

A Bold RPN Nursing Recruitment & Retention Solution

The global pandemic exacerbated an already looming crisis in nursing in Ontario and highlighted the need for more staff on the front lines of care. We must take the next steps to address this challenge by solving the nursing recruitment-retention puzzle.

PAY:

Ensure RPNs are fairly compensated

RPNs were excluded from the pandemic pay top-up of \$3/hour awarded to other health workers like personal support workers (PSWs). This had the unintended consequence of many RPNs making a wage that is very close to the colleagues they supervise, which risks pushing RPNs out of the profession.

Government should work with WeRPN to establish a provincial minimum wage for RPNs that is appropriately proportioned to RNs.



Pay



Workload



Education

WORKLOAD:

Establish workload standards for RPNs

RPNs are core members of the patient care team — but it is important to ensure the right care provider is matched with the right patient/resident to ensure manageable nursing workloads that attract and retain staff.

Government should work with WeRPN to standardize the staffing skill mix and number of providers appropriate for the LTC and HCC sectors with the goal of moving towards 75% of positions being full-time.

EDUCATION:

Enhance education support for RPNs

Recent government initiatives will bring new nurses to long-term care and home and community care and expand career-growth opportunities for RPNs.

Government should work with WeRPN to capitalize on recent commitments through enhanced education supports by:

- right-sizing the time it takes to career-ladder an RPN to RN
- ensuring nursing students have access to the clinical hands-on training and coaching they need

About the Registered Practical Nurses Association

WeRPN champions the critical role of RPNs to Ontario's health system. We build the profile and professional capacity of RPNs so they can better care for Ontario's patients, residents and community members and better support their fellow health care co-workers. As leaders in professional practice, WeRPN provides ongoing professional development to support RPNs in delivering high quality care in the hospital, long-term care and home and community care sectors. WeRPN provides ongoing professional development to support RPNs in delivering care on the frontlines. We promote evidence-based nursing practice that demonstrates the value of RPNs as contributors to excellence in safe, quality patient care.

Practical nurses do what needs to be done.

"I slept underneath a desk, as I couldn't leave the nursing home because there were too many critical patients that needed my attention, and we had no staff. I've had to be a caregiver, a nurse, housekeeper, family, friend, dietitian and even infection control lead."

Practical nurses are witnesses to the most intimate moments of a final good-bye while offering support to the loved ones left behind.

"I have held hands with those dying alone. We provide support to families whose loved ones are dying or who have died. That for me is heroic — keeping it together as a nurse and not breaking down in front of family members."



RPNs are the second largest group of regulated health professionals in our healthcare system

95%

Over 95% of RPNs provide direct care to patients across Ontario



RPNs make up 66% of nurses in long term care

33%

RPNs make up one third of the province's nursing workforce

Sectoral distribution of RPN workforce:



- Hospital 36%
- LTC 36%
- Community 22%
- Other 6%

For more information visit werpn.com

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We RPN

Registered Practical Nurses
Association of Ontario