



Ontario College of
Social Workers and
Social Service Workers

Ordre des travailleurs
sociaux et des techniciens
en travail social de l'Ontario

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DELIVERED BY COURIER

Ms. Barbara Sullivan
Chair
Health Professions Regulatory
Advisory Council
HPRAC Consultations
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
56 Wellesley Street West, 12th Floor
Toronto, ON M5S 2S3

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

On behalf of the Council of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW), I thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council's (HPRAC) two recent reports to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care: Interim Report "Mechanisms to Facilitate and Support Interprofessional Collaboration among Health Colleges and Regulated Health Professionals", and "Critical Links: Transforming and Supporting Patient Care, A Report to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on Mechanisms to Facilitate and Support Interprofessional Collaboration and a New Framework for the Prescribing and Use of Drugs by Non-Physician Regulated Health Professions".

The OCSWSSW welcomed the opportunity to participate in a number of HPRAC consultations including the Regulation of Psychotherapy, the Regulation of Personal Support Workers and Interprofessional Collaboration, as well as respond to the 2006 report "Regulation of Health Professions in Ontario: New Directions" and to the Discussion Guide regarding the Consultation on Issues Related to the Ministerial Referral on Interprofessional Collaboration among Health Colleges and Professionals in May 2008.

As you are aware, the OCSWSSW is a self-regulatory College, established on March 1, 1999, by the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* (SWSSWA). To date the OCSWSSW has registered more than 12,500 members in the social work and social service work professions.

Although the OCSWSSW is accountable to the Minister of Community and Social Services, social workers and social service workers are employed in a broad range of

settings in which health care is delivered, including hospitals, psychiatric facilities, long-term care facilities and centres for community or mental health. Approximately 50% of the members of the College are employed in the health care field and work in close collaboration with regulated health professionals. Though some are employed as administrators, educators and researchers, most provide direct service to individuals, families and groups. Additionally, many social workers provide psychotherapy services, often in a private practice setting.

To our knowledge the OCSWSSW is the only regulatory body, whose members provide health care services, that is not governed by the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA). This may not continue to be the case. As the definition of health is broadened, for example, as set out by the World Health Organization, and increasing numbers of professions are included in the provision of health services, interprofessional collaboration beyond the legislated “health professions” must be contemplated. The OCSWSSW’s current unique position is now more compelling than ever, since members of the OCSWSSW have been authorized, along with the members of several RHPA Colleges and the new College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists, to perform the controlled act of psychotherapy. This unprecedented development will demand not only interprofessional collaboration by the relevant regulatory bodies, but will require new and creative interministerial collaboration. It will be critical to the future success of interprofessional collaboration that current ministerial communication and collaboration will undergo reform in parallel with regulatory reform.

The OCSWSSW strongly advocates the development of a mechanism to ensure its involvement in initiatives by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care that impact the College’s role in regulating its members who provide psychotherapy and more generally, health care services.

To conclude, I wish to thank you again on behalf of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers for the opportunity to comment on HPRAC’s Interim and Final Report, Critical Links, in relation to Mechanisms to Facilitate and Support Interprofessional Collaboration. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, HPRAC, the RHPA Colleges and the new College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists on the regulation of psychotherapy and other matters related to interprofessional collaboration. Please feel free to contact me if you would like any additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Glenda McDonald".

Glenda McDonald M.S.W., RSW
Registrar

Cc:

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur
Minister of Community and Social Services

Ms. Lucille Roch
Deputy Minister

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