

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Ministère de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités

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MIDWIFERY AND NURSE PRACTITIONER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Midwives and Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners play important roles in the health care system and support the government's commitment to increase access to health care professionals. This increased enrollment will mean better health care outcomes for patients through increased access to primary health care providers, chronic disease management and key health services. Additional midwives and Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners will also improve patient centered care delivery for all Ontarians.

Midwifery Services

Midwives provide around the clock, on-call, primary care to low-risk women throughout pregnancy and to new mothers and their newborns for six-weeks following birth. In 2006, there were 366 midwives providing services with the help of physicians and nurses. More than 60 midwifery practice groups provide care for eight per cent of the births in 2006/07. In 1994 there were only 70 midwives practicing in Ontario. The government's continuing investment will bring the number of midwives practicing, and in training, to over 400.

Midwives have been regulated in Ontario since 1994.

Midwifery Education Program

The Midwifery Education Program is a four-year undergraduate program that is offered through three universities: McMaster University, Ryerson University and Laurentian University.

The government is investing \$2.3 million to increase the enrollment by 20 seats, which will be divided between the three universities. An additional 10 seats will be added in 2008/09. This will bring the total enrollment of midwives from 60 to 90.

Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Services

Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners are registered nurses with additional education and experience who are able to order and interpret diagnostic tests, communicate diagnoses, prescribe select pharmaceuticals and independently prescribe authorized clinical procedures. Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners work in a variety of settings including primary care, community, long-term care homes, emergency departments, Aboriginal Health Access Centres and out patient clinics. The government currently funds over 700 nurse practitioner positions across a variety of programs and practices.

Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Education Program

The Ontario Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner Program is currently a 12 month full-time post baccalaureate certificate program offered through 10 universities throughout the province.

The government is investing \$5 million to increase enrollment by 50 seats over the next four years. These seats will be divided between the universities that offer the program. Currently, the universities are:

- Lakehead University
- Laurentian University
- McMaster University
- Queen's University
- Ryerson University
- University of Ottawa
- University of Toronto
- University of Western Ontario
- University of Windsor
- York University

This will bring the total enrollment of Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners from 150 to 200 with new seats opening in the fall 2008.

The government will work with the universities to accommodate distribution of increased enrollment based on eligible applicants, geographical issues related to access, as well as physical and teaching capacity within the schools. The increased enrollment will create greater efficiency in service delivery and better outcomes for the patient.

HealthForceOntario

On May 3, 2006, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced HealthForceOntario: an innovative, collaborative multi-year plan to give Ontario the right number and mix of health care providers, working in communities across the province to meet Ontario's health needs – now and in the future. It includes a range of initiatives designed to help Ontario identify its health human resource needs, develop new provider roles to meet our changing health needs, work closely with the education system to develop people with the right knowledge, skills and attitudes, and compete effectively for health care professionals.

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