

Today's News - Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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The following statement was issued today by Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care: "The opioid crisis in Ontario is a tragic and growing issue, one we are continuing to work diligently to combat. As part of our government's commitment to openness, transparency and evidence-based decision-making, we are continuing to make relevant data widely available, including to health care providers and planners working on the front lines, as well as to the public. Today, we have updated the [Interactive Opioid Tracker](#) with data from April 1 – June 30, 2017. As part of the \$222 million announced last month to fight the opioid crisis, Ontario is making \$21 million immediately available to help community-based addiction organizations in their response to this crisis. In addition, our government is making fentanyl testing strips available that can identify whether a substance contains fentanyl. These strips will at first be made available at all current supervised injection services and pop-up sites and will be evaluated for further distribution."

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Also today:

- More than 400 people and organizations [shared their ideas](#) about how best to design a food security strategy, on a range of topics including how food security should be defined and how to better support innovators and communities in accelerating solutions. Feedback on what Ontario's Food Security Strategy could achieve included:
 - o Helping people access Ontario's food resources in a dignified manner.
 - o Providing access to safe, sufficient, affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food through a food system that is socially just and sustainable.
 - o Supporting individual, community, and cultural health and well-being.

The province will continue to engage the public, sector experts, Indigenous partners, and municipal and federal governments as Ontario moves forward with designing its first food security strategy. The strategy will address physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food, including in remote and urban Indigenous communities.

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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 proposed Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to **make housing more affordable** for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.