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## **MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INVESTING IN UPGRADES AND REPAIRS FOR EVERY PUBLIC HOSPITAL IN ONTARIO**

*More Than \$41 Million In Funding Means Better Care For Patients*

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is upgrading and repairing Ontario hospitals to provide a higher standard of care to patients, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Ontario’s hospitals are an integral part of our health care system,” said Smitherman. “Our investment today will enable every public hospital in the province to provide even better care in facilities that are well-maintained, safe and comfortable for patients.”

More than \$41 million in capital funding will be allocated to all Ontario’s public hospitals for critical or high-need priority projects including:

- Structural repairs including roof replacement and windows
- Upgrading heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems
- Improvements to comply with health and safety standards, such as upgrading back-up generators.
- Work needed to address requirements under the Ontario Building Code and Ontario Fire Code such as upgrading fire-alarm systems

Funding is being provided through the government’s Health Infrastructure Renewal Fund, which allows hospitals to decide where to invest the money and lets them proceed quickly with projects. Every hospital will receive a minimum grant of \$150,000 per site.

“Investments in modern hospital infrastructure are investments in modern patient care services,” said Hilary Short, President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association. “Today’s announcement will help every hospital in Ontario move forward with needed upgrades and repairs to facilities that are, on average, 43 years old.”

Under the province’s *ReNew Ontario* investment infrastructure plan announced in May, the McGuinty government and its partners will invest \$5 billion over the next five years to improve health care facilities.

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
- Issuing Requests for Proposals for 11 new hospital projects in 2006/07 worth \$2 billion.

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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