

Presentation to Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC)



January 17, 2006

Ontario Home Care Association - Background

The Ontario Home Care Association is an organization of home health and social care service providers. OHCA members provide a range of home care services including nursing care, home support services, personal care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, dietetics, speech language therapy and medical equipment in the home. Ontario Home Care Association members are contracted by all three levels of government, Community Care Access Centres, insurance companies, institutions, corporations and private individuals.

Ontario Home Care Association has a 35-Year History of Providing Quality Care In Ontario

- ◆ The Ontario Home Care Association (OHCA) represents home health care organizations that provide home care services throughout rural and urban Ontario.
- ◆ OHCA members have been providing high-quality, accessible health care for over 35 years to both government-funded home care programs and individuals.
- ◆ OHCA members are contracted by all three levels of government, Community Care Access Centres, insurance companies, corporations and private individuals.
- ◆ Association members provide employment for approximately 27,000 Ontarians and are key providers in the delivery of community health care to an estimated 200,000 clients annually.
- ◆ OHCA members are committed to the highest standard of service delivery, and are continually seeking new and better ways of providing care for the thousands of people who rely on our services.
- ◆ OHCA supports the advancement of research in the home and community sector through its involvement with the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES), the University of Toronto, the Ontario Home & Community Care Council, McMaster University, the Change Foundation and the University of Waterloo.

Access to Home Care Service Delivery in Ontario

The Ontario Home Care Association endorses:

- ◆ the principles of the Canada Health Act and the Canadian health care system which delivers a range of essential health care services available to all residents of Canada on the basis of need, not ability to pay.
- ◆ the vision of an Ontario health system that 'promotes wellness and improves health through accessible, integrated and quality services at every stage of life and as close to home as possible'
- ◆ and advocates for, the funding and resourcing of a strong publicly funded home care delivery system in Ontario made available through public administration and delivered by the private sector.
- ◆ the contribution of home care service provision that is currently available in addition to the publicly funded and publicly administered home care system.
- ◆ and believes that all home health care service providers must be held equally accountable to deliver the highest standard of care in the home.

Mission

The Ontario Home Care Association promotes the growth and development of the home and community health care sector by...

- ◆ Providing leadership that helps shape public health care policy in which the home and community care system is an integral part
- ◆ Supporting its members to ensure service excellence, quality and high levels of client satisfaction
- ◆ Being a leading source of information on home and community care for our members, our staff, our clients and the public

Vision

Helping the people of Ontario access the appropriate level of quality home and community health care.

Values

High quality service	Client satisfaction
Employee satisfaction	Ethical client-centered care
Good corporate citizenship	Financially sound agencies

Principles

We:

- ◆ pursue our goals until we achieve our stated outcomes
- ◆ conduct ourselves with dignity and professionalism
- ◆ demonstrate respect for all members of the community and health system and will not undermine the contributions of any
- ◆ commit to ethical behaviour
- ◆ maintain a participatory approach meaning that we will, to the best of our ability, keep all stakeholders apprised of our activities
- ◆ demonstrate cooperation across the associations and the health sector
- ◆ do our best to ensure open dialogue
- ◆ ensure that there is approval for the message when speaking for OHCA

Advocacy for Home and Community Care

The Ontario Home Care Association is a leader in promoting provision of adequate financial and other resources for the home and community care sector in Ontario. OHCA participates regularly, both federally and provincially, in task forces, consultations and committees in order to develop consistent approaches to policy and funding issues affecting home and community care service provision.

Ontario Home Care Association Presentation to the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council

1. THE ROLE OF THE PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER

The role of the personal support worker is one of support with limitations on independent action and judgment. The Personal Support Worker is trained for employment in many sectors of health care. Personal Support Workers have theory and clinical training in community and long-term health care facilities.

Personal Support Workers have a skill and knowledge level that includes basic nursing, supportive care for ongoing conditions and/or cognitive impairments, assisting the family, assisting with medications and caring for palliative care clients and their families.

Personal Support Workers report to Client Service Coordinators, Charge Nurses, Case Managers or other designated Teams Leaders or Clients.

2. THE SCOPE OF THE PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assisting with Personal Hygiene – bathing, showering, sponge bath
- Assisting the client with Elimination needs
- Assists with catheters, colostomies, ileostomies and urostomies
- Assisting the client with dressing and grooming
- Assisting with Ambulation, Mobilization and Positioning
- Assisting with Mechanical or Physical Lifts and /or Transfers
- Changing bed linens
- Assisting with Meal Planning and Preparation and Grocery Shopping
- Supervising the client eating or feeding client
- Assisting the client with medications
- Practices Universal Precautions and maintains a clean working environment
- Provides emotional support to clients and residents
- Seeks the assistance of professional staff for client as needed
- Observes and reports all behavioral changes, changes in ongoing conditions and any other information pertinent to the client's care
- Assists other team members as knowledge and skills allow
- Assists with other stable delegated tasks as directed by a professional or client as policies and procedures allows.
- Collects urine, sputum and stool specimens as directed

NOTE: The role and the responsibilities of a Personal Support Worker will vary dependant on the policies and procedures of the employing agency and the client's routine of daily living.

