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**MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT IMPROVING ACCESS
TO LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES IN HASTINGS COUNTY**
Seeking Applications For 128 New Long-Term Care Beds In The Area

BELLEVILLE – The McGuinty government is increasing access to long-term care services for residents in Hastings County by seeking applications from long-term care home operators to develop more beds in the area, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Hastings County is an area that needs more quality long-term care beds to address the needs of their growing and aging population,” Smitherman said. “Our government is committed to finding interested long-term home operators who can come forward with plans that will provide area residents with the high quality of life they deserve.”

The government is seeking applications to develop 128 beds for South Hastings.

“Today’s announcement that will result in additional long-term care beds being available in Hastings County means that friends and relatives can be close by to provide the love and support a family needs during often difficult times,” said Ernie Parsons, MPP for Prince Edward-Hastings. “In rural Ontario, it is even more important that we attempt to keep supports and services close to home. I am very proud of the achievements of our government and their commitment to making Ontario a better place to live.”

“Seniors in need of extra support should be able to stay close to home and close to their families,” said Leona Dombrowsky, MPP for Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. “By providing these new beds, our government is ensuring that seniors from Hastings County get the support they need, in their home community.”

Operators have until November 10 to submit their applications with the government announcing the successful applicants in early December. Applications will be evaluated based on the operator’s financial capacity, operational experience and ability to bring new beds in operation by December 2009.

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is working to improve access to health care services for seniors in Ontario. Other recent initiatives include:

- Investing \$87.8 million to improve home care and community support services
- Providing \$30 million to implement the Caplan report recommendations on CCACs.

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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