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MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO REDUCE HEALTH CARE WAIT TIMES
*\$222.5 Million for Cancer and Cataract Surgeries, Cardiac Procedures, Hip and Knee Replacements
and MRI Scans*

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is building on its success in reducing wait times by funding an additional 154,000 medical procedures, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Our efforts to reduce wait times are working, and today’s \$222.5 million investment builds on that success,” Smitherman said. “Each additional procedure we’re funding means one more Ontarian with their eyesight restored, their mobility regained, or success in overcoming a life-threatening disease like cancer. And we’re carrying out these procedures more quickly.”

Today’s funding announcement coincides with the government’s release of updated and comprehensive wait times trending data which confirms that province-wide wait times are clearly dropping.

Data on the government’s wait times website indicates that, during the last six months, cataract surgery median wait times dropped 21 per cent, times for hip and knee replacements decreased 19 per cent and 17 per cent respectively, and cancer surgery wait times dropped by four per cent. Further information is available at www.ontariowaittimes.com.

“Obviously it’s too early to declare victory, but it’s good to see that our wait times strategy is working and that the trends are heading down,” said Smitherman. “Ontario families deserve the very best health care we can provide them, and we’re going to keep working on their behalf.”

The \$222.5 million announced today will result in 154,000 more procedures, including:

- 9,000 more hip and knee joint replacements
- 25,850 more cataract surgeries
- 105,200 more MRI exams
- 4,700 more cancer surgeries
- 9,000 more cardiac procedures

“These allocations are one element of the government’s larger wait time strategy to improve access and shorten wait times across the province,” said Dr. Alan Hudson, Lead of Ontario’s Wait Time Strategy. “The strategy is reducing wait times by collecting accurate data to make better decisions, investing in new, more efficient technology such as MRI machines, standardizing best medical and administrative practices, and significantly increasing the capacity of the health care system.”

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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