

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INCREASING ACCESS TO DOCTORS IN ONTARIO

The McGuinty government is committed to increasing access to health care professionals and ensuring there are more doctors in Ontario. The government continues to work with physicians, communities and other partners on improving access.

Family Health Teams

The McGuinty government will create 150 Family Health Teams by 2007/08 to provide access to primary health care services for about 2.5 million Ontarians.

Earlier this year, the government announced the creation of the first 52 FHTs and three networks of Family Health Teams that will serve one million people.

Family Health Teams include doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and other health care professionals working together to keep patients healthy and provide comprehensive care when they need it.

International Medical Graduates (IMGs)

The McGuinty government has more than doubled the number of training opportunities — from 90 to 200 — for international medical graduates.

The unique IMG Ontario office provides a one-stop information service and application process to make accessing these positions even easier.

Family Medicine Residency Positions

The McGuinty government is increasing the number of family residency positions at Ontario's five existing medical schools by 70 per cent. This expansion will mean 340 more family doctors will be ready for practice in Ontario by 2008, providing care to 400,000 patients.

Medical Schools

The McGuinty government will expand the number of first-year spaces in medical schools by 15 per cent and improving the quality of medical education through \$95 million in funding.

The 15 per cent increase will result in 104 more first-year undergraduate positions in medical schools.

There are currently 692 first-year medical places offered annually in Ontario. There will be 852 spaces when the 15-per-cent increase is fully implemented. The 15-per-cent increase is in addition to the 56 new medical students who will begin their training when the Northern Ontario School of Medicine opens this year.

Northern Ontario School of Medicine

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine will accept 56 students each year beginning in August 2005. 32 of the students will be located at the Sudbury campus while 24 will be based out of the Thunder Bay campus.

OMA Agreement

The recent agreement between the government and the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) will:

- Relieve the doctor shortage by bringing more doctors to underserved communities
- Support doctors who spend more time treating seniors, including helping them manage chronic conditions like diabetes
- Encourage physicians to provide preventive care like helping people quit smoking, screening for cancer and flu shots
- Support doctors who work as a team with nurses and other providers to deliver comprehensive care to patients.