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**QUEEN'S FAMILY HEALTH TEAM IMPROVES ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE FOR
KINGSTON AREA RESIDENTS**

New Registered Nurses, Renovated Facility Will Lead To Better Care

KINGSTON – The Queen's Family Health Team is open for business and providing better health care to Kingston area residents by adding two registered nurses to the existing team and opening its newly renovated facility, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"We're on the side of families who want and deserve the best health care," said Smitherman. "The opening of the Queen's Family Health Team means better access to care for local residents."

The Queen's Family Health Team is one of 150 Family Health Teams announced by the McGuinty government since April 2005.

Family Health Teams are designed around the needs of each community. They include physicians who work with other health care providers such as nurse practitioners, registered nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, physician specialists, mental health workers and many others, depending on the needs of the local area.

"Family Health Teams are the next evolution in primary health care services and are changing the way health care is being delivered here in Kingston and right across the province," said Kingston & the Islands MPP John Gerretsen. "They mean a stronger health care system now and for generations to come."

Today's announcement is an important step in the development of the Queen's Family Health Team which now features a core group of 17 physicians, 11 registered nurses, one nurse practitioner and one psychiatrist. In addition to these existing providers, Queen's Family Health Team is in the process of recruiting additional nurse practitioners, a dietitian, social workers and a pharmacist to provide expanded services to its patients.

The Queen's Family Health Team provides health care services to 9,500 patients, focusing on primary health care, diabetes, mother and baby care and services for people with developmental disabilities. Queen's Family Health Team also provides training for International Medical Graduates and residents through its affiliation with Queen's University.

"The addition of two new registered nurses will allow us to provide more comprehensive care for our patients," said Dr. Walter Rosser, Lead Physician, Queen's Family Health Team. "Having an updated space to deliver these services will make it easier for our physicians and health care providers to deliver the top quality care our clients deserve."

This is just the latest example of the McGuinty government's commitment to providing Ontario families with access to health care services. Other initiatives include:

- Creating 104 new first-year medical school spaces by 2009/10
- Investing \$75 million over three years to create an additional 22 Community Health Centres and 17 satellites
- Expanding the number of nurse practitioner education seats to 150 this September, one year ahead of schedule.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities - keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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