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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT IMPROVES HOME CARE

Multi-million Dollar Commitment Focuses On Quality Home Care Support

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is investing \$117.8 million to improve home care and community support services this year, and announcing a comprehensive plan to address the recommendations from Elinor Caplan’s review of Community Care Access Centres (CCACs), Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Community health care is a priority for our government, and we are committed to providing quality health care to individuals in their own homes when they require it. Elinor Caplan’s report has given us a road map to improve the CCAC system and we are making a \$30-million investment to implement her recommendations,” said Smitherman.

The funding announced today includes:

- \$35 million increase to CCACs for acute home care services
- \$26.7 million for Ontario’s end-of-life care strategy
- \$30 million to implement the Caplan report recommendations
- \$12.75 million in funding for in-home rehabilitation services for 8,500 people who have had hip and knee replacements
- \$13.1 million for community services

The government is accepting 68 of 70 recommendations in Caplan’s review of CCACs. Many of these recommendations benefit individuals who work in the personal support field. Personal Support Workers will benefit from an increase in the minimum wage from \$9.65/hr to \$12.50/hr and will receive enhanced benefits, such as travel time and mileage compensation. The home care workforce as a whole will get improved job security through measures like extending CCAC contracts with home care agencies to up to nine years.

“The government’s response to the Caplan report will greatly improve the quality of care for those receiving home care across Ontario,” said Jim Armstrong, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres.

“We value the care that nurses, personal support workers and therapists provide to thousands of clients each and every day,” Smitherman said. “They are the backbone of the home 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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