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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTING NEW DEVELOPMENT AT ST. JOHN'S REHAB HOSPITAL

Better Access To Better Care For Greater Toronto Area Residents

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is improving health care services for the people of the Greater Toronto Area by approving the expansion and renovation of St. John's Rehab Hospital, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Our government is ensuring that people in all areas of the province have access to the health care they need, and that includes the highest quality local hospitals,” said Smitherman. “I'm pleased to announce that Toronto and surrounding communities will soon have even better hospital facilities to serve the needs of area residents.”

St. John's Rehab Hospital capital project is one of several hospital projects approved under ReNew Ontario, the government's five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan, which includes \$5 billion for health care infrastructure.

“This commitment will allow the hospital to move ahead with construction of a new ambulatory care wing including a new therapeutic pool, rehabilitation clinics, assessment areas, gym, daily living program space, and amputee out-patient space, as well as renovation to in-patient areas and needed infrastructure renewal,” said Willowdale MPP David Zimmer. “This means that patients will have access to a modern rehabilitation space for treatment and treatment equipment that will allow them to achieve the optimum level of independence.”

Construction at St. John's Rehab Hospital is slated to begin no later than 2009-10.

ReNew Ontario is a comprehensive plan to modernize and replace many of the province's hospitals, schools and post-secondary institutions. It will also support the provincial economy through investments in transportation, transit and research and by accommodating growth.

“Today, the provincial government has demonstrated its leadership and commitment to the future of Ontario's only hospital dedicated to specialized rehabilitation,” says St. John's Rehab President and CEO Malcolm Moffat. “This funding will let St. John's Rehab proceed in building a redeveloped facility focused on returning individuals to active, productive lives in the community and the workplace.”

“The ReNew Ontario plan will make it possible for many hospitals to undertake much-needed capital improvements to facilities that, across Ontario, average 43 years old,” said Hilary Short, President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association. “We welcome today's important investment at St. John's Rehab, and we look forward to further investments like these in the

months and years ahead.”

“This hospital capital project is part of our government’s plan to help ensure Ontarians have the high quality services they need and deserve,” said David Caplan, the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal. “For the first time, this province has a long-term plan for building and developing our hospitals that will bring much needed stability and certainty to hospitals and better health care for Ontarians.”

“Innovation and change is vital to reach our government’s goal of a health care system that will help keep Ontarians healthier, get them good care when they are sick, and that will be there for their children and grandchildren,” said Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman. “Upgrading and modernizing our hospitals is essential to make that goal a reality.”

This initiative is part of the McGuinty government’s plan to build a health care system that delivers on three priorities—keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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