

April 17, 2020

Doris Grinspun RN, PhD, LLD(hon), Dr(hc), FAAN, O.ONT.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario  
158 Pearl Street  
Toronto, ON M5H 1L3

**Re: Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario exceptional support during the COVID-19 response**

Dear Dr. Grinspun,

As the Chief Nursing Officer and Director of Health Promotion for Ottawa Public Health (OPH), I am writing to convey our sincere appreciation for the exceptional support of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) during the COVID-19 response.

During this challenging time with the COVID-19 pandemic, the RNAO was able to take prompt action to support OPH to accelerate our efforts to build nursing capacity in the early days of the response. Through the partnership of the RNAO's VIANurse program, OPH was able to quickly enhance its capacity for triaging, test results, case management and contact tracing by an additional 100 nurses, so that service could be provided 7 days a week, without delay. The sudden surge in demand for nurses to support the people of Ottawa could not have been addressed without their support.

RNAO's work with the OPH highlights the importance of collaboration during this crisis and has been very relevant across the province. Within 72 hours of contacting the RNAO, OPH was onboarding RNAO nurses. As RNAO members, these nurses had the latest COVID-19 knowledge, tools and resources. In addition, they had already been confirmed to be in good standing with the College of Nurses of Ontario. RNAO's capacity to rapidly respond and their ongoing support continues to be a tremendous support during this critical time.

As witnessed around the world and from coast to coast to coast in Canada, nurses have an incredible and essential role in the response to COVID-19. The strength of nurses during this response is remarkable while they put their health and the health of their families at risk to support others. The work of RNAO and nurses support the well-being of all Ontarians and represents the importance of health care in our province and exemplifies how nurses are vital to shaping the health system.

OPH, including in particular our Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Vera Etches, greatly appreciate the ongoing leadership and collaboration of RNAO.

Sincerely,



Esther Moghadam  
Director, Health Promotion & Chief Nursing Officer  
Ottawa Public Health

CC: Doug Ford, Premier, Government of Ontario  
Hon Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Ontario  
Helen Angus, Deputy Minister of Health, Ontario  
Matt Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health  
Dr. Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health, Ottawa Public Health