



Nov. 1, 2010

To my valued health care partners,

I'm writing to let you know about a new tool that's available to you and your patients. As leaders in health care and as front-line health care workers, it is important for all of us to continue building a health care system that puts patients first. It is also important to arm Ontarians with the information they need to access the health care that is right for them.

Over the last seven years, our government has made major strides when it comes to improving access to health care. Wait times are coming down and, since 2003, one million more Ontarians have found a family doctor. We're now focusing on quality and ensuring taxpayers are getting the very best value for health care investments.

Ensuring that Ontarians know how to access all the health care options in their communities is an important part of our future success. With this in mind, today we are launching a completely refreshed Health Care Options web site (www.ontario.ca/healthcareoptions). With a simple click of a mouse, or through the convenience of a smart phone, Ontarians can access information about health care options — things like family health teams, nurse practitioner-led clinics, community health centres, walk-in clinics or emergency rooms — available to them, as well as tips on how to use these options to their benefit.

By typing in their city, street or postal code, all Ontarians can find health care options nearby. They can now share those results with their friends and families through social networking sharing tools, like Facebook and Twitter. The web site is also now mobile-enabled through GPS technology, making it easier to use on the go.

We know that 86 per cent of Ontarians are interested in knowing more about the health care options in their communities. We want to help them learn. That's why, along with the redeveloped website, we're launching a public awareness campaign including T.V., radio, online and print advertising as well as digital media. This campaign aims to:

- Inform Ontarians about new health care options and explain how and where they can access health care in their communities
- Help Ontarians navigate the health care system
- Drive Ontarians to www.ontario.ca/healthcareoptions for more information. There, they will also be able to access a new web resource for newcomers to Ontario that will help them get started using the health care system.

We want to empower Ontarians to make better decisions about where to access the right health care services, close to home.

As leaders in today's health care system, we all have a role to play in protecting our universal health care system, putting patients first and ensuring we preserve the access we enjoy today for generations to come.

Thank you for what you do for all Ontarians.

Regards,



Deb Matthews
Minister