



**RNAO feedback on proposed amendments  
to regulation 778 of the *Ministry of  
Correctional Services Act, 1990***

Submitted to the Corrections Policy Unit,  
Ministry of the Solicitor General, via  
Ontario's Regulatory Registry

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The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) is the professional association in Ontario representing registered nurses (RNs), nurse practitioners (NPs), and nursing students in all roles and sectors, including correctional nursing. Since 1925, RNAO has advocated for healthy public policy, promoted excellence in nursing practice, increased nurses' contributions to shaping the health system, and influenced decisions that affect nurses and the public they serve.

RNAO welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Ministry of the Solicitor General, Corrections Policy Unit, on proposed amendments to Regulation 778 under the *Ministry of Correctional Services Act, 1990*, as posted on Ontario's Regulatory Registry.

### **Amendments related to independent reviews of segregation placements**

RNAO supports proposed amendments to the regulation that replaces the current requirement for the Superintendent to conduct a review of a segregation placement once in every five-day period with an independent review process. These amendments respond to compelling evidence of currently ineffective and inadequate segregation reviews as documented by Ontario's Independent Advisor on Corrections Reform (Sapers, 2017a, 2017b) and the Ontario Ombudsman (Dube, 2017).

### **Amendments related to length of disciplinary segregation**

RNAO supports proposed amendments to the regulation that would reduce the maximum length of disciplinary segregation ("close confinement") as a disciplinary measure from thirty days to fifteen days. These amendments would once again respond to the evidence demonstrated in the reports previously mentioned and align the regulation with current operational policy.

RNAO continues to urge the Ministry of the Solicitor General to comply with international human rights law by limiting the use of solitary confinement as a measure of last resort for as short a time as possible (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, 2015, 2016b). As segregation is a harm in itself, it is disturbing that although the average custodial population has decreased over the last decade, the number of people sent to segregation has been rising (Sapers, 2017b). Segregation is all the more dangerous for vulnerable individuals and so must be prohibited for those at risk including pregnant women and those who have recently given birth; people with mental health and/or addition disabilities; and those at risk of self harm and/or suicide (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, 2017b; Sapers, 2017b).

In order to better address the health needs of people who are incarcerated, including those who are vulnerable and at heightened risk of poor health outcomes and death, RNAO continues to urge the province to transfer responsibility for health services from the Ministry of the Solicitor General to the Ministry of Health (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, 2016a, 2016b, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b).

Thank you for considering this feedback.

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