

Ministry of Health

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September 2, 2022

Carol Timmings
Acting Executive Director and CEO
College of Nurses of Ontario
101 Davenport Road
Toronto ON M5R 3P1

Dear Ms. Timmings:

Thank you for your reply to my August 4, 2022, letter of direction. The expeditious registration of internationally trained healthcare professionals is an important part of the recently released Plan to Stay Open: Health System Stability and Recovery. The plan will further bolster Ontario's health care workforce, expand innovative models of care, and ensure hospital beds are there for patients when they need them. The ministry appreciates the efforts of the College of Nurses of Ontario in helping the province to implement our plan.

My August 4th letter requested that I be provided with those actions you would be taking to ensure the expeditious registration of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs). Among the actions noted in your reply were two regulation amendments made under the *Nursing Act, 1991* to amend the College's temporary class requirements and remove the 3-year recency of practice requirement.

With respect to the regulation amendments, I would like to know how many IENs you are expecting will benefit from these changes. Additionally, I would like to know what additional tiers of registration you will be focusing on, the numbers of individuals in those tiers and what strategies you have for ensuring that these individuals are also registered expeditiously. If you haven't already done so, I would ask that you develop metrics to monitor, track and report on your progress and to report back to me on what those metrics are.

With respect to the regulation amendments, I would advise the College to proceed with drafting them immediately. Your letter requests approval of an abridged circulation period under section 95 (1.6) of the Health Professions Procedural Code. In this one

Ms. Carol Timmings

instance and given the urgency with which these amendments are needed, I am approving a waiver of the statutory 60-day circulation requirement.

It is my expectation that should these amendments be approved by the government, that the College will immediately begin registering both IENs and other applicants who will benefit from these changes.

The ministry will continue to work with your organization, Ontario Health and other partners on other activities that will help remove barriers to the registration of internationally trained applicants. For example, the province is expanding the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership Program to the Home & Community Care Sector. This program has already helped over 600 internationally educated nurses gain the practice experience and language requirements needed to become nurses in Ontario, and with this expansion we hope to expedite the licensure of more of our internationally educated nurses.

Financial barriers may be stopping some retired or internationally trained nurses from receiving accreditation to resume or begin practicing in Ontario. The province has announced that it will temporarily cover examination, application, and registration fees for retired or internationally trained nurses looking to work in Ontario. We will work with your organization in the coming weeks to launch this important initiative as quickly as possible.

I note with interest your comments about access to education for IENs and the opportunity to not only support the timely registration of almost 6000 IENs, but as well to create a long-term solution to IEN education that would benefit both IEN applicants and the province in effectively planning the nursing workforce. I have asked the ministry to engage you and other key partners, both inside and outside government, to identify the work required to develop this solution.

I welcome the move to greater transparency and reporting of application statistics on the College's website. I am also very interested in receiving additional insights from the registration exam survey on barriers that internationally educated nurses face, and proposals to address those barriers.

We acknowledge that many of the solutions proposed will help expedite registration of internationally trained nurses in the short term. Ministry staff will continue to work with your organization and others on long term ways to modernize the legislative framework governing Ontario's regulated health professionals. We look forward to your continued partnership. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sylvia Jones', written in a cursive style.

Sylvia Jones
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

Ms. Carol Timmings

- c: Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister, Pandemic Response and Recovery
Melanie Fraser, Associate Deputy Minister, Health Services
Sean Court, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy, Planning and French
Language Services Division
Michael Hillmer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Capacity Planning and Analytics
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Dr. Karima Velji, Assistant Deputy Minister, Chief of Nursing and Professional
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Allison Henry, Director, Health Workforce Regulatory Oversight Branch
David Lamb, Director, Capacity and Health Workforce Planning Branch