3. DELEGATED ACTS

Personal Support Workers work under the direction of the R.N., RPN or Client. Tasks are to be taught by the R.N., and then the Personal Support Worker demonstrates skill in performing the delegated task. Delegated tasks can include assisting with medication. These delegated tasks are considered to be routine aspects of a persons life and no unexpected consequences are foreseen as a result of the task, administering suppositories, gastric feedings and oral suctioning. In the publicly-funded home care system, CCAC's and employers have created specific forms for Personal Support Workers to ensure that delegated Acts have been taught and are understood by the Personal Support Worker.

4. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Personal Support Worker program was originally developed as part of the Ontario government's plan to reform long – term care and support services which are provided to people in long-term care facilities or living at home in the community.

It was a single training program that replaces and consolidates Health Care Aide and Home Support Worker (Level I, II & III) training. This program standardized training and provided a solid educational base for workers who provided long-term care and support services in both institutional and community settings.

Personal Support Workers assist with the tasks of daily living. Services are provided in homes and apartments in the community, in long-term care facilities, congregate housing settings and day programs. Personal Support Workers must develop a broad range of abilities beyond dexterity skills. They must provide not only for the comfort, safety and well-being of their clients, but also demonstrate sensitivity and respect for those in their care. The attitude, abilities and approach of the worker are critical to the well-being and health of the people they support.

Recently, changes have been proposed to the original program and these changes are outlined in the following chart.

5. PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Module	Current Hours	Proposed Hours
Individuality	15	15
Role of the Worker	18	18
Interpersonal Skills	18	22
Safety	9	9
Assisting A Person with Mobility	18	18
Abuse	9	9
Household Management & Meal Preparation	18	18
Optimal Support and Care Planning	12	28
Personal Hygiene	18	18
Assisting the Family	12	18
Cognitive Impairment & Mental Health Issues	31	35
Assisting A Person to Mange Ongoing Conditions	33	33
Assisting with Medications	12	12
Assisting a Person Who is Dying	12	22
Testing	10	10
Total Theory	245 hours	285 hours
Supervised Community & Facility Clinical	180	180
Precepted Community & Facility Clinical	85	175
Total Clinical	265 hours	355 hours
Total Program Hours	510 hours	640 hours

Highlights of Module Enhancements

Module 3: Interpersonal Skills

- Enhancement of communication with the Health Care Team
- Enhancement of effective communication skills with a focus on reading and understanding job specific materials
- Addition of techniques to improve written communication
- Addition of Problem/Solving/Critical Thinking Skills theory

Module 8: Optimal Support and Care Planning

- Enhancement of rehabilitation of the whole person
- Enhancement of charting including observing, narrative carting and problem oriented charting
- Addition of computer applications in documentation/charting

Module 10: Assisting the Family

- Addition of Eric Erikson's Developmental Stages
- Enhancement of family dynamics
- Moved Developmental Disabilities from the Cognitive module to Assisting the Family module
- Addition of assisting child clients in a family environment

Module 11: Cognitive Impairment and Mental Health Issues

- Enhancement of understanding of mental health issues, treatment therapies and support services
- Enhancement of treatment therapies and support services for confusion and dementia clients
- Enhancement of management of aggressive behaviors
- Addition of acquired brain injury and stroke

Module 14: Assisting a Person who is Dying

- Enhancement of understanding loss
- Enhancement of communication with the palliative client/resident
- Enhancement of understanding pain management
- Enhancement of understanding of support for the family and caregiver after death

Note: The content guidelines for all modules were revised where needed to clarify content and provide some supportive details.

Precepted Clinical

- The precepted clinical hours were increased to provide an opportunity for students to continue to develop their skills and potentially be exposed to many different support situations. There were many comments in the responses from employers requesting additional opportunities for students to gain real life experience prior to completing their programs.

NOTES:

1. Hours required to complete First Aid and CPR are not included in totals.
2. The SUPERVISED and the PRECEPTED CLINICAL PLACEMENTS are a blend of Institutional (Nursing Home) and Community (Agency) placements with a 60% maximum 40% minimum split in hours.

6. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- a) Grade 12 (Ontario Secondary School Diploma) at the General Level or equivalent or Mature Student (19 years of age and out of school for one year).
- b) Fluency in English
- c) Fitness to complete Practicum
- d) CPP and First Aid Certification
- e) Police Check (Clearance of Criminal Record)

7. OHCA MEMBERS REQUIRE THAT

To successfully meet the Personal Support Worker Program outcomes and pass the students must:

- achieve a minimum mark of 70% in all of Section 1, Section 2 and the additional 8 modules;
- pass the three skills performance demonstrations;
- achieve a satisfactory rating in each of the required abilities listed in the Personal Support Worker skills passbook;
- have a current Standard First Aid and Basic Rescuer (level C) CPR Certification;
- have fulfilled all of the practicum (clinical placement) hour requirements

¹ Consideration of Personal Support Workers to be Regulated under the RHPA

OHCA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the issue of regulation for Personal Support Workers (PSWs).

It is the position of the OHCA that PSWs occupy a very important supportive role in home care assisting people to continue to live at home independently. This role is highly valued and respected by all OHCA members. It is the further position of the OHCA that the PSW role is to provide supervised supportive, non-medical care which does not necessitate regulation.

As one of the largest groups of employers of PSWs, OHPA members has analyzed the criteria for regulation of a profession. These criteria include:

- Risk of Harm
- Sufficiency of Supervision
- Alternative Regulatory Mechanism
- Body of Knowledge
- Educational Requirements for Entry to Practice
- Leadership's Ability to Favour the Public Interest
- Membership's Support and Willingness to be regulated and likelihood of complying with regulation
- Economic Impact of Regulation
- Public Need for Regulation

The OHCA will now examine some of the more salient issues related to the criteria for regulation:

Risk of Harm

The role of the PSW is to provide supportive care, following established care plans set out by regulated health professionals. PSWs do not assess, diagnose, order treatments or make changes in care plans.

Sufficiency of Supervision

The PSW does not have a role which is independent of a regulated health professional. A regulated health professional, usually a Registered Nurse, supervises and teaches all delegated tasks to the PSW.

Alternative Regulatory Mechanism

A professional is a person who identifies, prevents or treats illness or disability acquiring this knowledge after a significant amount of academic preparation. The PSW role is not to identify, prevent or treat illness and has a short time period of preparation. The employer can provide an alternative means, through careful supervision and policies and practice to provide mechanisms to guide the accomplishment of PSW tasks.

¹ Regulated Health Professions Act, January 2005, Criteria for Regulation

Body of Knowledge

As stated in this document, the PSW has a basic curriculum which guides the worker in the ability to collect information and perform tasks under the on-going supervision of a regulated health professional. The PSW does not assess or plan treatments based on a limited base of knowledge.

Educational Requirements for Entry to Practice

While the PSW course can be offered at post-secondary institutions, it can also be offered in private vocational schools and through employers. Course curricula can vary, the course length to become a PSW is very short and there is a lack of standardized entrance requirements.

Public Need for Regulation

The public is protected from harm by the PSW because their scope of work is limited, their work is supportive in nature and a regulated professional supervises their work consistently. Complaints about an employee's (PSWs) work can be brought to the attention of the supervising health professional or the employer.

Summary and Recommendations

Based on this analysis, the OHCA believes that the PSW does not need to be regulated as a profession in Ontario. The work carried out by PSW is supportive in nature and an analysis of the criteria for regulation does not point to the need for a regulated practice.

Further recommendations to support the PSW tasks and function in the community would be:

- The need to ensure a standardized educational preparation (exit and entry) which would in turn allow for the creation of a standardized set of performance indicators and the creation and adoption of province-wide evaluative standards and expected outcomes for the completion of PSW functions and tasks in the home
- The development of a PSW Faculty which supports a quality educational experience for students
- The requirement that all PSW training facilities ensure a CPIC check which can be used as a criteria of exclusion to admission. (This is common practice in other health care fields).
- Certifying PSWs who have completed the standardized educational preparation as being competent to perform identified tasks under supervision
- Create a vocational list of PSWs who have met certification requirements to undertake specific tasks within their level of training. A vocational list would allow the PSW and employer to assure the public that only skilled, well-prepared and competent PSWs are serving Ontarians in their homes.

Susan D. VanderBent
BA, BSW, MSW, MHSc, CHE
Executive Director
Ontario Home Care Association
19 Melrose Avenue South, Hamilton, Ontario L8N 2Y4
Phone: 905-543-9474 Fax: 905-545-1568
Email: suevan@homecareontario.ca
Web Site: www.homecareontario.ca