

IMPROVING PATIENT CARE IN ONTARIO

December 1, 2009

Ontario has passed Third Reading of Bill 179 that would improve access to health care for Ontarians by allowing care providers to use all of their training to perform their jobs and to work more effectively in teams. The proposed legislation would:

Expand What Health Care Providers Do

Health profession Acts (e.g., *Nursing Act*) under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* would be changed to allow providers to perform specific health care actions (controlled acts) or order diagnostic tests:

Health Care Provider	Proposed New Controlled Acts and Powers
Nurse Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply specified forms of energy (e.g., diagnostic ultrasound); • Set or cast a fracture or dislocation of a joint
Pharmacists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prick or lance skin to educate a patient
Physiotherapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell patients their diagnosis • Treat a wound • Insert an instrument, hand or finger into certain body openings for assessment or rehabilitation of the pelvic musculature • Order certain forms of energy (e.g., diagnostic ultrasound)
Midwives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell patients their diagnosis • Give suppository drugs • Place a tube in the nose or mouth of a newborn • Take blood samples from fathers and donors
Dietitians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prick skin to check a patient's blood readings
Medical Radiation Technologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the order of a physician be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - perform procedures below the skin (e.g., give a needle) - suction a tracheotomy - put contrast media into certain body openings and artificial openings into the body - put an instrument, hand or finger past certain body openings and artificial openings into the body.

Professional Practice Changes Regarding Drugs

Health professions Acts (e.g., *Pharmacy Act*) under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* would be changed to give providers the power to administer, prescribe, dispense, compound (mix), sell and use drugs as follows:

Health Care Provider	Drug Authorities Proposed to be Added
Chiropodists and Podiatrists	Give a patient certain substances by inhalation
Dental hygienists	Prescribe, dispense, sell or mix certain drugs
Dentists	Sell or mix drugs (can already prescribe and dispense)
Midwives	Give a patient any substance on the order of a physician
Naturopaths	Prescribe, dispense, mix and sell certain drugs.
Nurse practitioners	Prescribe, dispense, mix and sell drugs without restrictions.
Pharmacists	Prescribe certain drugs to manage patient health Give certain substances through injection and inhalation to demonstrate their use or to educate patients
Physiotherapists	Give certain substances by inhalation as ordered by authorized persons (e.g., a physician)
Respiratory therapists	Independently give a patient certain substances by inhalation

Increase Ability to Order X-Rays

Regulations would be changed under the *Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act* to allow:

- Nurse practitioners to order any X-rays
- Physiotherapists to order X-rays subject to conditions