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NEWS RELEASE

VON CONGRATULATES THE MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT FOR RECOGNIZING HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE AS PART OF THE SOLUTION FOR HEALTH CARE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 30, 2008 (Ottawa, ON) – VON Canada (Victorian Order of Nurses) is pleased to see that the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care is investing in concrete solutions to help meet the health and social needs of Ontarians and improve the integration between hospitals and home and community care.

This morning, Minister George Smitherman, announced a \$109 million investment aimed at reducing wait times in emergency rooms. As part of the overall funding, \$38.5 million will be devoted to increasing home care services and enhancing integration between hospitals and communities.

One of the greatest challenges facing hospitals is the large number of patients waiting in alternative level of care (ALC) beds. “With the additional supports announced this morning, many of these patients could be cared for at home, helping to ease the pressure on hospitals, emergency rooms, and the overall system,” says Dr. Judith Shamian, President and CEO, VON Canada.

“We are delighted to see that the Government of Ontario is recognizing the outstanding contributions of personal support workers (PSWs) across Ontario, who play an essential role in our health care system by providing support and care for clients to enable them to heal, live and age comfortably in their homes,” says Dr. Sue Matthews, Ontario Vice President Operations and Chief of

Practice. "Not only will the increased resources help Ontarians remain in their homes, it will provide family and friend caregivers additional relief, allowing them to share the responsibility of care."

Given the current health human resource shortage in Ontario, providers will continue to face challenges recruiting and retaining staff. VON is committed to working with the sector and the Ministry to build a strong sustainable approach.

VON supports the ongoing leadership of Dr. Alan Hudson, Provincial Executive Lead, Access to Services and Wait Times, Dr. Kevin Smith, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Healthcare in Hamilton and ACL Lead and Dr. Michael Schull, Senior Scientist ICES, Director of Emergency Medicine at the University of Toronto and ER Wait Times Lead, who will continue to lead this initiative and strengthen partnerships between hospitals and communities.

VON will continue to work with the McGuinty government to ensure that the people of Ontario receive the highest quality of care and services where they want to receive it, in their homes and communities.

VON is dedicated to being a leader in the delivery of innovative comprehensive health and social services and to influencing the development of health and social policy in Canada. We are a national health organization and registered charity offering a wide range of community health care solutions that meet the needs of Canadians from coast to coast. VON is committed to continuous quality improvement and is accredited by Accreditation Canada.

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