

December 20, 2006

ONTARIO'S PLAN FOR HEALTH CARE

The Ontario legislature passed the Local Health System Integration Act in March, 2006. The Act requires the government to develop a health care plan that includes a vision, priorities and strategic directions for the health system and make it available to the public. Developing this plan is an opportunity for the public to become involved and help determine how the system can meet their needs over the next 10 years.

The McGuinty government will be engaging the public, front-line providers, local health care officials, and other stakeholders in a transparent planning process that will ensure Ontarians have a long-term plan for health care that reflects their values, priorities and concerns.

The goal is to develop a long-term plan for continuing to build a stronger health care system, which will identify the changes and work toward the solutions so that our health care system is able to improve the overall health and future prosperity of all Ontarians.

Building on Progress

Over the past three years, the government has made a number of innovative changes in key priority areas to address urgent problems within the system. Thanks to the creation of 14 Local Health Integration Networks, the government has taken major steps forward on improving access to health care and reducing wait times for key health services.

Now, the government wants to work together with the people of this province to identify the changes that are needed to re-build the system so it meets the long-term needs and expectations of the public, and improve the health and quality of life of Ontarians.

Process for the 10 Year Strategic Plan

The plan will provide clear direction by setting out a vision, priorities, and strategic directions for the health care system. It will set out three, five and 10-year goals for improving the health of Ontarians, access to necessary services, and sustaining the publicly funded health care system.

The plan will provide direction to the health care system to meet challenges and realize opportunities in the future. It will also set out to measure performance expectations, which will be used to ensure progress is being made according to the 10-year plan.

This strategic approach will help move Ontario's health care system toward long-term goals that improve health outcomes and keep the publicly funded system on a sustainable path for current and future generations.

The plan, which will be released in the spring of 2007, will provide direction into future health system policy, planning, investment, and the operation of government and government agencies.

Public Engagement

The provincial public engagement will play a key role in the development of the 10-year plan. It will build on the advice received by the 14 Local Health Integration Networks during their own community engagement exercises over the past several months, as they have developed three year plans for the local delivery of health care services

The government's strategic planning process will involve a broader and longer-term (10 year) perspective, encompassing province wide services that are outside of LHIN responsibility, as well as looking at how to improve the overall health of Ontarians. LHINs will be consulted, engaged and involved to the extent they determine, throughout both the Plan development and Public Engagement activities.

The public engagement with Ontarians includes the following elements:

- A website (www.ourplanforhealth.ca) telephone number (1-866-532-3161) and fax number (1-888-307-0747) where people can provide their views and get more information
- Regional consultation dialogues in communities across Ontario in the new year
- A health symposium with health care and community organizations to discuss trends, priorities and potential strategic directions with health care associations and related groups
- Roundtable dialogues with francophone and aboriginal organizations
- Focus groups with the general population, front-line health care providers, rural Ontarians, seniors, low income individuals, youth, women, disabled people, new Canadians, francophones, aboriginals, gay and lesbian individuals, caregivers, and homeless people
- Surveys and web-based panels of Ontarians to discuss health care values, priorities and expectations

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