



STRENGTHENING ONTARIO'S HEALTH CARE ADVANTAGE Better Access To Better Health Care

Investing in health care is one of the McGuinty government's top priorities. The government is building opportunities for Ontarians to achieve better health through new programs to promote health and prevent illness, better access to doctors and nurses and shorter wait times for key services.

The government's investment in health will grow by an additional \$1.9 billion to \$35.4 billion in 2006-07, rising to \$38.8 billion in 2008-09.

Keeping Ontarians Healthy

This Budget further enhances health promotion and illness prevention by:

- providing \$12 million in 2006-07, growing to \$30 million in 2008-09, to fund the purchase of insulin pumps and related supplies for young people with Type 1 diabetes;
- providing total funding of almost \$35 million in 2006-07, growing to almost \$42 million in 2008-09, to the Ontario Breast Screening Program to increase access to screening for women between the ages of 50 and 74. This funding will support the completion of more than 320,000 screens in 2006-07, growing to approximately 385,000 screens in 2008-09;
- investing \$7 million annually to enhance the Newborn Screening Program by expanding the number of diseases for which Ontario screens and by supporting the creation of a new, state-of-the-art screening facility at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario;
- implementing the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic, increasing the government's stockpile of antivirals and emergency supplies and equipment to protect health care workers and their patients; and
- dedicating, for the first time in Ontario's history, a Ministry of Health Promotion to advocate healthy living and to develop programs that prevent illness and promote wellness.

Improving Access

The government will continue to improve access to doctors, nurses and other health professionals by:

- increasing the number of Family Health Teams (FHTs) to 150 by 2007-08 to provide access to primary health care services for approximately 2.5 million Ontarians;
- implementing a comprehensive Nursing Strategy that acknowledges the key role of nurses in quality health care and increases the supply of nursing professionals;
- investing \$75 million over three years to create an additional 22 Community Health Centres (CHCs) and 17 satellites to improve access to primary health care. When fully operational, 76 CHCs and 27 satellites will serve 530,000 Ontarians;
- investing an additional \$300 million over the next three years to move towards a 50-50 sharing of the cost of municipal land ambulance services by 2008; and
- creating 104 new first-year medical school spaces by 2009-10.

Shorter Wait Times for Key Services

The government will continue to shorten wait times in 2006-07 by:

- providing funding for additional cancer surgery, cardiac procedures, cataract surgery, hip and knee replacements, and MRI procedures in order to further improve wait times. The government has already funded 31,000 more cardiac, cancer and cataract surgeries, and hip and knee replacements since 2004-05. The number of MRI examinations has increased by 42 per cent since 2003-04. The government has also reduced the wait time for elective cardiac bypass surgery from 30 to 15 days and reduced the wait time for radiation treatment by more than a week;
- increasing operating grant funding to hospitals to \$12.9 billion in 2006-07, \$13.4 billion in 2007-08 and \$14 billion in 2008-09; and
- further developing the Wait Times Information System by establishing it in approximately 55 Ontario hospitals by December 2006. These hospitals perform 80 per cent of key wait-time procedures.

Modernizing Health Infrastructure

The government will continue to modernize Ontario's health infrastructure by:

- issuing Requests for Proposals for 11 new hospital projects in 2006-07, worth \$2 billion, through Infrastructure Ontario in Ajax/Pickering, Belleville, Hamilton (two projects), London (two projects), Mississauga, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury and Toronto;
- funding additional hospital service quality and expansion projects;
- providing \$85 million in 2006-07 for cancer care equipment and repair and rehabilitation of hospitals; and
- spending \$31 million over three years to support the relocation of a significant component of the Central Public Health Laboratory in Toronto and address new and upgraded infrastructure required for other regional public health laboratories.

Efficiency and Accountability

The government will continue to increase efficiency and accountability by:

- working with the 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) as they assume their roles and responsibilities. Through improved integration and coordination of services, LHINs will create a more effective, accountable and sustainable health care system; and
- working with hospitals to ensure that all 152 organizations balance their budgets while maintaining high-quality care.

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