



Islamophobia

RNAO is committed to a health system and nursing profession that is free from Islamophobia. Islamophobia is contrary to the person-centred, equitable and accessible health system that RNAO believes in and advocates for. Also, Islamophobia, as a social determinant of health, negatively influences the health of Canada's Muslim population.

RNAO recognizes the importance of cultural safety for patient populations, and is committed to ensuring that nurses and all health-care providers are educated and prepared to provide care that is sensitive to all individuals, including those who identify as Muslim or who practice Islam.

Islamophobia in Canada

The history of Islamophobia in Canada is long and complex. However, the issue of Islamophobia became more prominent throughout North America in the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.

The population of Canada includes over one million Muslims – three per cent of the Canadian population. And yet, 46 per cent of Canadians view Islam unfavourably – more than for any other religious tradition. These alarming statistics illustrate that Islamophobia is an ongoing threat within Canada and point to the need for both vigilance and education.

Islamophobia in Canada includes some recent acts of horrific violence. In 2017 six worshippers at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Quebec City were shot to death and five others injured. In 2021, four members of a Muslim family in London, Ontario were run down and killed, leaving a fifth family member orphaned.

RNAO acknowledges and condemns the history of Islamophobia in Canada. We recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every person and support diversity and inclusion in all areas of Canadian society. Specifically, we look forward to a Canada that is free of fear, hatred and discrimination in all its forms against the Islamic religion and Muslims.

Our commitment to action

RNAO will:

- speak out against Islamophobia and condemn all who propagate Islamophobia;

- advocate for a health system that is person-centred, accessible, equitable and, specifically, inclusive of Muslim communities; and
- advocate for a health system safe for Muslim nurses to practice in without fear of hate, prejudice and discrimination.

Our calls to action:

RNAO calls on the government of Canada to implement all recommendations set out in the 2018 report of its standing committee on Canadian heritage, *Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia*. (LINK:

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/CHPC/Reports/RP9315686/chpcrp10/chpcrp10-e.pdf>)

RNAO calls on the government of Ontario to:

- assist with the implementation of the recommendations set out in the 2018 report, *Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia*; (LINK: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/CHPC/Reports/RP9315686/chpcrp10/chpcrp10-e.pdf>); and
- ensure that nursing programs and health-care settings provide cultural safety training.