

May 8, 2006

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS NURSING IN ONTARIO

As part of its *HealthForceOntario* human resources strategy, the McGuinty government today announced a number of nursing initiatives today including:

- Guaranteeing every nursing graduate in Ontario gets offered a full-time job in the province within a set period of time after graduation
- Investing \$1 million to support tuition costs for nursing students interested in practising in rural, remote or underserved communities
- Authorizing registered practical nurses to initiate certain procedures, such as dressing and cleansing wounds, and assisting an individual with the insertion of a catheter
- Expanding the number of nurse practitioner education seats to 150 this September, one year ahead of schedule.

These initiatives build on the McGuinty government's strong investments in support of nurses. Since 2003, the government has invested more than \$317 million towards improving nursing in the province. These investments include:

- \$25 million annually provided to 33 hospitals (with operating budgets greater than \$100 million) to hire new full-time nurses and to convert casual and part-time nurses into full-time staff.
- \$25 million annually provided to the remaining hospitals in the province (with operating budgets under \$100 million) to create full-time nursing positions.
- \$25 million in one-time funding to hospital to enhance the work environments for nurses through better supplies and equipment, and more educational and professional career opportunities
- \$40 million to help hospitals retain the services of experienced nurses by providing opportunities to expand their knowledge and training so they can work in other clinical areas or nursing roles
- \$34 million for a retention program aimed at keeping late career nurses in the profession while utilizing their skills and experience to benefit the health care system
- \$30 million to support new nursing graduates as they move into the workplace by creating temporary full-time positions in hospitals and long-term care homes
- \$103 million in funding for the purchase of equipment – such as patient lifts, electric beds and safety alarms – to improve patient safety and working conditions for nurses
- \$20 million for clinical simulation equipment (anatomically correct mannequins) that provide nurses with hands-on clinical practice in simulations as part of their undergraduate training
- \$2.8 million annually to create mentoring relationships between experienced nurses and newly hired or less experienced nurses
- \$2.5 million over three years to support the implementation of evidence-based nursing practice in long-term care homes
- \$11.4 million in one-time funding to assist hospitals in transition to safe medical equipment, including safety engineered medical devices.

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