

Today's News - Wednesday, April 18, 2018

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Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne was at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre today to explain how the government's investment of nearly \$19 billion in health care and an expanded innovative bundled care program will help reduce wait times at Ontario hospitals. Premier Wynne highlighted the government's commitment, which represents an increase of \$822 million, or 4.6 per cent, in funding for day-to-day operations. This will allow hospitals to invest with more precision in the care and supports that further reduce wait times and address the specific needs of their patients and community. Patients will benefit from these increased investments through reduced wait times for hip, knee, cataract, shoulder, cornea and spine surgery. This will also give hospitals the resources to expand essential services such as cardiac care, critical care, chemotherapy and treatment for strokes. Premier Wynne also explained how the government is tackling wait times at hospitals by expanding Ontario's Bundled Care Program, which will help patients return home sooner after surgery and reduce emergency room visits and hospital readmissions. This innovative approach will play an important role in freeing up space in health care facilities by helping patients transition from hospital to home faster and with the right supports. Bundled care coordinates services and integrates funding for a patient's full spectrum of care for a specific health issue — from the hospital right through to follow-up home care. Ontario tested the bundled care model through a successful pilot program. Based on the success of an initial six sites, the program will now expand to 24 health care teams providing care of hip and knee surgery patients. In 2018–19, this expansion is expected to help more than 20,000 patients, increasing overall efficiency and freeing up hospital beds for more patients.

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Also Today:

- Ontario is improving cycling across the province by launching a number of new initiatives to encourage people to get around by bike, improve safety and provide more travel options. Kathryn McGarry, Minister of Transportation and Daiene Vernile, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, were at the Ontario Bike Summit to announce #CycleON Action Plan 2.0, the new provincewide cycling network and the [Cycling Skills Guide](#). Action Plan 2.0 outlines the next steps in achieving the goals of #CycleON: Ontario's Cycling Strategy. This includes actions that help design healthy, active, and prosperous communities, improve cycling infrastructure, make highways and streets safer, promote cycling awareness and behavioural shifts, and increase cycling tourism opportunities. The plan also includes developing a comprehensive cycling education framework that provides standards for curriculum, supports the development and certification of instructors, and delivers cycling education courses across the province. The cycling network, identified for long-term development, includes over 9,800 km of cycling routes that connect the regions of the province, providing access to major communities and destinations. About half of these network routes already exist, incorporating large segments of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail, the Great Trail, the Greenbelt Cycling Route and other cycling routes. Action Plan 2.0 and the new cycling network build on the substantial investments that Ontario has already made in new bike lanes, bicycle parking, and other cycling infrastructure across the province.

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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 under 25 and over 65 through OHIP+**, 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.