

## College of Nurses of Ontario Successfully Prosecutes Illegal Practitioner



THE STANDARD OF CARE.

### *For Immediate Release*

June 26, 2008 (Toronto) The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) has successfully pursued charges against an Ontario resident who repeatedly held herself out as a nurse without having the legal authority to do so.

The judge found Luanne Joy Vendittelli guilty of one count of claiming to be a nurse and three counts of using the protected title Registered Nurse (RN), contrary to the Nursing Act, 1991.

CNO argued for a severe penalty, given Vendittelli's past conduct. The judge fined Vendittelli \$25,000 per count, amounting to a total fine of \$100,000. The judge also imposed a two-year probation order.

"Individuals who pass themselves off as a nurse without the proper qualifications are a threat to public safety and undermine the integrity of the nursing profession," says CNO Director of Investigations and Hearings, Karen McGovern, RN. "CNO takes such matters very seriously, and given Vendittelli's past actions, we felt she should be prosecuted to the fullest extent."

In 1996, CNO revoked Vendittelli's certificate of registration following a finding of professional misconduct. Then in 2001, Vendittelli was convicted of being an illegal practitioner after starting a community paediatric nursing business. On this occasion, Vendittelli was fined \$9,800.

In the most recent case, Vendittelli secured a position as a nurse in charge of coordinating a research project. About four months into her employment, the facility learned that Vendittelli was listed on CNO's website ([www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org)) as an illegal practitioner. Following an investigation, CNO prosecuted Vendittelli for repeatedly violating the Nursing Act.

In delivering its decision, the court noted that Vendittelli appeared incorrigible and in need of a very significant fine to address her persistent disregard of the law.

"This case emphasizes how crucial it is for nurse employers to confirm registration with CNO before hiring," says McGovern. "CNO maintains a register of all of its members. Anyone considering employing a nurse is encouraged to call CNO to confirm that the individual is currently entitled to practise nursing in Ontario."

The College of Nurses of Ontario is the regulatory body for Ontario's 145,000 Registered Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses. Its mission is to protect the public's right to quality nursing services by providing leadership to the nursing profession in self-regulation.

For more information on illegal practitioners and the College's investigations and hearings processes, visit [www.cno.org](http://www.cno.org).

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