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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT FURTHERS REDEVELOPMENT AT ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL

Funding Supports Planning For Expansion At St. Michael's Hospital

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is improving access to health care services in Toronto by helping St. Michael's Hospital expand, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“The McGuinty government is proud to lend its support to Toronto's ‘Urban Angel’,” said Smitherman. “The funding announced today will lead to better, more timely access to health care for the people of Toronto.”

The government is providing a \$2 million grant to St. Michael's Hospital to develop a proposal and business case for a capital project to expand patient care services at the corner of Queen and Victoria streets. The proposal by St. Michael's could include laterally expanding patient care space, a lobby and two mechanical rooms.

“We are pleased with the government's support for our redevelopment planning,” said Jeffrey Lozon, President and CEO of St. Michael's Hospital. “This funding will help us develop an innovative solution to provide a much needed expansion of services and patient care space.”

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is working to provide quality hospital care. Other initiatives include:

- Investing over \$142 million in an Emergency Department Action Plan, which contains system-wide solutions to ensure emergency rooms stay open and increase capacity in the health care system to meet the needs of Ontario patients.
- Increasing operating grant funding to hospitals to \$12.9 billion in 2006/07, growing to \$14 billion in 2008/09.
- Reducing wait times for five key health care services (hip and knee joint replacement, cataract surgeries, MRI exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures) with a recent investment of \$222.5 million.
- Increasing medical school enrollment by 23 percent and funding long-term care homes to hire 682 new nurses.
- Providing over \$41 million in Health Infrastructure Renewal Fund (HIRF) to all Ontario public hospitals for critical or high-need priority projects.

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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