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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARDIAC SERVICES IN NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre To Provide Angioplasty Services

THUNDER BAY- The McGuinty government is ensuring angioplasty services are available for Northwestern Ontario residents, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“We’re on the side of residents of Northwestern Ontario who want and deserve the best health care, including access to angioplasty services,” Smitherman said. “We have asked the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre to provide angioplasty services that will ensure close-to-home treatment for those who need access to this important cardiac procedure.”

Angioplasty is a medical procedure in which a balloon is used to open narrowed or blocked blood vessels of the heart.

Establishing a stand alone angioplasty service in Thunder Bay will fulfill a key recommendation from the 2005 Integrated Service Plan for Northwestern Ontario prepared by Tom Closson.

“This is great news for the people of Northwestern Ontario,” said Bill Mauro, MPP for Thunder Bay-Atikokan. “This announcement further shows this government’s commitment to high-quality cardiac care services in communities across Ontario.”

“This service has long had the support of the community in Thunder Bay,” said Michael Gravelle, MPP Thunder Bay-Superior North. “I am extremely happy that the Minister has recognized its importance.”

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is on the side of Northwestern Ontario residents. Other recent initiatives include:

- An investment of \$6.2 million in funding towards increasing services and lowering wait times in the five key areas, including \$144,950 for an additional 128 cardiac procedures
- The provision of \$1.98 million in new funding for improved home care and community support services
- Expanding access to doctors and nurses by creating 150 new Family Health Teams across the province, including 11 in the North West Local Health Integration Network.

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

Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister's Office
416-327-4320

John Letherby
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 416-327-4327, or 1-800-268-1154

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