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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT IMPROVING PATIENT CARE WITH BETTER INFORMATION

*Health Care Providers Working Together To Improve
Information Management*

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is improving patient care and supporting a more integrated health care system by establishing 14 Local Data Management Partnerships across Ontario, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Quality patient care requires quality information,” Smitherman said. “We are building an information management system to support a new, patient-focused system of care that will consolidate, coordinate and standardize the way data are managed.”

The new Local Data Management Partnerships bring together health information management officials from hospitals and the community care sector in each of the 14 new Local Health Integration Networks. They will work together to identify best practices, standards, tools, and policies for better data quality and management.

“Information management is an area of health care that has suffered from decades of neglect,” said Dr. Adalsteinn Brown, Information Management Lead for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s Health Results Team. “This initiative is the first step in the implementation of a strategy that will lead to better information management in health care, and informed decisions made in the best interest of patients.”

“This is an opportunity to take a more integrated approach to data management that builds on informal approaches already used by hospitals and their partners to improve information sharing,” said Hilary Short, President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association. “This is an important step forward in providing our health care workers with the information they need to provide the safest care possible.”

The government has developed an Information Management Strategy which involves setting standards for data quality, better coordination of data collected by health care providers, and the consolidation of information into a common, integrated knowledge base. It is focused on producing better data, supporting accountability and quality improvement through performance measurement, and supporting evidence-based decision-making.

“Information management is an area whose time has come,” said Jeff Lozon, President and CEO, St. Michael’s Hospital, Toronto. “From our perspective, information is vital in supporting our core functions of care, education and research. The implementation of a formal structure to improve the

management of information, at a local level, is a step in the right direction for health care providers and the system alike. We look forward to contributing to this effort.”

This 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 providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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