

**Ministry of Health  
and Long-Term Care**

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**Ministère de la Santé  
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June 13, 2019

HLTC2968IT-2019-57

Ms. Cheryl Evans  
President  
College of Nurses of Ontario  
101 Davenport Road  
Toronto ON M5R 3P1

Dear Ms. Evans:

As was articulated in the 2019 Ontario Budget, we are committed to enabling health professions to use their education and training more effectively by expanding the scope of practice for certain regulated health professionals.

One way that we can achieve our vision, is to ensure that patients of Nurse Practitioners (NPs) have access to appropriate diagnostic testing. To this end, I have asked ministry staff to work with the College of Nurses of Ontario (College) to authorize NPs to order magnetic resonance imaging tests and computed tomography scans and to perform point-of care testing. I am expecting that this will be implemented by Winter 2020 and that the College will have developed the necessary infrastructure to support these independent authorities.

You are also likely aware that our government is committed to streamlining care pathways to make connections easier in the system, improving access to minor and routine care in the community and increasing patient choice in where to obtain health care services. Recognizing the integral role that Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) play in helping to achieve these commitments, I would like the Council of the College of Nurses of Ontario to make the necessary regulatory amendments to authorize RPNs to independently initiate the following procedures:

- Irrigating, probing, debriding and packing of a wound below the dermis or below a mucous membrane;
- Venipuncture to establish peripheral intravenous access and maintain patency, using a solution of normal saline (0.9 per cent), in circumstances in which the individual requires medical attention and delaying venipuncture is likely to be harmful to the individual;

Ms. Cheryl Evans

- Those that, for the purpose of assisting an individual with health management activities, requires putting an instrument, beyond the individual's labia majora and for the purpose of assessing an individual requires putting an instrument, hand or finger beyond the individual's labia majora; and
- Those that, for the purposes of assessing an individual or assisting an individual with health management activities, requires putting an instrument or finger into an artificial opening into the individual's body.

To ensure that this work considers all possible perspectives and that the appropriate safeguards are in place for patient care, I am expecting the College to actively consult with system partners. I would like the College to undertake this work immediately with a view to submitting the regulation to the ministry for my review no later than June 30, 2020.

I understand that there may be parameters that need to be in place to ensure that RPNs who are independently initiating these procedures do so in a safe and competent manner and that the College will have in place measures to maintain patient safety. This may include the College requiring RPNs to demonstrate that they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and judgment.

I would like to thank you for your continued collaboration in ensuring that patients, their families and loved ones receive the best nursing care in the province. I look forward to receiving your proposal and thank you for your proposal related to Registered Nurse prescribing which is another important step in meeting our vision of the health care system.

Sincerely,



Christine Elliott  
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

- c: Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
Patrick Dicerni, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy and Planning Division  
Allison Henry, Director, Health Workforce Regulatory Oversight Branch  
Anne Coghlan, Executive Director, College of Nurses of Ontario  
Marnee Wilson, President, Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario  
Linda Keirl, President, Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario  
Angela Cooper Brathwaite, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario  
Vicki McKenna, President, Ontario Nurses' Association