

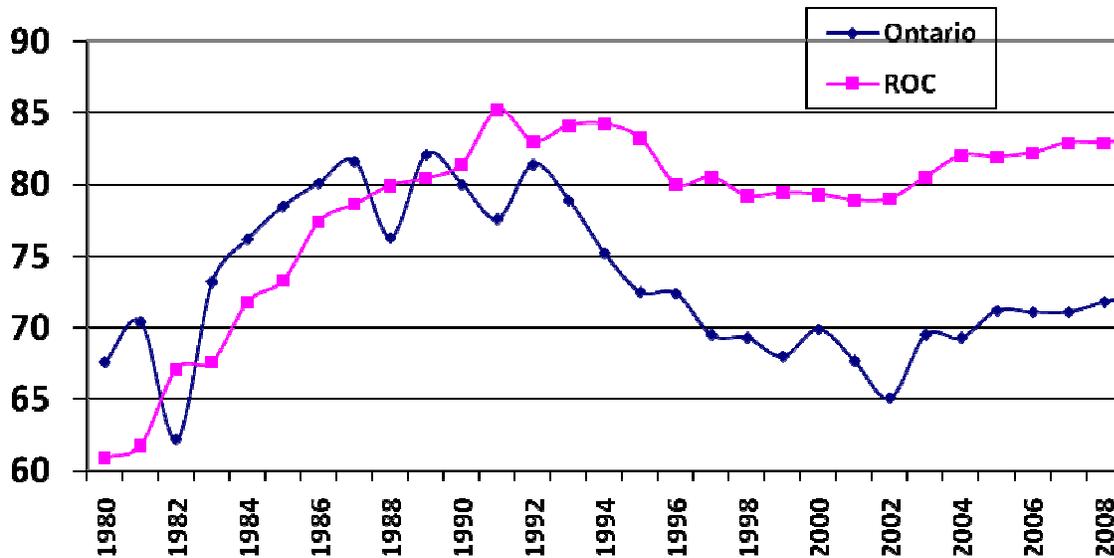
**Discussion : Commitment to Bring Ontario's RN to Population Ratio in line with the rest of the Country**

**Building Nursing Employment**

There are several pressures on the nursing workforce. First, many are approaching retirement age. Latest data show fully 29 per cent of RNs were over the age of 54, which is close to a typical RN retirement age. Also, workloads for many are higher these days, and that contributes to burnout and early departure from the workforce. Statistics back up this impression: We would need 12,527 RNs to return to the RN/population ratio that prevailed in Ontario in 1986, and we would need 14,481 more RNs to catch up with the rest of the country.

After a disastrous decimation of the RN workforce in the 1990s, successive governments worked to reverse the downward trend, resulting in gains in nursing employment and a partial recovery in the number of RNs per population. The government promised to raise nursing employment by 9,000 positions in its second mandate, and they are on their way with 5,579 positions after two years. Given the serious shortfall on RN positions we are asking the government to realize the remaining 3,421 positions in RN positions by the end of its second mandate. Furthermore, in view of the continuing gap with the rest of the country, we are asking all parties to commit to making up more of the gap in the next four years through the net creation of 9,000 more RN FTEs.

**RNs per 10,000 Population: Ontario vs. Rest of Canada (CIHI data)**



*Without disclosing any identifying information, we would like to share with you a few illustrations from our practice that demonstrate the challenges of working without enough RNs.*

**QUESTION 1: Can we count on your Party's support to bring Ontario's RN to population ratio in line with the rest of the country by adopting RNAO's call to increase Ontario's RN workforce by an additional 9000 RN FTEs by 2015, in addition to the previous commitment to hire 9000 nurses by 2011?**

### **Attaining 70% RN Full Employment**

While the government was making progress on nursing employment, it also heeded calls from the RNAO to raise the share of full-time employment. Full-time nurses had fallen below 50 per cent by 1998, and that is unacceptable for any health profession. Too much part-time employment hurts continuity of care and patient outcomes. And it is particularly bad for recent graduates, who need full-time employment to properly integrate into the health system. Thanks to concerted efforts of the government and the nursing profession, the share of full-time employment has risen to 65.5 per cent for RNs and 58 per cent for RPNs. We are getting close to our goal of 70 per cent full-time.

**QUESTION 2: Can we count on your party's support to raise the full-time share of RN employment to 67 per cent in this coming year and to reach 70 per cent full-time employment in all sectors for RNs and RPNs by 2015?**