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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CT Scanner announcement great news for area patients

Strathroy, ON – Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital has approval to purchase a CT Scanner and have it operational by Spring of 2007, Health and Long-Term care Minister George Smitherman announced today. The Middlesex Hospital Alliance will embark on a fundraising campaign to raise the \$2.5 million required to purchase the equipment and make the necessary renovations to house the CT.

"The addition of a CT scanner is part of a long range strategic investment in Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital, that has included a new emergency and ambulatory care centre and the renovation of 23000 square feet of existing patient care areas," said Yvonne Lambert, Board Chair, Middlesex Hospital Alliance. "A CT scanner is an integral part of our plan to continually improve services for the patients served by the Middlesex Hospital Alliance.

The new CT Scanner will deliver an estimated 4300 annual scans for patients in a wide catchment area that includes 80,000 residents in Middlesex, Lambton, Elgin and Kent counties. Patients currently requiring a CT scan in the area are transferred, often by ambulance, to other hospitals. The new equipment will have a positive impact on waiting times at neighbouring regional hospitals, will decrease operating costs and increase the availability of ambulance service for emergency response within the region.

According to Dr. Bill Dawson, Chief of Diagnostic Imaging, the investment in digital imaging (PACS) by the provincial government has paved the way for advanced imaging in the Strathroy area. "CT is a powerful diagnostic tool, and has become the standard of care for many patient conditions," explains Dawson. "Having a CT in the community should help in recruitment and retention of physicians."

The CT Scanner is an important addition to the diagnostic imaging services offered at SMGH, which includes on-site radiology, mammography, fluoroscopy and ultrasound for inpatients and out patients. The CT Scanner offers a number of benefits for both diagnosis and treatment of patients.

CT allows the physician to improve patient care by arriving at a diagnosis with greater clarity and precision faster and providing the necessary treatment sooner. Unlike other imaging methods, CT scanning offers detailed views of many types of tissue, including lung, bones, soft tissues and blood vessels. In trauma cases, a CT can reveal internal injuries and bleeding quickly enough to save lives.

"The announcement of a CT scanner to be placed at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital will help the Foundation move forward with plans to fund this \$2.5 million project," said George Sinker, Board Chair, Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital Foundation. "The addition of a CT scanner will provide enhanced diagnostic services to more than 80,000 persons living in the service area."

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