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## **ONTARIO IMPROVING WORKPLACE SAFETY FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS** *Worker And Employer Representatives To Sit On Permanent Advisory Committee*

QUEEN'S PARK — The McGuinty government recently appointed a permanent health and safety advisory committee to provide advice on protecting the safety of health care workers, Minister of Labour Steve Peters announced.

“Our government is committed to protecting the health and safety of Ontario workers,” said Peters. “Health care workers are on the front lines protecting all of us, so it is vital that they be protected from injury and illness while performing their jobs.”

The committee, appointed under the authority of Section 21 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), will meet on an ongoing basis and provide advice to the Minister on how to improve health and safety protection in the sector. The committee is comprised of representatives from groups within the health care sector, representing both employers and workers.

This committee is part of the Ontario government's ongoing improvements to workplace health and safety. These include:

- Hiring 200 new health and safety inspectors for workplaces across Ontario, including health care facilities
- Designating inspector positions, for the first time, specifically to the health care sector to handle key issues and facilities
- Targeting workplaces with poor health and safety performance records and high costs to the WSIB
- Putting in place a new annual process to update occupational exposure limits for the more than 700 hazardous substances covered by Ontario regulation.

“Ontario's health care workers ensure that Ontarians continue to enjoy the best quality of life possible,” said Peters. “This new committee will help the government ensure these workers are kept safe and healthy at work while they continue to deliver the highest quality health care.”

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**Contacts:**

Susan McConnell  
Minister's Office  
416-326-7710

Belinda Sutton  
Ministry of Labour  
416-326-7405

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