



800 Bay Street, 7th floor
Toronto, ON M5S 3A9
T: 416 750 1720
F: 416 750 3624
www.oaccac.on.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Care Access Centres Commend Ontario's Commitment to Increasing Access to Family Care

Care Connectors Help Ontarians Find Health Care Providers in their Communities

Thursday, February 12, 2009 – Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) support Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty's important announcement today of a new, innovative program devoted to increasing Ontarians' access to family health care – *Health Care Connect*.

At the core of the *Health Care Connect* program will be the role of the *Care Connector* – experienced nurses who will refer patients without a family doctor to a family health care provider in their community. Each Community Care Access Centre will have a minimum of two Care Connectors who will work with local physicians and nurse practitioners to build relationships and better understand their practices.

"We are honoured to be part of this unprecedented Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care program," said Betty Kuchta, Executive Director, Erie St. Clair Community Care Access Centre. "Care Connectors have already begun to work; their strong relationships and hands-on, individualized approach will help them match people to the most appropriate and highest quality care possible. CCACs are looking forward to our role in helping ensure this program becomes a reality for Ontarians."

"We applaud the Government for creating an opportunity to connect the more than 890,000 people in Ontario to quality care and to direct access to qualified health care providers in their communities. CCACs recognize the value of helping people better understand the care options available to them and how to access the care they need when they need it," said Margaret Mottershead, CEO, Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres (OACCAC).

CCACs will work closely with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Local Health Integration Networks, Telehealth Ontario and Ontario's family health care teams to help deliver this innovative, new provincial initiative.

Community Care Access Centres provide services in the home and the community for more than 650,000 Ontarians annually.

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For more information, contact:
Gabiella Skubincan (416) 640-4803