



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Government of Ontario announces major investment for new regional hospital in Kenora

Kenora, ON, May 16, 2025 – It is a historic moment for healthcare in our region as the Government of Ontario announced yesterday a stunning investment of \$50 million to support advanced planning of a new regional hospital in Kenora.

Minister Greg Rickford, Member of Provincial Parliament for Kenora-Rainy River elaborates "Our government continues to deliver for the families of Northwestern Ontario. The 2025 Budget will move forward the planning of a new Lake of the Woods District Hospital—bringing us one step closer to a modern facility that meets the needs of the region. This is a major step for healthcare in the North—expanded services, stronger diagnostic capacity, and culturally safe care for Indigenous patients. Congratulations to the Lake of the Woods District Hospital and Ogimaawabiitong-Kenora Chiefs Advisory team for their leadership and commitment. This is their moment, and we're proud to support it."

The journey to this point in time began in 2017 when Ogimaawabiitong Kenora Chiefs Advisory (KCA) and Lake of the Woods District Hospital (LWDH), in ceremony, committed to working together in partnership, for the good of our region. Fred Richardson, Chair of the Board of Directors explains "Our common goal and trust in each other propelled meaningful consultation, thorough planning and earlier this year, KCA's acquisition of the site in which the new regional hospital will be built."

Plans for the new facility supports program growth to address current shortcomings and demographic changes, as well as a new transitional care unit, expanded Mental Health services, a robust Indigenous Patient Relations department, and expanded rehabilitation, outpatient, surgical and diagnostic services.

Cheryl O'Flaherty, President & CEO of LWDH expressed gratitude and relief "I am so incredibly grateful to receive this monumental news. It couldn't be more timely, as the need for a new hospital facility becomes more and more urgent. And although our team does an incredible job providing extraordinary patient care, we have long outgrown the walls in which we operate. A new hospital on the horizon means the immense potential for service growth and enhanced care for our communities." Cheryl is also quick to acknowledge the many, many individuals involved:

LWDH Executive and staff (past and present), the LWDH Board of Directors, KCA Chiefs and staff, members of the All Nations Hospital Project Steering Committee, leadership of the City of Kenora, the Province of Ontario, Minister Rickford, Minister Sylvia Jones, and Premier Doug Ford.

Chief Lorraine Cobiness, Board President of Ogimaawabiitong KCA shares, “On behalf of the Board of Ogimaawabiitong, and Executive Team, we are passionate about seeing this project through, and want to thank this Government and our MPP, Minister Rickford for sharing our vision.”

According to Chief Cobiness, both LWDH and KCA intend to continue joint planning related to the governance and operational model of the future-state, new hospital. An investment is being sought from the Federal Government recognizing the specific needs of our area’s large First Nation population.

Executive Director of Kenora Chiefs Advisory, Jennifer Dreaver says, “work will continue, to build on cultural safe care through anti-racism training of both LWDH and KCA staff, with opportunities for experiential learning. And we look forward to the really important discussions ahead with LWDH partners to further envision and plan for the new hospital”.

City of Kenora Mayor Andrew Poirier shares “From a municipal lens, we are incredibly grateful to the Province for the continued investment in the City of Kenora. This new regional hospital is an investment not only in the City of Kenora, but Northwestern Ontario as a whole. The new facility will provide state-of-the-art technology for medical professionals to work in and most importantly provide health access for everyone in Northwestern Ontario. We thank our MPP, Minister Greg Rickford for his continual advocacy and support to ensure that this new hospital was included in the 2025 Provincial Budget. We thank Premier Ford and the entire Cabinet for the investment in this project in Kenora for the Northwest Region.”

LWDH and KCA now look forward to working with Infrastructure Ontario and the Ministry of Health on the Detailed Design and Procurement phases, which are estimated to take up to three years, followed by the Construction phase which is anticipated to take another three years.

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