

For Immediate Release  
October 17, 2005  
2005/nr-100

## **ONTARIO GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE OUTBREAK**

*Dr. David Walker To Lead Review Of Outbreak*

TORONTO –An independent review of the legionnaires' disease outbreak in Toronto will be conducted by Dr. David Walker, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care George Smitherman announced today.

“The legionnaires' disease outbreak was a tragedy that affected some of our most vulnerable citizens,” Smitherman said. “I believe that Toronto Public Health has done a good job in managing this outbreak. We now need to look closely at what worked and what improvements need to be made, and apply any new lessons quickly.”

Dr. David Walker is currently the Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences at Queen's University. Dr. Walker chaired the expert panel on SARS and Infectious Disease Control. This experience makes him a suitable candidate to evaluate actions taken during this outbreak, assess whether or not relevant lessons learned from SARS were applied, and identify what can be learned from this experience in order to manage and respond to future outbreaks.

“I am pleased that someone of Dr. Walker's stature has agreed to take on this very important task,” said Dr. Sheela Basrur, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health. “His experience with SARS will be invaluable.”

Dr. Walker's review will examine response times, processes, communication and co-ordination between the various organizations that were involved in the management of the outbreak. These organizations include the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Toronto Public Health, Toronto Emergency Medical Services, Seven Oaks Home for the Aged, and area hospitals.

Dr. Walker will begin his review immediately, with the final report presented to the public and the minister before the end of the year.

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 1-800-268-1154

This news release, along with other media materials, such as matte stories 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).