

Executive Officer Notice: Proposed Legislative and Regulatory Amendments - Dissolution of the Citizens' Council and the Pharmacy Council under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act*

April 15, 2021

The purpose of this notice is to notify you of proposed amendments to the Ontario Drug Benefit Act (ODBA) and to Ontario Regulation 201/96 under the ODBA.

The Ministry of Health (MOH/Ministry) is proposing amendments to the ODBA and Ontario Regulation 201/96 under the ODBA to dissolve two advisory agencies namely the **Citizens' Council** and the **Pharmacy Council**, as recommended by the Agency Review Task Force (ARTF) who completed a comprehensive review of provincial agencies to improve services, fix inefficiencies, and protect the sustainability of public services. The proposed amendments to the ODBA are conditional on their introduction and passage in the Legislative Assembly. The proposed regulatory amendment is conditional on the passage of the legislative amendments.

The dissolution of these health advisory agencies through the proposed legislative and regulatory amendments, if passed/approved, would support building smarter government by:

- Taking steps to ensure all provincial agencies are relevant, efficient, effective and provide value-for-money for taxpayers; and
- Delivering programs and services that are relevant, efficient, and better for Ontarians by ending duplication of functions between agencies and identifying savings to re-invest in health system priorities.

The proposed changes, if passed/approved, would align with the government's overall priority of building a smarter government that is focused on delivering programs and services that are relevant, efficient and provide value-for-money.

Citizens' Council

- The Citizens' Council was established in 2007 to engage ordinary citizens about policy questions related to public drug programs. It has issued 11 reports on specific topics.
- The Ministry recommends dissolving the Citizens' Council as more efficient and cost-effective patient-engagement options (e.g., Patient and Family Advisory Council) are now available to obtain a patient perspective on drug funding and policy decisions relating to the public drug program.

Pharmacy Council

- The Pharmacy Council was established in 2006 to involve pharmacists in the development of pharmaceutical and health policy and in aspects of their profession's roles and services advising government during a major transition in Ontario's drug system. It is co-chaired with the Ontario Pharmacists Association.
- The Ministry recommends dissolving the Pharmacy Council as the primary issues and challenges relating to the pharmacy sector with which the Pharmacy Council was created to inform government interventions have been addressed through several sector reforms that were implemented in 2010, 2015 and 2017. The Ministry will continue to seek expert advice by alternative means and/or explore other mechanisms to actively engage the sector as appropriate.
- Pharmacy stakeholders are consulting with the government outside the Pharmacy Council. As required, the Ministry will seek expert advice by alternative means and/or explore other mechanisms to actively engage the sector as appropriate.

These proposed changes are about coordinating and connecting the health care system to make it more efficient, while investing more tax dollars into frontline care.

As part of the government's *Smart Initiative*, the proposed dissolution of these agencies aligns with the requirements of the *Fiscal Sustainability, Transparency and Accountability Act* in supporting government's overall plan to improve fiscal sustainability and reduction of red tape.

A summary of the proposal and text of the draft amendment to Ontario Regulation 20/19/6 are available on the Regulatory Registry website at:

<https://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=37047&language=en>

The content of the final regulation is at the discretion of the Lieutenant Governor in Council ("LGIC") who may make the regulation with any changes that the LGIC considers appropriate.

Interested parties are invited to provide written comments on the proposed changes to the regulation as part of the review. The ministry will consider comments received on or before May 30, 2021 at midnight EST. Please be advised that submissions received after this date may not be considered. Please submit your written comments to:

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Ministry of Health
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Toronto ON M2M 4K5

Fax: 416-325-6647

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Statement about Comments

Unless requested and otherwise agreed to by the ministry, all materials or comments received from organizations in response to the notice will be considered public information and may be used and disclosed by the ministry as part of its review. The ministry may disclose materials or comments, or summaries of them, to other interested parties during and after the comment period.

An individual who makes a submission and who indicates an affiliation with an organization in his or her submission will be considered to have made his or her submission on behalf of the affiliated organization. The ministry will not disclose any personal information contained in a submission of an individual who does not specify an organizational affiliation in his or her submission without the individual's consent unless required by law. However, the ministry may use and disclose the content of the individual's submission to assist the ministry in its review.

If you have any questions about the collection of this information, you can contact the ministry's Freedom of Information and Privacy Coordinator at (416) 327-7040.