

For Immediate Release

July 12, 2006

2006/nr-077

McGUINTY GOVERNMENT REDUCING WAIT TIMES FOR CT SCANS IN STRATHROY

New CT Scanner Will Provide Area Residents With Diagnostic Care Closer to Home

STRATHROY – Residents of Strathroy and surrounding communities will have better access to diagnostic services thanks to the new CT scanner that has been approved for Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“People suffering from significant health problems should not have to wait long periods of time to be diagnosed,” Smitherman said. “This new machine will mean that more people in this area will receive the diagnostic procedures they need closer to home.”

“The addition of a CT scanner is part of a long range strategic investment in Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital, that has included a new emergency and ambulatory care centre and the renovation of 23,000 square feet of existing patient care areas,” said Yvonne Lambert, Board Chair, Middlesex Hospital Alliance. “A CT scanner is an integral part of our plan to continually improve services for the patients served by the Middlesex Hospital Alliance.”

The new CT scanner at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital will deliver 4,300 additional scans per year for the residents of Middlesex whose population grew by almost 10 per cent between 1996 and 2001. It is expected to be operational in the spring of 2007.

“This is great news for patients in Strathroy and area,” added Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MPP Maria Van-Bommel. “For people receiving these scans who get a clean bill of health it will mean quick peace of mind. For others it may mean a fighting chance against a disease like cancer where early detection is vital.”

The McGuinty government is on the side of Ontarians who want the best health care. Initiatives benefiting Southwestern Ontario residents include:

- Expanding access to doctors and nurses by creating 150 new Family Health Teams across the province, including 15 in the South West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)
- Almost \$9 million in new funding for improved home care through community care access centres including \$958,200 for community support services in the South West LHIN
- Investing over \$40 million toward increasing services and lowering wait times in five key areas (hip and knee joint replacement, cataract surgeries, MRI/CT exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures), including over \$12 million for an additional 28,392 MRI and CT scans in the South West LHIN.

“Patients expect and deserve the best possible health care,” said Minister Smitherman. “We are providing Ontarians with faster access to better health services, to reduce their pain and suffering and keep them healthier, longer.”

This initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care to build 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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