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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT IMPROVES ACCESS TO COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

\$1 Million Investment Goes Towards Renovations To Progress Place Rehabilitation Centre

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is improving access for community mental health services by investing an additional \$1 million toward the renovations of Progress Place Rehabilitation Centre, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“We’re on the side of Ontario families who want and deserve the very best health care, including access to community mental health and addiction treatment services,” Smitherman said. “We’re investing in renovations to Progress Place Rehabilitation Centre that will provide more space for programs, result in full accessibility, increased safety and security for clients and staff.”

The centre is being renovated to create more space for comprehensive programming and health and wellness programs. Street-level entrance to an elevator will be created for physically challenged clients, which will improve access to the three-storey centre.

Progress Place, which offers comprehensive psychosocial rehabilitation services, assists more than 650 people each year. The centre uses a “clubhouse” approach where clients help staff in a variety of roles at the facility such as administrative, cooking and producing a newsletter. Progress Place also works in partnership with local employers to place 200 members each year in paid jobs in the community.

“We appreciate the generous support from the government that will enable Progress Place to provide better access to services for program participants,” said Brenda Singer, Executive Director of Progress Place Rehabilitation Centre. “This improvement will make a huge impact on the lives of the consumers who regularly attend its programs, especially those with physical challenges.”

This is just the latest example of how the McGuinty government is on the side of Ontario families concerned about access to community mental health and addiction services. Other initiatives include:

- Investing \$68.5 million to improve access to community-based mental health and addiction treatment services for 22,910 more Ontarians this year
- Expanding hospital and community-based forensic mental health services for people in the criminal court system who are mentally ill and require those services
- Establishing an external task force to provide advice to the government on how to improve methadone treatment in Ontario.

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health, 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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