

Position of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario on the Recruitment of  
Internationally Educated Nurses  
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Consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the position of the International Council of Nurses, the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) recognizes the human right of individual nurses to migrate. RNAO has been a strong advocate in support of internationally educated nurses (IENs) who choose to make Ontario their home through such mechanisms as endorsing permanent funding for bridging programs for internationally educated nurses in our provincial political platform. While recognizing the right of individual nurses to migrate, the International Council of Nurses also "acknowledges the adverse effect that international migration may have on health care quality in countries seriously depleted of their nursing workforce."

The tension between the human right to migrate of health professionals working in faltering health care systems, and the human right to health of people living in developing countries, is sometimes presented as being at the heart of the dilemma of international recruitment of health care professionals. This tension is heightened by worsening global trends of economic and health inequalities on the one side and shortage of health care professionals on the other.

RNAO's position is that the individual human right to migrate is not in question. What is in question are health human resources (HHR) policies in wealthy countries such as Canada that target HHR from poor countries as a solution to domestically created nursing shortages. RNAO advocates for sustainable local solutions, designed to tackle the specific needs of jurisdictions and communities, to address the shortage of nursing and other health care professionals in Ontario and across Canada.

#### **RNAO's Position**

- **Ensure that government and those health organizations funded by the government do not engage in international recruitment of nurses and other health professionals.**
- **Ensure that internationally educated nurses who make Ontario their new home face no systemic barriers to practice their profession.**
- **Establish permanent funding for existing upgrading and bridging programs for internationally educated nurses who make Ontario their new home.**

#### **Strengthen local HHR capacity by**

- **Substantive investments in nursing education across the country, including infrastructure, faculty and nursing seats.**
- **Continued investment in workplace health, including adequate workloads, employment arrangements that match nurses' needs, professional opportunities, and best management practices.**
- **Continued investments in patient safety and quality patient care, including continuity of care and care provider, best practices in clinical care, and improved interdisciplinary work.**