



Attention: News/Health Editors
MEDIA RELEASE
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Provincial funding ushers in new era of *Rebuilding Lives at St. John's Rehab Hospital*

TORONTO, April 3, 2006 /CNW/ – Today, the Honourable George Smitherman, Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, confirmed the Province's approval and investment in a major expansion and enhancement of St. John's Rehab Hospital's facilities that will begin a new era in rebuilding people's lives.

"Our government is ensuring that all Ontarians have access to high quality hospital services," said Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman. "Today's announcement takes St. John's Rehab and the community it serves another important step forward in making sure that people are getting the health care they need, when and where they need it."

St. John's Rehab's \$30 million redevelopment project has been in the planning stages since 2001. The centrepieces of the project are a new ambulatory care wing and renovations to expand and enhance treatment space in the hospital's 160-bed inpatient wing.

At a news conference this morning, Willowdale MPP David Zimmer announced the Province's approval to move forward with the project. Mr. Zimmer has actively campaigned in support of the project and the hospital since 2003.

"Today, the provincial government has demonstrated its leadership and commitment to the future of Ontario's only hospital solely dedicated to specialized rehabilitation," says St. John's Rehab President and CEO Malcolm Moffat. "This funding will let St. John's Rehab proceed in building a redeveloped facility focused on returning individuals to active, productive lives in the community and the workplace."

In 2004, the province announced \$3.5 million in funding for the planning and design of the project. The 50,000-square foot expansion will:

- For the first time, bring all of the hospital's outpatient services into a consolidated wing;
- Create an urgently-needed new main hospital entrance with the latest accessibility features, including a protective canopy, generous entrance vestibule and adjacent accessible parking;
- Bring expanded multidisciplinary treatment areas;
- Enhance splinting and face-mask clinic space;
- Contain a state-of-the-art whirlpool and therapy pool;
- Include a porch element that links all functions of the new two-level wing;
- Feature floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the hospital's 25-acre landscaped grounds and new therapy garden – a key element in St. John's Rehab's whole-person approach to care.

Existing inpatient facilities will also be renovated to add a new 32-bed care unit for the hospital's most complex patients. This will allow St. John's Rehab to allocate its 160 beds over five floors instead of four.

In the first public fundraising campaign since the hospital opened in 1937, St. John's Rehab Foundation, under the leadership of The Honourable Art Eggleton, has raised \$10.2 million towards the expansion project – 68 per cent of its \$15 million goal. The Sisters of St. John the Divine – founders of the hospital and Canada's only indigenous order of Anglican nuns – have underscored their ongoing commitment to

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health care excellence with a visionary gift of \$5 million. Philanthropic leaders Sally Horsfall and John Craig Eaton have pledged \$1 million to the campaign and the hospital's dedicated volunteers have committed \$500,000 toward the new facilities.

"The hospital's redevelopment project will bring us closer to our vision of being at the forefront of specialized rehabilitation care," says Elizabeth Martin, Chair of the St. John's Rehab Hospital Board of Directors. "With this investment by the province and the generosity of the community, St. John's Rehab can continue to excel at delivering highly specialized services to people who've experienced life-changing injuries or medical conditions."

About St. John's Rehab Hospital

St. John's Rehab is the only hospital in Ontario solely dedicated to specialized rehabilitation. This 160-bed hospital in north Toronto is recognized as a benchmark rehabilitation leader by the Ontario Hospital Association through its Hospital Report Series. The site of Ontario's only dedicated burn and Canada's only organ transplant rehabilitation programs, we also offer specialized rehabilitation for amputations, cardiac surgery, stroke, traumatic injuries and musculoskeletal conditions, as well as community health clinics for acupuncture, massage, chiropractic and chiropody. With a unique focus on the whole person – body, mind and spirit – St. John's Rehab Hospital is rebuilding people's lives.

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