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MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR SENIORS *Ensuring New Research And Best Practices Used In Caring For Seniors*

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is improving quality of life for seniors by making sure the best research on seniors’ care is available for use across Ontario, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

“Every day we are learning more about the best ways of caring for our oldest and most vulnerable members of society,” Smitherman said. “Today we are introducing two ways of taking this new knowledge and applying it in long-term care homes and seniors’ homes for the benefit of seniors and those who care for them.”

The government is investing a total of \$2.7 million to:

- Build a Seniors’ Health Research Transfer Network that will support putting health research into practice with all health care providers who work in geriatric care and involve front-line providers in setting research priorities
- Hire eight regional co-ordinators to implement Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) Best Practice Guidelines – such as treating diabetes and preventing falls – in long-term care homes.

These initiatives are in response to Parliamentary Assistant Monique Smith’s report *Commitment to Care: A Plan for Long-Term Care in Ontario*, which called for improved quality of life for long-term care residents, more informed consumer participation and higher standards of care.

"These important initiatives will help nurses and other health professionals deliver the best possible care to Ontario's seniors," said The Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister Responsible for Seniors. "They will make a real difference in the health and well-being of seniors across the province."

“We are increasing expertise among caregivers and improving public education and awareness,” Smitherman said. “This involves driving best care practices and research into the geriatric care field, so that seniors receive the best care possible, and families and caregivers get the most support.”

“We’re pleased that the Ontario government is helping to get evidence-based health care practice into the community and in long-term care homes to benefit seniors,” said Lois Dent, President of the Concerned Friends of Ontario Citizens in Care Facilities.

"The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario applauds the hiring of best practice regional co-ordinators to facilitate the implementation of best practice guidelines in the long-term care sector," said Tazim Virani, Program Director of the RNAO’s Nursing Best Practice Guidelines Program. “This is a much

needed initiative to improve the quality of clinical practice and work environment in long term care homes in Ontario. The result will be improved care for all residents."

This initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan to build a health care system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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