



RESOLUTIONS REPORT

FROM THE 2019 AGM

Resolution: Funded Nurse Practitioner Interprofessional Collaboration with Midwives

Author: Rochelle Turin

Conflict of Interest: Author is joining Uptown Midwives and Family Wellness

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) advocate to municipal, provincial and federal governments for funding for nurse practitioner collaboration with midwives in the delivery of primary care for women +/- children.

RNAO's CEO and staff met with the resolution author and members of the Association of Ontario Midwives (AOM) in June and again in October 2019 to explore potential approaches to advance the resolution. This included discussion of collaboration with nurse practitioners and possible strategies related to advocacy activities. Following the meetings, a brief example of a collaborative proposal was submitted to RNAO by AOM and along with further input from AOM will help shape possible next steps. RNAO's CEO submitted this proposal for funding to MOH.

RNAO's Nurse Practitioner Task Force: Vision for Tomorrow, announced at the 94th Annual General Meeting in April 2019, will release its groundbreaking report later this year. It will include a set of critical recommendations related to future NP practice. The report focuses on optimizing the NP role in an integrated system that will have implications for collaborative practice across professions and sectors.

Resolution: Re-implement the 2015 Sex Education Curriculum

Authors: Rainbow Nursing Interest Group on behalf of Community Health Nurses' Initiatives Group, Pediatric Nurses Interest Group, Maternal and Child Nurses' Interest Group, and the Sudbury & District Chapter

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) lobby the government to re-implement the revised 2015 sex education curriculum to reflect the diverse sexual health needs of children and youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that RNAO continue to encourage RNs and NPs working in educational settings at the primary, secondary and/or tertiary levels to teach and work under the provisions of the 2015 sex education curriculum and as such seek to be inclusive of all gender and sexual identities and expressions.

RNAO is committed to speaking out against discrimination and social exclusion based on sexual orientation and gender identity. RNAO was extremely concerned with Premier Doug Ford government's 2018 announcement to scrap the 2015 sexual education curriculum, which had been updated by the former government to include sections on gender identity and same sex marriage. In July 2018, RNAO initiated an Action Alert in response to Premier Ford's vow to change the curriculum. Over 2,300 members responded to tell Premier Ford, and Ministers Lisa Thompson and Minister Christine Elliott to keep the 2015 sex-education curriculum.

RNAO continued to monitor activities related to establishing a revised sex education component in the curriculum and advocated for a return to the 2015 curriculum. Although the Progressive Party passed a resolution known as R4 at its November 2018 convention, to remove gender identity from the curriculum, the government reverted to the 2015 curriculum it initially sought to eliminate just prior to the start of the 2019 school year. While there are some provisos that have essentially moved specific content to later years, different from the original 2015 curriculum, and added communication with parents related to timing of content areas to be addressed in class, the curriculum does provide students with updated sex education. RNAO continues to monitor and speak out against any and all forms of discrimination and recommends societal supports that foster inclusivity. RNAO will follow up with the Rainbow Nursing Interest Group to determine any next steps in the coming year.

Resolution: Integrated Health Services and Research for Persons Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Authors: Janson Chan; So-Yan Seto and Susan Pearce, co-founder of the Ontario Autism Coalition

Conflicts of interest: Authors have a family member diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Janson founded a not-for-profit organization, Autism Teenage Partnership, which services teenagers diagnosed with ASD. Susan is the co-founder of the Ontario Autism Coalition.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) advocates for an integrated approach to ASD using research for evidence-based decision-making for clients and families, with a determined effort to set policy across systems that can ensure positive changes leading to a healthier way of life for persons, their families and communities.

