

December 12, 2006

WHAT HEALTH CARE EXPERTS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT'S HEALTH SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS BILL

“As naturopathic doctors, we see more and more Ontarians seeking to improve their health. Modernizing the regulation of naturopathic doctors, as the government proposed today, will help ensure that Ontarians have better access to safe, high quality health care. The province’s own advisory commission recommended twice before that naturopathic doctors’ regulation should be improved and this government has chosen to follow that advice. It will benefit patients and practitioners alike.” – Ruth Anne Baron, naturopathic doctor and chair of the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors.

“The Ontario Association of Optometrists is very pleased with the commitment this government has shown through its efforts to improve access to primary eye health care services. By expanding optometrists’ scope of practice, the McGuinty government is helping to increase the capacity of the health care system to meet the needs of Ontario patients.” – Dr. Derek MacDonald, president of the Ontario Association of Optometrists.

“This is a prime example of government taking appropriate steps to protect the public interest and improving on self regulation. In so doing, it was consultative, collaborative, but never lost sight of its goals.” - Irwin Fefergrad, Registrar, Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario.

“The Ontario Coalition of Mental Health Professionals commends Minister Smitherman on the draft legislation for the regulation of psychotherapy. The bill successfully balances the need to protect the public from untrained and unscrupulous practitioners while, at the same time, providing the public with choice and access to a wide range of qualified practitioners who are currently unregulated. The Coalition will continue in its efforts, along with other stakeholders, to ensure that this is the best possible legislation for all Ontarians.” - Naseema Siddiqui, Chair of the Ontario Coalition of Mental Health Professionals.

“The McEachern’s have shown what kind of impact one family can have when they put their heart into it. We salute their courage and the leadership shown by the Honourable George Smitherman and Mr. Bruce Crozier, MPP (Essex), for helping to address a perceived liability barrier to more widespread adoption of defibrillators in public places. Today’s action is a fitting tribute to Chase’s vision, which will aid in our campaign with the family to introduce 1,000 defibrillators across the province and serve as a catalyst to make these devices as common as fire extinguishers, giving Ontarians the best possible chance of surviving cardiac arrest”. - Rocco Rossi, CEO, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

“Our son, Chase, had a dream of seeing more defibrillators available in more public places to save more lives. My wife, Dorothy, our son Cole, my family and I, are honoured to see this Bill introduced today by Minister Smitherman, named after our son, which, if passed, will help to remove any lingering doubt about liability for using defibrillators to save someone. Chase was a boy who always tried to help people and I know he’d be proud to see this Bill introduced today.” - John McEachern, Chase’s father

“The CDHO is pleased that the government has made a substantial step in improving access to preventive oral health care for Ontarians. The public will now have the option of choosing to receive care by a dental hygienist without first having to see a dentist. This is in recognition that dental hygienists are professionals regulated by their own self-governing College under the *Regulated Health Professions Act*.” - Fran Richardson, Registrar/CAO, College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario.

“The Ontario College of Pharmacists is pleased and proud that Ontario is leading the way in maximizing the value the Pharmacy profession can bring to the public through regulation of pharmacy technicians. Regulation will ensure that all pharmacy technicians in Ontario possess the necessary knowledge and skills to safely perform technical aspects of dispensing prescriptions so pharmacists are better able to focus on patient care. The Ontario government is the first in Canada to recognize, through its commitment of \$50 million dollars for 'pharmacy professional services,' the key role pharmacists play in providing patient care to the people of Ontario. The College also supports and appreciates the proposed amendments to the Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act which will enhance the College’s ability to fulfill its regulatory mandate to effectively govern pharmacies in Ontario.” - Gerry Cook, President of the Ontario College of Pharmacists.

“Integrating land and air ambulance critical care transfers under Ornge would result in a more coordinated, faster and safer transport service. Patients would receive better and safer care while in transit because they would be accompanied by Critical Care Paramedics who have the training and skills necessary to care for critically ill patients.”- Dr. Chris Mazza, CEO, Ornge.

“The Inter-facility Transfer initiative responds to work undertaken in partnership with AMO. Once implemented, this new approach could free up resources to allow municipalities to focus on emergency ambulance services, such as 911 calls.”- Doug Reycraft, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

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Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister’s Office
416-327-4320

A.G. Klei
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

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