

For Immediate Release

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**MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT DELIVERS STRENGTHENED HEALTH CARE SERVICES
FOR KINGSTON AREA RESIDENTS**

Investing An Additional \$14 Million For Critical Care, Satellite Dialysis Unit And Infrastructure Projects

KINGSTON - The McGuinty government is increasing access to health care services for Kingston area residents by investing an additional \$14 million in funding for several capital projects, Kingston and Islands MPP John Gerretsen announced today on behalf of Minister of Health and Long-Term Care George Smitherman.

Today's investment will provide over \$4 million in funding for infrastructure to accommodate seven additional critical care beds at Kingston General Hospital (KGH).

The critical care beds serve patients who require advanced or long-term respiratory support or basic respiratory support. KGH currently operates 21 critical care beds. Today's investment has been ranked by the hospital as one of the prime short term solutions to alleviate the bed shortage in the hospital.

"This much needed investment together with the new 38 interim long term cares beds at Briargate will greatly assist the KGH in meeting the health care needs in the Kingston community," said Gerretsen.

Today's announcement also includes about \$3 million in funding to construct a 12-station hemodialysis unit and a 2-station home hemodialysis training program at Providence Care, Mental Health site, to be operated as a satellite of the Regional Chronic Kidney Disease program at KGH.

This satellite dialysis unit will provide hemodialysis services for up to 70 patients who have been stabilized on dialysis. Patients, whose kidneys are not functioning well, require hemodialysis treatments three times a week as a life-sustaining measure. Some patients select to do the hemodialysis at home and for these patients, the education to do self-dialysis will occur in the two home training stations.

"Our government is focused on delivering quality health care, and this includes substantial investments in the Kingston area," said Minister of Health and Long-Term Care George Smitherman. "Patients in Kingston will see better health services in the future."

The government is also providing increased funding of \$6.9 million, bringing its commitment to the electrical infrastructure project at Kingston General Hospital to about \$25 million.

“I am delighted the government is responding to the health care needs in the Kingston area with solid investments in capital projects,” said Gerretsen. “This investment will mean better hospital services to meet the demands of our growing population.”

This is just one more example of how, working together, we have achieved results in increasing access to health care services for Kingston area residents.

Other recent initiatives include the following:

- Investing an additional \$22.1 million in operating funding at Kingston General Hospital in 2007/08;
- Adding 38 interim long-term care beds in the Kingston area at Briargate;
- The construction of a new 160 bed Long Term Care Home to be built by Extendicare at St. Lawrence College
- Construction of a new, expanded 40-station in-centre Kidney Dialysis Unit at the Kingston General Hospital;
- A new 25-bed unit for inpatient pediatrics at Kingston General Hospital , where all pediatric care will be consolidated;
- Expansion of the Intensive Care Unit at Kingston General Hospital from 21 beds up to 33 beds;
- Increased chemotherapy treatment chairs at Kingston General Hospital from the current 15 up to 39 chairs; and
- The addition of two new radiation bunkers at the Cancer Centre for Southeastern Ontario to increase cancer treatment capacity.

Gerretsen also applauded the recent integration of the planning services of all three hospitals as well as the fundraising plans for KGH, Hotel Dieu and Providence Care in the name of the University Hospitals Kingston Foundation.

“Integrating the planning functions and fundraising activities for the integrated hospital system here in the Kingston area works best to provide the highest possible medical care for the people of this area, said Gerretsen.”

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