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## **Strategy Urgently Needed to Meet Needs of Growing, Aging Population: OHA**

Toronto – Creating a comprehensive strategy to meet the needs of a growing and aging population must be an urgent priority for the Government of Ontario, and for Ontario’s health care providers, in the months and years ahead.

“Ontario’s population is growing and aging very quickly,” said Hilary Short, President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA). “This means that the demands on Ontario’s acute care hospitals, and particularly on their emergency departments, are increasing very quickly.”

The OHA continues to call for the timely development of a comprehensive strategy to ensure that Alternate Level of Care patients can receive the care they need outside of acute care hospitals. ALC patients typically require a lower level of care than that provided in acute care hospitals. Hospitals that are unable to discharge their ALC patients to more appropriate facilities have experienced crowded emergency rooms and, in some cases, have cancelled surgeries.

The OHA recommends that the ALC issue be addressed from a health system perspective, and involve additional investments in the acute care, long-term care, home care, complex continuing care and rehabilitation sectors and in supportive housing beyond what is currently planned.

“Concerted action is needed to ensure that patients, particularly elderly patients, receive the care that they need, where and when they need it,” Short said. “We plan to work with the Government of Ontario, and our partners outside hospitals, to develop a strategy that will meet their needs.”

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