

## Algonquin College Proclaimed Ontario Hub of Excellence in Nursing Education

**Ottawa, Ont., May 8, 2006** – The Government of Ontario has proclaimed Algonquin College a Hub of Excellence for Operating Room Nursing Education. This announcement emphasizes Algonquin's position as a leader in nursing education and brings with it funding worth \$500,000.

On November 16, 2005, the Ontario Minister of Health and Long Term Care announced funding for Hubs of Excellence in Nursing Education. This announcement was driven by the government's *Wait Times Strategy* that addressed wait times for specific surgeries and fosters collaboration between nursing schools in Ontario.

"As a Hub of Excellence, Algonquin addresses the nursing shortage with a two-fold approach," says Marlene Tosh, Chair of Specialty Programs in Algonquin's School of Health and Community Studies. "Algonquin's students will have the advantage of learning in a leading-edge simulated environment and it also allows nurses in the field to acquire new specialized skills in their own profession."

"The Ontario government is recognizing the critical role colleges play in the delivery of health-care education and we are pleased to be recognized by the province as a Hub of Excellence in Nursing Education," says Robert Gillett, President of Algonquin College. "Five out of every six health care workers receive their training at the College level and this funding will assist Algonquin to continue offering leading-edge nursing education."

"This announcement will help Algonquin enhance its collaboration with other nursing schools and ensure that the College remains responsive to the changing needs of the health care system," says Dr. Barbara Foulds, Chair of Nursing Studies for Algonquin College. "We are leading the way with our Simulation Centre for Health Studies and being proclaimed a Hub of Excellence will help us continue to utilize our state-of-the-art facilities to improve the learning opportunities for our students and working nurses."

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Algonquin's Simulation Centre for Health Studies – Phase II officially opened in November 2005. It is the first fully-equipped Operating Room Suite and Critical Care/Trauma unit in an educational facility in Canada, allowing Algonquin College faculty to recreate clinical environments providing opportunity for inter-professional practice, such as Nurses, Physicians, Respiratory Therapists and Paramedics. Using high-fidelity patient simulators such as SimMan and SimBaby students are able to practice essential psychomotor and decision-making skills and build confidence in a safe environment prior to entering clinical practice.

Algonquin is also partnering with CareConnect, a partner in the Ontario Telehealth Network. CareConnect links hospitals and health care sites in Eastern Ontario to facilitate clinical and educational events. Connectivity occurs through the Smart Systems for Health Agency, a private and secure, high-speed broadband telecommunications network. This partnership will allow Algonquin to share knowledge and best practices with other nursing schools across Ontario.

**About Algonquin College:**

Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology is located in the Nation's Capital and the Ottawa Valley and is the second-largest college in Ontario. Algonquin is the leader in the integration of technology into the learning landscape. Algonquin College has a diverse population of 14,487 full-time students and 34,761 part-time registrations in more than 140 programs and is committed to student success.

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