



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

Hon. Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister
Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

December 21, 2016

RE: Access to OHIP for all residents of Ontario

Dear Minister Hoskins,

I am writing you about a campaign that RNAO endorses and for which we would like your support.

As a physician who has worked with refugees you have witnessed firsthand the horrible impact when people cannot get access to the health care they need. As a humanitarian committed to health equity, your work demonstrates a commitment to ensuring that all people receive the services they need to be healthy and well.

Yet as Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care you are presiding over a health-care system where an estimated 500,000 residents did not have OHIP coverage for the whole, or part, of 2014, the most current year for which we have data.

Ontario has a system of unequal health insurance coverage based on immigration status, type of application submitted, length of stay and other conditions such as type of work contract. Too many residents do not have OHIP coverage. These include: newly landed immigrants; in-Canada migrants newly approved for permanent residency; those awaiting response to inland immigration sponsorship, humanitarian and compassionate applications; and returning Canadians in the three-month waiting period. There is growing evidence that lack of coverage for these groups is having damaging effects on their health while also endangering public health and the health of other Ontarians.

Registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and nursing students are committed to human dignity, inclusivity, equity, and social justice. As nurses we have to step up and speak out for healthy public policies.

This is why we are supporting the OHIP for All campaign. This campaign does not include medical tourism and RNAO continues to urge the province for a legislated ban on health-care organizations creating for-profit programs to treat people from abroad on a pay-for-treatment basis.

We urge you as Ontario's Minister of Health and Long- Term Care to develop a comprehensive government policy that ensures access to OHIP for all residents, regardless of immigration status. We know there are some immediate steps that could be taken to advance access to the uninsured. We join with others in the OHIP for All campaign and call on your leadership to fill the remaining gap in health coverage and leave no Ontarian behind.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doris Grinspun", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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

cc. Alyson Rowe, Director of Policy, Minister's office Alyson.rowe@ontario.ca