



RNAO

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
L'Association des infirmières et infirmiers
autorisés de l'Ontario

Sophie Kiwala, MPP
Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children and Youth Services
15th Floor
56 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, ON M5S 2S3

Sent by email: Sophie.Kiwala@ontario.ca; rosa.gutierrez@ontario.ca

June 26, 2017

RE: RNAO request to meet about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

Dear Ms. Kiwala,

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) was delighted to acknowledge the 2017 Ontario Budget as a progressive budget.¹ Among the measures that RNAO supported was the investment of \$26 million over four years to increase awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and how it can be prevented as well expanding support to children, youth and families affected by the disorder.²

RNAO has been actively engaged for several years advocating for a comprehensive strategy for FASD. In 2012, RNAO members unanimously passed a resolution at our Annual General Meeting, advocating for an integrated FASD provincial strategy to address prevention, early diagnosis, evidence-based interventions and supports for individuals and families, and ongoing professional education to enhance capacity of front-line service providers. Such a comprehensive strategy is consistent with advice provided by the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Ontario Network of Expertise (FASD ONE)³ and what Parliamentary Assistant Granville Anderson heard from many organizations and individuals including the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, the Select Committee on Developmental Services, and RNAO.⁴ RNAO and its expert members have been urging action on this critical file to the Select Committee on Developmental Services,⁵ at community roundtables,⁶ via education directed to nurses and other health care providers,^{7 8} and through the media.^{9 10 11}

We are now asking to meet with you to discuss ways that RNAO is able to support the province in preventing FASD and improving the health and daily lives of people with FASD and their loved ones. Specifically, we want to dialogue about the implementation of the six FASD initiatives identified in the 2017 budget:

- create one-stop access to information/training resources;
- provide funding for 56 FASD workers to support approximately 2,500 Ontarians with FASD;
- support parent support networks;
- increase access to FASD initiatives developed by Indigenous partners;

- establish a consultation group to provide advice and feedback to inform implementation planning and prioritization of efforts; and
- create a research fund and invest in knowledge mobilization.¹²

At the broader systems level, RNAO is also interested in discussing a comprehensive, integrated FASD strategy for the province that will address this critical health and social crisis.

Josephine Mo, my executive assistant, will follow up to set up a convenient time for us to meet.

Warm regards,



Doris Grinspun, RN, MSN, PhD, LLD(hon), O.ONT
Chief Executive Officer, RNAO

Cc. Hon. Michael Coteau, Minister of Children and Youth Services

¹Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (2017). RNAO hails progressive budget. Toronto: Author.
<http://rnao.ca/news/media-releases/2017/04/27/rnao-hails-progressive-budget>

² Sousa, C. (2017). *2017 Ontario Budget: A Stronger, Healthier Ontario*. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 117.
<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2017/budget2017.pdf>

³Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Ontario Network of Expertise (FASD ONE) (2014). *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD): A Call to Action in Ontario*. Toronto: Author.
<http://www.fasdontario.ca/cms/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/FASD-call-to-action-r6-HiRes.pdf>

⁴Anderson, 2015. *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Provincial Roundtable Report: A Report from Parliamentary Assistant Granville Anderson to the Minister of Children and Youth Services*. Toronto: Author, 5.
http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/specialneeds/fasd/FASD_Roundtable_Report.pdf

⁵Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (2014). *Submission to the Select Committee on Developmental Services*. London, Ontario. January 13, 2014.
http://rnao.ca/sites/rnao-ca/files/RNAO_submission_to_Select_Committee_on_Developmental_Services.pdf

⁶Anderson, G. (2015). *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Provincial Roundtable Report*.

⁷Di Costanzo, M. (2013). A Troubled Life. *RN Journal*, November/December 2013, 13-17.
<http://rnao.ca/sites/rnao-ca/files/RNJ-NovDec.pdf>

⁸Fletcher-Stackhouse, T. & Mueller, M. (2013). Webinar: Pregnancy and Substance Use. Toronto: Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.
<http://rnao.ca/bpg/initiatives/mental-health-addictions-initiative/pregnancy-and-substance-abuse>

⁹Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (2014). Act now to help persons living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and their caregivers: RNAO says. Toronto: Author.
<http://rnao.ca/news/media-releases/2014/01/13/act-now-help-persons-living-fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-and-their>

¹⁰Gilbert, C. (2014). Cost of FASD will snowball: Ontario nurses. *Our London*. January 14, 2014.
<https://www.ourlondon.ca/news-story/4313804-cost-of-fasd-will-snowball-ontario-nurses/>

¹¹Priest, L. Educating Austin: supporting kids with fetal alcohol syndrome. *Globe and Mail*, January 4, 2013.
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/parenting/educating-austin-supporting-kids-with-fetal-alcohol-syndrome/article6968131/>

¹²Sousa, *2017 Ontario Budget: A Stronger, Healthier Ontario*, 117.