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WHAT PATIENTS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ARE SAYING ABOUT ONTARIO'S WAIT TIME STRATEGY

"I was told at my appointment near the end of September that I needed surgery and it was booked for October 19. That was very, very short and you didn't have time to worry about it. If you don't have that much time to worry about it (the surgery), it's much better. You're far better going into surgery being calm than you are if you're upset about it." – Joan Sheppard, cataract surgery patient from Innisfil.

"With the introduction of the Wait Time Strategy and increased funding, we now do many more cancer surgeries . . . than we had done several years ago. We continue to strive to provide more and more service, hoping that this improved access to cancer surgery would result in much reduced waiting time for surgery." – Dr. Mary Gospodarowicz, chief of the radiation medicine program, Princess Margaret Hospital/University Health Network.

"They're getting to see a clinician like myself, they're getting to see the surgeon much faster than they ever would have. They're getting their surgery booked much sooner and for most patients this is a huge deal because they're having day-to-day pain, they can't function and do the day-to-day activities. The response has been very positive (from patients) which is very gratifying to me as a clinician." – Anna Gutlin, physiotherapist, North York General Hospital's total joint assessment centre.

"For knee replacement surgery, our waiting lists have gone from almost two years to approximately five to six months. The staff have really stepped up to the plate – which includes surgeons, anesthetists, physiotherapists and nursing personnel – in order to do this extra work to provide benefits to our patients." – Dr. John Denstedt, chair of the department of surgery, London Health Sciences Centre.

"We've taken nurses from our ambulatory (outpatient) care area and we've allowed them to train in the operating room theatre with our standard operating room nurses. For higher volumes of cataract surgeries, they are replacing the standard operating nurses, and that frees them (operating nurses) up to perform functions in other areas of the operating room." – Dr. Gordon Porter, chief of staff, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

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