RNAO has held discussions with the authors of the resolution. These discussions addressed both analysis of the government's response to ASD and strategies for advancing an evidence-based, integrated approach to ASD for a healthier way of life. Due to the history of the mover – their family-related experiences, direct work in this area, and their relationships with the community and organizations that advocate for people with ASD – these discussions have resulted in directions for future steps. Following these discussions, RNAO held meetings with MPP Lisa Gretzky regarding her Private Member's Bill (Bill 64, Noah and Gregory's Law) and its applicability to the resolution. Bill 64 would eliminate wait times for developmental disability services and ensure no one goes without the developmental supports they need as they transition to adulthood. It was determined that while Bill 64 is relevant to the resolution and worthy of RNAO support, it does not directly address the full intent of the resolution. Work on this resolution is ongoing, and plans for next steps are being developed.

Resolution: Loneliness as a Priority Health Issue for Older People

Author: Marjan Kasirlou

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) advocates for the growing population of older adults and lobby with municipal, provincial and federal governments to increase funding for social support services for older people to tackle loneliness and social isolation. In addition, RNAO advocates the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care develop strategies to build capacities, mobilize community partners, create practice guidelines for health-care providers that include proper screening and approaching at risk citizens, diagnosis, prevention, and dedicating appropriate support services for older people in order to increase their involvement in the community, and in turn, reduce loneliness and its potential risks.

In July 2019, the provincial government led public consultations on Ontario's Seniors Strategy. RNAO followed up with the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility in spring 2020 to advocate for the strategy release, inclusive of a plan to advance the health and wellness of Ontario's seniors. In October 2019, the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility committed to an investment of \$14.1 million to support more than 300 senior active living centre programs across the province. This investment is critical to mitigating the risk of social isolation as it supports seniors to remain active, socially engaged and connected. RNAO will also keep abreast of current literature for valid and reliable screening tools related to loneliness in the older adult population. RNAO will disseminate relevant resources to members as appropriate.

Resolution: Strategies to Address Mental Health Crisis Faced by Post-secondary School Institutions

Authors: Lauren Allison, Arani Baskaran, Sarah Abdel Gabar, Claudia Molinaro and Saffeyyah Raji

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) advocates to municipal, provincial and federal governments for improved access to mental health resources for post-secondary students.

Progress on this resolution is thematically linked to RNAO's ongoing advocacy for child and youth mental health related to a 2018 resolution put forth on behalf of Pediatric Nurses Interest Group (PedNIG) with support from Mental Health Nursing Interest Group (MHNIG). In March 2020, RNAO's policy team engaged with the Ministry of Health to provide feedback on the new Mental Health and Addictions strategy, Roadmap to Wellness, and advocated for improved access and quality of mental health services for Ontarians of all ages. RNAO will continue to lobby for the expansion of frontline services for children and youth in the community and in the post-secondary school system. We will hold the government accountable to investments and timelines promised, such as the Mindability initiative that can directly benefit youth and young adults experiencing depression and anxiety and the expansion of integrated Youth Wellness Hubs.

RNAO's policy team engaged with an RNAO member who works at the University of Toronto with post-secondary students facing mental health challenges. The member's recommendations and experiences with community wellness capacity were considered by RNAO in advancing this initiative. RNAO will continue to promote a "whole of community" approach meaning the government, post-secondary school institutions, student associations, health-care providers, and community agencies/organizations have set roles and responsibilities to make student mental health a priority. RNAO will leverage its existing partnerships with organizations such as Children's Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). RNAO will also continue to foster new relationships with associations such as the Ontario University & College Health Association (OUCHA) to address the spectrum of student mental health needs that are mounting in post-secondary school institutions. Mental health was also the subject of an RNAO COVID-19 webinar held on June 8, 2020. It included representatives of CMHO, the Ontario branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association of Canada and Addictions and Mental Health Ontario.

Resolution: Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) Funding

Author: Jane Radey on behalf of the RN First Assistant Interest Group

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) lobby the provincial government for ongoing funding for the creation of new RNFA positions in Ontario when and where needed.

