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## PREMIER FORD PRESSES OTTAWA TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR ONTARIO PRIORITIES

Premier Doug Ford joined his fellow Premiers to press the federal government on critical priorities for the people of Ontario, including strengthening frontline health care and moving shovel-ready infrastructure projects forward.

The need for additional health care funding is urgent with rising case numbers across the country, a potential secondary wave of COVID-19 on the horizon, and ongoing work to modernize hospitals, long-term care homes and other health facilities. Ontario joins provincial and territorial partners in calling for a significant increase to the federal Canada Health Transfer to cover 35 per cent of provincial-territorial health costs and help meet urgent challenges, prepare for the future, and build stronger health care systems.

"This is a critical moment for us to stand together and build a stronger, more resilient province and country," said Premier Ford. "To meet the challenges we face, we need a modern health care system that can effectively respond to the potential surges and waves of COVID-19, while addressing issues such as hallway health care and the need for more long-term care beds. Ontario is at the table

with \$67 billion for health care this year, but we need the federal government to step up with its share to better protect the people we serve."

Like many provinces and territories, Ontario is making unprecedented investments this year in health care to respond to COVID-19, including quickly expanding testing capacity, building more hospital capacity, and developing homegrown manufacturing capacity for personal protective equipment. Premier Ford joins Canada's Premiers in calling for a true long-term funding partner in the federal government to support this fundamental priority for Ontarians and Canadians alike.

Premier Ford is also calling on Ottawa to reduce delays in federal approvals for current infrastructure projects and step up with an additional \$10 billion per year over 10 years for shovel-ready projects. The province is seeking at least 40 per cent of total costs for the nationally significant \$28.5 billion subway plan for the Greater Toronto Area, along with additional funding for broadband to expand and improve service to more rural, remote, and Northern communities. Supporting these projects will accelerate economic recovery by creating more

jobs, providing more opportunities for local businesses, and improving the quality of life in these communities.

Ontario stands ready to work with the federal government and provincial and territorial partners to advance these important priorities for the people of Ontario and all Canadians.

### QUICK FACTS

Ontario has invested \$67 billion in health care this year, including an additional \$7.7 billion as part of Ontario's Action Plan: Response to COVID-19.

Canada's provinces and territories are projected to spend \$188 billion on health care this year, while the federal government's share amounts to \$42 billion, or 22 per cent.

Under the original Medical Care Act, the federal government covered 50 per cent of eligible hospital and physician

expenses. Today, the federal share has fallen to just over 22 per cent of provincial-territorial health spending and is projected to decline to 16 per

cent by 2040.

Because of factors such as an aging population, new drugs and technology, the cost of health care is growing

at an annual average of approximately 6 per cent, yet the federal Canada Health Transfer grows by approximately half that rate.



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### Ontario Supports Telephone Based Social and Educational Programs for Seniors

The Ontario government is providing \$467,500 to the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario (OACAO) to administer the new Seniors' Centre Without Walls Micro-Grants program and other capacity building initiatives. The funding will support a broad range of seniors' organizations and help people stay connected to their communities through telephone-based social and educational programs.

The announcement was made today by Raymond Cho, Minister of Seniors and Accessibility.

"Our government is committed to ensuring that our seniors have the support and resources they need to maintain their health, wellbeing, and a good quality of life," said Minister Cho. "Social isolation can be particularly challenging for seniors, especially during the pandemic. Our investment will help ensure more seniors can access valuable telephone-based programs to combat social isolation and help keep them safe."

The Seniors' Centre Without Walls Micro-Grants will help organizations deliver remote teleconference programming to meet the unique needs of older adults in Indigenous and Francophone communities, as well as seniors living in rural and remote areas of the province.

Indigenous communities and non-profit organizations that serve seniors are eligible to apply for the program until September 30, 2020. Visit the OACAO's webpage to find full program guidelines and access

an online application.

"The Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario is pleased to work with the Government of Ontario as our funding partner to offer the Seniors' Centre Without Walls Micro-Grants Program," said Sue Hesjedahl, Executive Director of the OACAO. "The health and safety of Ontario's seniors is most important during the COVID-19 pandemic, including their mental health and social connectedness. Seniors' Centre Without Walls is an accessible and inclusive telephone-based program model which reduces the negative impacts of social isolation and ensures that participants remain engaged in their communities."

This work builds on Ontario's commitment to help seniors stay independent, healthy and active within their communities. In June, the government announced an investment of up to \$4 million for the Seniors Community Grant program, which provides funding for non-profit organizations, local services boards or Indigenous groups to develop programming for seniors.

### QUICK FACTS

The Seniors' Centre Without Walls model is a free interactive telephone-based group program for socially isolated seniors and people with disabilities who find it difficult to leave their homes.

By 2023, there will be three million Ontarians over the age of 65; this is the province's fastest growing demographic.