

Standing Committee on Social Policy
Room 1405
Whitney Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

March 3, 2009

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) is the professional organization for registered nurses who practice in all roles and sectors across Ontario. RNAO is pleased to present this submission on Bill 141, An Act to amend the *Regulated Health Professions Act* to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

Like many jurisdictions across North America,¹ the province of Ontario is seeking to prevent additional tragic deaths of patients during cosmetic surgery at independent health facilities.² As this has been an issue identified in Ontario at least since the death of a 44-year woman, Toni Sullivan, in 1989,^{3 4} RNAO urges the immediate adoption of measures that will increase public safety. This is particularly an issue for women's health and safety as women are often disproportionately affected by cultural norms of beauty that generate demand for cosmetic surgery. In addition, power differentials based on gender may pose a barrier for female patients being able to ask pertinent questions of their health care provider in order to make an informed decision.

In the interest of public safety, accountability, and transparency, RNAO welcomes this amendment that will provide for the direct observation of a member in practice.

The details of how this amendment will be implemented are crucial from both the standpoint of public safety and improving access to health care by supporting a robust, efficient health care system where members practice to their full scope. We will look forward to further consultation with the relevant regulatory colleges and stakeholders to help ensure continuous improvements in the health care system for all Ontarians.

Kind regards,



Doris Grinspun RN, MSN, PhD (cand) O.ONT.
Executive Director

References

¹ Lin, R. (2008). Push for stricter plastic surgery swells in wake of death of Kanye West's mother. *Los Angeles Times*. May 26, 2008.

² White, P. (2008). New rules loom in cosmetic surgery. *Globe and Mail*. April 10, 2008.

³ Talaga, T. (2007). Cosmetic surgery crackdown begins. *Toronto Star*, November 20, 2007.

⁴ Cribb, R. (2007). Surgical watchdog dithered. *Toronto Star*, September 27, 2007.