RNAO has a long-standing history of advocating for government funding for RNFA positions. RNAO understands the critical role RNFAs fill in the health system, ensuring patients experience optimal outcomes throughout the perioperative experience due to their unique skill set, educational background and training in the field. RNAO was pleased with previous commitments to government funding of new RNFA positions in 2006/2007 and again in 2012. As elected surgeries ramp up to normal levels (due COVID-19 related cancellations), RNAO will continue to partner with the RN First Assistant Interest Group to advocate for new funding of RNFA positions, ensuring registered nurses with this special competency are able to practise in the perioperative field, utilizing their expertise and skill to positively impact surgical wait times and ultimately, population health in Ontario.

Resolution: Psychotherapy Insurance

Authors: Stacey Roles and Kamini Kalia on behalf of the Mental Health Nursing Interest Group (MHNIG)

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) advocates for accessibility to psychotherapy through billing insurances inclusive of Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIB), Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) and private insurances companies (Sunlife, Manulife, Great West Life), amongst others to be inclusive of RNs and NPs who will be authorized to perform the controlled act of psychotherapy once proclaimed.

RNAO has long advocated for the independent initiation and provision of the controlled act of psychotherapy for nurses and has proudly represented the voice of members that have provided expert, safe and compassionate psychotherapy services for years. A policy consultant with RNAO has developed contacts in the insurance industry through ongoing work with the Nurse Practitioner Task force: Vision for Tomorrow. These relationships will be leveraged to make progress on insurance coverage for psychotherapy delivered by RNs and NPs.

Furthermore, members of RNAO's nursing and health policy team met with executive members of MHNIG to discuss the current status of psychotherapy and brainstorm solutions to address challenges related to insurance for RN and NP psychotherapists. RNAO will consider various approaches to improving the psychotherapy insurance process including an environmental scan of various insurance companies' current policies. RNAO embraces ongoing collaboration with MHNIG regarding this.

Resolution: Wage Parity Among Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners in Ontario

Author: Jennifer Burgess

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) support Nurse Practitioners by advocating to the provincial government for wage parity among all Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners in Ontario.

At the 94th Annual General Meeting in April 2019, RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun announced the Nurse Practitioner Task Force: Vision for Tomorrow to address the current gaps in access to care for the people of Ontario. The work of the task force began with a mandate to optimize the NP role in an integrated system, with objectives highlighting the key roles of NPs across settings and sectors, the extent of current NP utilization and facilitators and barriers to NPs practising to their full scope.

The Nurse Practitioner Task Force: Vision for Tomorrow report, due to be released later this year, explicitly covers wage parity for NPs across all sectors and settings. This watershed document will serve as an important advocacy activity in the topic area covered by this resolution. Furthermore, on May 12, 2020 RNAO released a groundbreaking report titled Enhancing Community Care for Ontarians (ECCO 3.0), which offers a renewed vision for primary and community care services. Included in the report and media release by RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun and RNAO president Angela Cooper Braithwaite were appropriate considerations for improved provider experience such as working conditions and wage parity for nurses across all sectors.

Resolution: Ontario Child Advocate

Authors: Sarah Gallie, Chantal Singh and Kristin Gallant on behalf of the Pediatric Nurses Interest Group

Conflict of Interest: No known conflict of interest

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) actively lobby the Ontario government to reinstate the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007 in continued efforts to support children and youth in Ontario who are at the highest risk.

There is ongoing advocacy work related to this resolution from RNAO to elevate the voices of vulnerable children and youth in the province and help to bridge the gaps across sectors to ensure their health and wellbeing. In 2019, RNAO engaged directly with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) to understand their position as a key stakeholder on this issue and maintain up-to-date with resources pertaining to child welfare in the province.

RNAO is committed to following the proposed transformational changes to Ontario's child welfare system that was initiated by the online survey and consultations announced by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services in August 2019 and will actively lobby the government to address the over-representation and disparities in outcomes for marginalized children and youth. RNAO commends the invaluable advocacy the former Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth provided and will lobby for the advocacy functions that were not assumed by the Ontario Ombudsman to be upheld and strengthened by the government.

RNAO welcomed the Ontario government's decision to issue a moratorium for supports and services to be maintained for youth who reached the cut-off age during the COVID-19 pandemic as a crucial step in the right direction.