

ONTARIO ESTABLISHES TWO PRIORITIES TO IMPROVE CONFIDENCE IN HEALTH CARE

*McGuinty Government Reducing ER Wait Times
And Improving Access To Family Health Care*

NEWS

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TORONTO - Reducing wait times in emergency departments and improving access to family health care are Ontario's two most important health care priorities over the next four years.

The ER strategy includes:

- Reducing the number of visits to emergency rooms
- A new Aging at Home Strategy that enables seniors to continue living in their homes
- Better management of chronic diseases, such as diabetes
- More home care
- Improved community-based mental health and addiction treatment

The Family Health Care Strategy, one which offers Ontarians more alternatives for non-emergency health care services includes:

- 50 new Family Health Teams
- 25 nurse practitioner-led clinics
- 9,000 new nurses

QUOTES

"Reducing ER wait times and connecting patients to family health care will improve patient satisfaction and enhance confidence in Ontario's health care system," said George Smitherman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "Patients are at the heart of our health care system and the government is listening to their needs. Making significant gains in these two priority areas will be crucial to improving the health of all Ontarians and ensuring the future sustainability of our health care system."

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario's Wait Time Strategy has made remarkable progress since being introduced in 2004 with wait times for cataract surgery being reduced by 61.4 per cent, CT scans by 54.3 per cent, knee replacement by 41.6 per cent, hip replacement by 36.2 per cent, cancer surgery by 18.5 per cent, and MRI scans by 9.2 per cent.
- The Wait Time Alliance (WTA) recently crowned Ontario a national leader in reducing wait times. For the first time, the WTA gave Ontario the highest grades – Straight As - for meeting performance targets in reducing wait times in five areas: hip replacements, knee replacements, cataract surgery, radiation oncology and cardiac services. No other province reached this achievement.
- The government has created 150 Family Health Teams which are providing care to more than 1.7 million Ontarians – including about 180,000 patients who didn't have a family doctor.

LEARN MORE

Learn more about Ontario's plan to improve confidence in [health care](#).

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