

Friendly Question

Member from Brantford-Brant to the Minister of Health Will Bouma to Christine Elliott: Asthma

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Approximately two million people in Ontario currently live with asthma. Living with asthma can be challenging—never knowing when it's going to flare up or how severe it's going to be, making it hard to breathe. I know the fear of watching helplessly as one of my boys has struggled to breathe after just normal activities. That's why it's so important for my constituents and for the people of Ontario to have proper asthma supports.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please explain to the members of this Legislature how our government is supporting people in Ontario who are living with asthma?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much to the member from Brantford–Brant for your question. I know it's personally very important to you, as it is for many people, and I'm very grateful that the people from Asthma Canada are here today.

Mr. Speaker, did you know that one in three people will develop asthma in his or her lifetime, and one in four children will be affected by asthma? Uncontrolled asthma can lead to school and work absenteeism and increases in urgent and acute health care needs.

That's why our government is investing up to \$4 million in the asthma program. Our government recognizes the need for a coordinated, integrated approach to asthma care in order to improve health outcomes. We will continue to work and listen to partners in front-line care to find innovative solutions and build a health care system that will truly work for the people of Ontario living with asthma.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'd like to thank the minister for her response and for her excellent work on this file in this incredible ministry.

There is no doubt that asthma is a serious health issue that needs to be properly addressed. That's why I am so proud to be a part of a government that supports people living with asthma in the province of Ontario. Together, we will create a connected, sustainable, public health care system that truly works for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please inform the members of this Legislature of how our government's plan to modernize the health care system will benefit people across Ontario living with asthma?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you again to the member. We have committed to the people of Ontario to build a modern, sustainable and integrated health system and to end hallway health care. Every step of the way, we have put people at the centre of our decisions. We are empowering our nurses and doctors to provide better, faster, integrated care.

I know the people living with asthma will appreciate a better connected health care system, one that ensures that they will get connected to the right specialist care, where they don't have to repeat their health care situation over and over again, because all of their care providers will have access to the same health records. These are the kinds of changes that are needed to deliver care that is truly focused on the patient, on their families and on their caregivers.