

NEW HI-TECH TOOL FOR NURSES

McGuinty Government Delivering Better And More Effective Care For Patients

NEWS

May 13, 2008
2008/nr-023

Ontario nurses will be soon be able to instantly access drug databases, diagnostic materials and medical dictionaries – all at their patient’s bedside – to deliver faster and more effective care.

It’s part of a new plan to deliver hand-held computer devices known as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) to up to 2,000 front-line nurses in Ontario. This is the first provincial government funded nursing initiative of its kind in Canada.

PDAs provide nurses with instant access to a range of clinical tools that allow them to quickly diagnose and counsel patients at the bedside with a few simple clicks. PDAs also have the potential to reduce medical errors.

This \$3 million investment will allow long-term care homes, hospitals and other organizations to buy 1,390 hand-held devices for front-line nurses.

This initiative is part of HealthForceOntario, the government’s health human resources strategy that will provide Ontario with the right number and mix of health care providers, working in communities across the province to meet the province’s health needs – now and in the future.

QUOTES

“This is all about giving nurses the tools they need to deliver care with speed and accuracy at a patient’s bedside,” said George Smitherman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. “I see this as kind of a computerized medical lifeline for many nurses, especially those working on their own in home care or the night shift in a long-term care home where access to quick and accurate medical advice may be more limited.”

“Enabling nurses to have access to information at the point of care is vital,” said Sherri Oliver, Director of the Strategic Nursing Initiatives Unit, Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario (RPNAO). “Decisions are made each time a nurse assess a client or patient. By using technology such as a PDA much time is saved when that nurse does not need to leave that individual in order to retrieve additional information. RPNAO is committed to working together with the ministry and other stakeholders to ensure all nurses at the point of care are enabled to practice in a manner that meets the needs at hand.”

QUICK FACTS

PDAs are hand-held computer devices that store information, provide access to resources and offer a range of interactive clinical tools for practitioners. Under the PDA initiative, each device will include:

- Drug database
- Calculator
- Medical dictionary

- Registered Nursing Association of Ontario (RNAO) best practice guides
- Lexi or Pepid Nursing Suites which provide clinical point-of-care reference materials and comprehensive drug information
- McMaster Nursing Plus which provides a database of best evidence from medical literature
- Organization-specific resources including policies and procedures, medical directives, and infection control guidelines.

PDA funding is being provided to 30 organizations including:

- Long-term care homes
- Hospitals
- Public health units
- Family health teams
- Home health care agencies
- Correctional facilities

LEARN MORE

Learn more about the [HealthForceOntario](#) strategy.

Visit the [Ontario Nursing Secretariat](#) online to learn more about the nursing programs that make Ontario the employer of choice for nurses.

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