mental Health Centre (NEMHC). Smitherman said the government agreed with the report and will work with stakeholders to implement the recommendations.

The recommendations include:

- Transferring Sudbury community mental health and addiction programs from NEMHC to Hôpital régional de Sudbury Regional Hospital
- Transferring North Bay community mental health and addiction programs from NEMHC to North Bay General Hospital
- A revised bed distribution plan to eliminate the movement of programs between North Bay and Sudbury
- Revised bed-planning targets to take into account the current expertise in Sudbury and North Bay.

“I believe this is a ‘win-win’ situation for all parties in Sudbury and North Bay and one that satisfies the goals of quality patient care and community consensus,” White said. “Strong working partnerships have developed out of this process and should continue as the communities and hospitals move forward with implementation.”

Last November, Smitherman announced that control of community mental health and addiction programs would go to hospitals in Sudbury and North Bay as part of the transfer of governance and management of North Bay Psychiatric Hospital to the NEMHC. The NEMHC will take on a regional role providing appropriate specialized treatment for people with severe mental illness in northeastern Ontario.

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