

Today's News - Friday, January 26, 2018

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Ontario is expanding helpline services to support Indigenous women and their families facing violence. The province is supporting Beendigen Inc., an Indigenous family shelter in Thunder Bay, to expand culturally appropriate helpline services for Indigenous women across Ontario. For over 40 years Beendigen Inc. has provided safety and shelter to Indigenous women and children experiencing violence, and facilitated the cycle of healing through culturally appropriate programs and services to individuals and families. This investment builds on the success of Talk4Healing, an Indigenous-designed and delivered helpline for Indigenous women in Northern Ontario. Expanding helpline services for Indigenous women is a key commitment under Walking Together: Ontario's Long-Term Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women to help respond to the high rates of violence experienced by Indigenous women. Supporting Indigenous women is one of many steps on the journey of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It reflects the government's commitment to work with Indigenous partners and to create a better future for everyone in Ontario.

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Also Today:

- Ontario is ensuring that families in Bowmanville and Durham Region continue to have access to high-quality, state-of-the-art care close to home, by supporting the redevelopment and expansion of Lakeridge Health's Bowmanville Hospital. Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, was joined by Granville Anderson, MPP, Durham, today at the Bowmanville Hospital to announce that the redevelopment project is moving forward. The project will replace the old north wing of the hospital with a new patient tower, to meet the changing health care needs of local residents. In addition to the new building, Lakeridge Health will expand facilities for a variety of programs and services, including a new emergency department, new surgical services, a critical care unit and inpatient units as well as diagnostic imaging.

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Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes **historic new investments in health care**, including free **medications for everyone 24 and under through OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare**, providing free **tuition to over 210,000 students** and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 kids access quality, licensed child care and making it more affordable for families, making everyday life more affordable by **reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent** on average through our Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to **make housing more affordable** for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.