

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

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère de la Santé
et des Soins de longue durée**

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Dear College Presidents and Registrars/Executive Directors:

My duty as Minister under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA) includes ensuring that the health professions are regulated in the public interest. As part of that, my responsibility is to ensure that all Ontarians have access to information that is relevant and timely, useful and accurate -- information that evokes public confidence and enhances the public's ability to make informed decisions about their care. It is the right thing to do.

To deliver on my commitment to providing Ontarians with the information they need, I am asking you to share more information and make our system more transparent when it comes to regulating our health professions. I am asking you not only to improve transparency, but to work together with each other and with us to make this a reality.

I know that many colleges are working individually or together through organizations such as the Advisory Group on Regulatory Excellence (AGRE) to improve transparency. I also know that many of you have dedicated resources to improve transparency. I am asking that all colleges move collectively to make transparency a priority.

Specifically, I am asking each Council and transitional Council to:

1. Make transparency a priority objective in each of your strategic plans, if it is not yet a stated priority. This is crucial because it places transparency at the heart of what you do, and will ensure it remains a priority in the future.
2. Take concrete steps to develop and establish measures that will continuously increase transparency in College processes and decision-making, and that will make more information available to Ontarians.

Your transparency initiatives should include:

1. How you will be strengthening existing measures that the College or transitional Council has in place to enhance transparency; and,

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2. New measures that the Council or transitional Council will develop and implement to increase transparency in College processes, decision-making and information disclosure.

In the coming days, Suzanne McGurn, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Human Resources Strategy Division, will be writing to you regarding these initiatives.

In addition, I ask Colleges with inspection programs to publicly disclose full, detailed, useful information with respect to each inspection they conduct. These reports should include, at a minimum:

- the purpose of the inspection;
- the results of that inspection;
- the reasons for those results;
- any deficiencies identified by the inspectors; and
- any conditions that apply.

These publicly disclosed reports must bear in mind applicable principles of fairness and privacy.

I appreciate that it may take time for some Colleges to adjust their processes and procedures so that they can fully disclose detailed information about their inspections and other transparency measures; this may include the introduction of new or the amending of existing by-laws.

However, it is in the public interest for these measures to be undertaken as soon as possible. Making more detailed, timely, accurate and clear information relating to inspection reports publicly available, as well as other transparency measures, is important to maintaining confidence in Ontario's health professions regulatory system, and in our health care system more broadly.

Therefore, I ask that College Councils and transitional Councils report back to my Ministry by December 1, 2014, on the specific steps that will be taken to make all of these transparency measures possible. Please report back to the following ministry official:

Suzanne McGurn, Assistant Deputy Minister
Health Human Resources Strategy Division
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
900 Bay Street
Macdonald Block, 2nd Floor, Room M2-61
Toronto ON M7A 1R3
E-mail: Suzanne.McGurn@ontario.ca

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My hope is that we can work collaboratively to implement these steps as we work together to maintain the public's trust in our health care system.

However, as Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, my ultimate responsibility is to the people of Ontario. I reserve the right to take any and all necessary measures to ensure that the public interest remains paramount, including exercising the powers reserved to me under subsection 5(1) of the RHPA including the ability to require Councils to do anything that, in my opinion, is necessary or advisable to carry out the intent of the RHPA and the health profession Acts.

I am confident that all College Councils and transitional Councils will undertake these necessary initiatives to improve transparency in a way that serves and protects the public interest. I hope you will join with me to ensure that, together, we can maintain public confidence in Ontario's health care system. That is our collective duty.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Hoskins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister