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MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT DELIVERING HEALTH CARE RESULTS
Second Progress Report Details Plan For Strengthening Medicare

QUEEN'S PARK — The McGuinty government today released the second in a series of progress reports highlighting its success delivering on the key health care priorities of Ontarians.

“Our government has a plan to help people stay healthy, provide good care for them if they become sick and to do what is necessary to sustain medicare for generations to come,” said George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. “We’re working with doctors, nurses, hospitals and other health care providers to achieve the results that will ensure Ontarians have access to care when and where they need it.”

This year’s Progress Report spells out what the government has accomplished in its second year in office, the key results it is working to achieve over the next two years, and the strategies it is putting in place to deliver on its plan for Ontarians.

Health care highlights in the report include:

- **Improving access to family care:** Doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and other health professionals such as pharmacists, social workers and dietitians are working together to provide accessible and comprehensive care in Family Health Teams. One hundred Family Health Teams have been approved to date that will improve access to primary health care for more than 1.7 million Ontarians in 77 communities. The number of Family Health Teams will rise to 150 by 2007-08.
- **Expanding the number of family physicians:** A 70 per cent increase in family medicine residency positions at five Ontario medical schools over the next two years will result in 337 more family doctors ready to practice by 2008.
- **Reducing wait times for key medical procedures:** The government has provided funding for more than 240,000 additional MRI exams, CT scans, cancer surgeries, cataract and cardiac procedures and hip and knee replacements.
- **Launching Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs):** The government’s new 14 Local Health Integration Networks are designed to allow critical health care decisions to be made at the community level, by people who best understand the needs and priorities of patients in the community. In November, the government introduced the *Local Health System Integration Act* which will, if passed, give LHINs the tools they need to plan, co-ordinate and fund health care services in their communities
- **Preventing illness and promoting wellness:** the government has passed the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and removed junk food from elementary schools.

“Strong, sustainable, universal and accessible health care is one of our province’s greatest economic advantages and a foundation of our prosperity,” said Premier Dalton McGuinty. “Our government is making progress on strengthening public health care for Ontarians and for future generations — now we must work together to accelerate that progress.”

The full Progress Report is available at www.gov.on.ca.

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