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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INCREASES ACCESS TO CANCER CARE IN YORK REGION

New Cancer Centre At Southlake Regional Health Centre Proceeds to Next Stage

NEWMARKET – Services for cancer patients in York Region got a boost today as Southlake Regional Health Centre’s new cancer care centre is one step closer to reality, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced.

“It’s an unfortunate fact that cancer touches the lives of many Ontarians,” said Smitherman. “That’s why the McGuinty government is determined to help cancer patients in York Region – one of the fastest-growing areas of our province. We’re helping Southlake Regional Health Centre work quickly to build this new regional cancer centre and help local residents gain better access to the vital services they need to lead healthier lives closer to their families and their community.”

Today’s announcement means the Southlake Regional Health Centre can advance to the tender stage of the regional cancer centre project and seek bids from construction companies. Construction of the new cancer centre is expected to begin in spring 2007.

Smitherman was joined in today’s announcement by Daniel Carriere, President and CEO of Southlake Regional Health Centre, the Hon. Belinda Stronach, MP for Newmarket-Aurora, and Terry Sullivan, President and CEO of Cancer Care Ontario.

In addition to the good news for the new cancer centre, Smitherman made additional announcements to improve patient care in York Region:

- Up to \$6.1 million in additional funding for Southlake Regional’s redevelopment project for additional furnishing and equipment costs for the cardiac program, the capital costs for implementing Arrhythmia Program as well as infrastructure cost to address the containment of infectious diseases in the emergency department
- \$5.4 million in capital funding to support the expansion of services and other costs associated with the redevelopment (inpatient and outpatient cancer services, inpatient and outpatient surgical services, complex continuing care, neonatal services and rehabilitation services)
- The three machine/four bunker centre, which will be part of a new four-storey addition of the new regional cancer centre, will also include the shell-in of two additional bunkers and associated program space
- Support for three additional capital projects to accommodate the hospital services needed with the new cancer centre (expansion of the clinical laboratory, a new diagnostic imaging unit, and building space for a CT scanner).

“We're quite excited about moving closer to starting the construction of this new state-of-the-art cancer care centre,” said Daniel Carriere, president and CEO of the Southlake Regional Health Centre. “More than one million people will have access to the very best cancer care facilities close to home.”

“The Southlake Regional Cancer Centre will greatly enhance access to a range of cancer detection, treatment and care services for the people of Newmarket and those north of the GTA,” said Terry Sullivan, President and CEO of Cancer Care Ontario. “This is a milestone for cancer care in Ontario because it’s the first of the 6 new or expanded cancer centres to get off the ground as part of the government’s infrastructure renewal plan.”

“The residents of Newmarket and Aurora are delighted to know that work will soon begin on one of the most modern and up-to-date cancer care facilities in the country,” said Belinda Stronach, Member of Parliament for Newmarket-Aurora. “A regional cancer centre will truly help improve the quality of life for many families in our community who have a loved one that has been stricken by this disease. I would like to thank Premier McGuinty and Minister Smitherman for making this happen,”

The Southlake cancer centre project is being cost-shared between the government and the hospital. It is one of several hospital projects approved under ReNew Ontario, the government’s five-year, \$30-billion plus infrastructure investment plan, which commits \$5 billion to health care projects.

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is working to provide quality hospital care. Other examples include:

- Increasing operational funding to hospitals to \$12.9 billion in 2006/07, growing to \$14 billion in 2008/09
- Investing more than \$142 million in the Emergency Department Action Plan, which contains system-wide initiatives to ensure emergency departments stay open and increase capacity to meet the needs of patients
- Providing \$41 million in capital funding to hospitals for needed repairs and upgrades of their facilities.

Today’s initiative is part of the McGuinty government’s plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities - keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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