

February 13, 2026

The Honourable Sylvia Jones
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Jones,

Re: Enhancing Primary Care Capacity: Leveraging Ontario's Skilled Registered Practical Nurses

On behalf of WeRPN and more than 65,000 Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) across Ontario, I am writing to congratulate your government on the recent \$30 million investment to expand the province's primary care workforce. This funding—and the broader \$2.1 billion Primary Care Action Plan—is a critical step toward ensuring every Ontarian is connected to the care they need, close to home.

As we look toward achieving the target of two million new patient attachments by 2029, we wish to emphasize the strategic value of the RPN workforce. Currently, thousands of RPNs work within Ontario's primary care and community health sectors. Utilizing RPNs to their full potential is a fiscally responsible strategy that maximizes clinical capacity and attachment potential. By optimizing the nursing mix, primary care teams can stretch healthcare dollars further while maintaining high standards of clinical excellence.

CNO data identifies nearly 2,800 RPNs in core primary care settings like physician offices, Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics and Family Health Teams alone, with thousands more supporting primary care delivery through community health and public health channels, serving as a vital foundation for team-based models of care.

These RPNs bring a high level of clinical competency that directly supports the sustainability of our primary care system, specifically through:

- **Clinical Leadership in Preventative Health:** RPNs demonstrate excellence in managing complex screening programs and immunization strategies, ensuring high-risk populations are identified and supported early.
- **Comprehensive Chronic Disease Management:** RPNs utilize their knowledge and advanced education in physical assessment and health teaching to empower patients with chronic conditions, improving long-term health outcomes and reducing acute care reliance.
- **Specialized Clinical Interventions:** From wound care and diabetes management to maternal and child health support, RPNs provide the high-quality, specialized clinical care that patients of all ages and their families rely on within local clinics.

While RPNs are already a cornerstone of this sector, more can be done to provide the specific education and training needed to support even more RPNs in finding roles within this dynamic field. Targeted educational pathways—much like the recently announced upskilling program for RNs—would allow the province to tap into this existing, highly motivated workforce to meet our attachment goals even faster.



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This information was shared during WeRPN's recent productive meeting with Dr. Jane Philpott, Chair of the Primary Care Action Team (PCAT). Our discussion highlighted that RPNs are already deeply embedded in the work, and there is a significant opportunity to provide the educational frameworks that will allow them to support the government's mandate to its fullest potential.

WeRPN is eager to discuss how we can work together to connect RPNs with tailored education and onboarding opportunities to support recruitment to the sector. We remain committed to working collaboratively with the Ministry of Health and the PCAT on ongoing workforce planning and implementation. I would welcome the opportunity for my team to meet with yours to discuss these recommendations in greater detail.

By recognizing and supporting the RPNs already in the field with robust education, we can ensure a stronger, more accessible primary care future for all Ontarians.

With my regards,

Dianne Martin
Chief Executive Officer

Cc:

Jane Philpott, Chair, Ontario's Primary Care Action Team
Karima Velji, Chief of Nursing & Professional Practice; ADM, Ministry of Health
Nathalie Boudreau, Director, Nursing and Health Professionals Branch
Manjil Raveendran, Senior Stakeholder and Caucus Relations Advisor