

Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care

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JUN 28 2007

Barbara Sullivan
Chair
Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council
55 St. Clair Ave. West, 8th Floor
Toronto, ON M4V 2Y7

Dear Ms Sullivan:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the members of the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC) once again for the considerable time and effort given in providing advice on the multiple complex issues in HPRAC's report *Regulation of Health Professions in Ontario: New Directions, April 2006*.

Our government is committed to ensuring that the health profession regulatory system keeps pace with and supports the health care needs of Ontarians. This letter asks the Advisory Council for advice and recommendations on important matters that support this commitment, and in particular addresses issues associated with interprofessional collaboration, patient safety and certain other matters reviewed by the Council. Specifically, I am asking the Council to:

1. Recommend mechanisms to facilitate and support interprofessional collaboration between health Colleges beginning with the development of standards of practice and professional practice guidelines where regulated health professions share the same or similar controlled acts, acknowledging that individual health Colleges independently govern their professions and establish the competencies for their profession.

In HPRAC's analysis, I ask it to take into account, when controlled acts are shared, of public expectations for high quality services no matter which health profession is responsible for delivering care or treatment.

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2. Undertake a review of the scope of practice for registered nurses in the extended class under the *Nursing Act, 1991*, and include in the review the proposals made by the Council of the College of Nurses of Ontario with respect to controlled acts and the practice of registered nurses in the extended class.
3. Examine the authority given to non-physician health professions to prescribe and/or use drugs in the course of their practice under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA) and the health profession Acts. I ask that the Council provide advice specific to each of these professions respecting whether lists, categories or classes of drugs should be prescribed by regulation for the profession, or whether restrictions on prescribing of drugs should be placed in regulation under the respective health profession Act.

I also ask that the Council provide advice on a framework and process for the ongoing evaluation of requests by Colleges for changes to regulations in this regard to ensure that such regulations reflect efficiency, best practices of the profession and provide maximum public protection.

4. With regard to a previous HPRAC report, make recommendations on the currency of, and any additions to, advice provided in relation to the regulation of diagnostic sonographers.
5. I wish to thank the Council for its advice regarding the regulation of personal support workers. I have recently posted the report on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website for public review and comment. I would like the Council now to build upon its report and provide me with further advice.

I recognize with you the extensive health care services provided by personal support workers in numerous environments. HPRAC concluded that steps other than regulation of personal support workers under the RHPA are appropriate for the protection of the public interest at this time, and speak to the fledgling nature of the organizations representing this important group of health care providers.

In its *New Directions* report, HPRAC spoke highly of the evolution of a particular professional association which grew in stages to a professional association with a strong commitment to the public interest, in addition to serving as an advocate for the profession.

I would appreciate HPRAC's advice as to whether a model such as this would be appropriate for personal support workers, what steps would be necessary, and what supports would be required to facilitate the creation of such an association for this sector.

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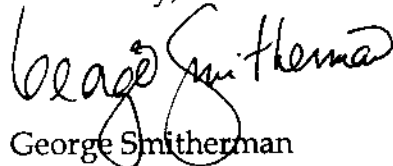
6. Advise whether the practice of dental assistants ought to be regulated under RHPA and if so, what would be the appropriate scope of practice, controlled acts and titles authorized to the profession. Also, I would like the Council to take into account the activities these practitioners undertake with respect to x-rays and other forms of energy and the circumstances in which these are being done.
7. Advise whether paramedics and emergency medical attendants should be regulated under the RHPA, and if so, what would be the appropriate scope of practice, controlled acts and titles authorized to the profession.
8. Review issues relating to the regulation of chiroprody and podiatry and provide advice as to whether and how there should be changes to existing legislation regarding these related professions. Include in your review an analysis of the current model of foot care in Ontario, issues regarding restricted titles, and whether the existing limitations on the podiatrist class of members should continue.

I understand that my request deals with many complex regulatory issues that will take considerable time to complete. I would like HPRAC to plan to provide me with advice and recommendations for item 1 regarding mechanisms to facilitate and support interprofessional collaboration between health Colleges relating to the development of standards of practice and professional practice guidelines, and item 2 regarding a review of the scope of practice for registered nurses in the extended class under the *Nursing Act, 1991* before March 31, 2008.

I recognize the tremendous effort put forward by the Council in delivering its previous advice. Please extend my thanks to the members of Council, both past and present, for their remarkable work in enhancing the quality and safety of health care in Ontario.

I would also like to express my gratitude to you, Barbara, for your leadership and dedication to public service.

Yours truly,



George Smitherman
Minister

cc: Presidents and Registrars of all Colleges under the RHPA
Presidents of associations representing health professionals regulated under RHPA
Chair, Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy-Naturopathy
President, Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors