

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

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HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is to the Premier. According to Dr. Michael Lawrie, president of the medical staff at Cambridge Memorial Hospital, the hospital is "sadly underfunded." Yesterday, my colleague Gerry Martiniuk and I, along with 500 people, attended a rally, and these people said that they agree with the doctor. They are demanding that your government not only give them fair funding for their hospital in a fast-growing community, but that you not cut oncology, pediatrics and obstetrics.

Premier, you told the federal government you need more health care; you need to share it equally. You now have more funding. Will you also share with Ontarians and give Cambridge Memorial Hospital its fair share-about \$280 more per resident-and protect their hospital services?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the question from my honourable colleague, and I'll speak to it momentarily, but in passing, I would recommend that she speak to her colleague Mr. Hudak, who says that we've invested too much in the course of the past five years in health care generally.

Just by way of specific contrast, we've increased funding for hospitals in Waterloo by 24%. Her colleague says we shouldn't have gone beyond 10.3%, just so we're clear on that score. We've increased funding for St. Mary's hospital by 31%, Grand River Hospital by 30%, Cambridge hospital by 16%, and \$8 million invested in the region to reduce wait times specifically, which is working in a number of ways. We have come to the table, and I assume from the basis of the question that my colleague is asking us, in the coming budget, to make sure we continue to invest in health care

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: What happened to Cambridge and the half million citizens of Waterloo region, one of the fastest-growing areas in Ontario? We have been forgotten. Not one cent for fast-growth funding in Grand River Hospital-not a cent-not one cent for fast-growth funding in Cambridge and only a pittance for St. Mary's in cardiac care.

Cambridge's hospital was ordered to be expanded 10 years ago. John Milloy, on behalf of George Smitherman, put a shovel in the ground on December 21, 2005, and not a thing has happened since. The feds gave you almost half a billion in new health dollars. Giving you money like that is a waste of time; they might as

well have given it to AIG. Stop playing politics with the lives of the people of our region. When will the expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital be built?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the passion, but I wonder where it was when the member sat in government and when the government of the day cut funding to health care in the province of Ontario.

Again, when it comes to the community-Waterloo health care-we have increased funding for St. Mary's hospital by 31%, Grand River Hospital by 30%, Cambridge Memorial Hospital by 16%. The community is now home to nine family health teams serving 183,000 patients.

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I take it from the member's question, once again, that he's asking us to ensure that our budget includes more supports for our families, more supports for their schools, more supports for their health care. At the beginning of question period, they asked us to do one thing alone, which is to cut taxes for business. I want them to know-