

## **The Protecting Patients Act, 2017**

May 30, 2017 1:00 P.M.

The Protecting Patients Act supports Ontario's [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#) and ensures that patients in Ontario remain healthy and safe.

### **Regulated Health Professions Act**

Ontario has strengthened its zero tolerance policy on patient sexual abuse by any regulated health professional.

Acts of professional misconduct involving the sexual abuse of a patient are always unacceptable. The relationship between a patient and their regulated health professional must be built upon a foundation of trust, confidence and safety.

The act strengthens the prevention of, and response to, incidents of patient sexual abuse, increases supports for victims of sexual abuse by regulated health professionals and improves regulatory oversight and accountability of health regulatory colleges. Specifically, the act will:

- Expand the list of acts that would result in the mandatory revocation of a regulated health professional's certificate of registration
- Remove the ability of a college to impose gender-based restrictions on a regulated health professional's certificate of registration
- Increase fines for health professionals and organizations that fail to report an allegation of patient sexual abuse to a college
- Increase the required information that colleges must post on their public registers
- Establish a minimum time period of one year after the end of a patient-professional relationship during which activities of a sexual nature between professionals and former patients are prohibited
- Ensure more timely access to funding for patient therapy and counselling in relation to sexual abuse by a regulated health professional.

### **Immunization of School Pupils Amendment Act**

There are some immunizations that children are required to receive in order to attend school to protect themselves, as well as the other children at their school, against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. Ontario will support parents who are seeking to exempt their children from these immunizations to make informed and evidence-based decisions. The act will require

parents to complete an education session before they submit a request to exempt their child from required immunizations for non-medical reasons.

In addition, Ontario will also help parents by improving the way immunizations are reported. Currently, parents and guardians are responsible for reporting the vaccines that their child has received to their local public health unit. The government will now require doctors and other health care providers who administer vaccines that are needed to attend school in Ontario to report vaccines that they administer to children and youth directly to their local public health unit.

### **Seniors Active Living Centres Act**

Ontario is modernizing the Elderly Persons Centres network across the province, to help seniors stay healthy, active and engaged. These Centres support more than 100,000 seniors per year with social and recreational activities ranging from fitness and cooking classes, to Meals-on-Wheels, falls prevention classes and transportation services.

Modernizing the legislation will give Centres more flexibility to be more responsive to community needs and to strengthen the services they offer. Modernized legislation will also encourage them to act as community hubs that provide a central access point for a range of health, social and cultural services.

### **Ontario Drug Benefit Act**

Ontario will make it easier for people to receive coverage for certain prescriptions that are written by nurse practitioners, and in the future, other authorized prescribers.

The province is amending the Ontario Drug Benefit Act to allow products such as diabetes testing strips and nutritional products prescribed by nurse practitioners, and in the future, other authorized prescribers, to be reimbursed under the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program.

The amendments will also enable nurse practitioners, and in the future, other authorized prescribers, to submit a funding application to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for drug products for specific ODB recipients under the Exceptional Access Program (EAP), which facilitates patient access to drugs not listed on the ODB Formulary/Comparative Drug Index, or where no listed alternative is available.

### **Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act; Health Insurance Act; and Public Hospitals Act**

To support modernization of the community laboratory sector, amendments to the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act and the Health Insurance Act will give the ministry more flexibility in regulating and funding the community laboratory sector.

Amendments to the Public Hospitals Act will allow for hospitals to be designated to provide community laboratory services in addition to the laboratory services they currently provide to admitted in-patients and registered out-patients.

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