

# **Nurse Practitioner Conference, Ontario**

## ***Remarks By Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario***

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Good morning.

Thank you, Claudia, for that kind introduction today ...

And for all your hard work and leadership every day as President of the Nurse Practitioners Association of Ontario.

To everyone at NPAO, thank you for supporting the work of our nurse practitioners who are ....

As your vision statement says:

“Transforming health care for Ontarians through Nurse Practitioner innovations.”

As you know, I’ll be going through a transformation of my own.

Of course, some will notice little difference.

When I made my announcement ...

My son was at the gym working out.

A couple of other guys were working out beside him.

The news came on the TV.

So one guy says to the other: “Hey, McGuinty quit!”

The other guy says: “Who?”

The first guy says: “You know, McGuinty, he quit.”

So, the other guys says: “Quit what?”

Which goes to show: Not everybody in the world is interested in politics.

But everybody is interested in health care.

I want to thank all of you for taking time out of your busy schedules to come together for this conference ...

Sharing skills and experience ...

Supporting and encouraging each other ...

And continuing to promote and expand you capacity to make health care stronger for all of us.

You know, one of my goals as Premier was to make Ontario the best place in North America to be a nurse ...

Because, here in Ontario, we have the best nurses, anywhere.

So, working together, that's just what we've done:

Strengthened ....

Broadened ...

Elevated ...

And maximized ...

Your profession.

So that, today, about two-thirds of Canada's nurse practitioners are in Ontario.

Nurse practitioners who are helping us deliver care that's stronger ...

Quicker ...

More efficient ...

And more focused on helping people live healthier lives.

Nurses are the backbone of the health care system.

That's why we've hired over 15,000 thousand since 2003.

We've more than doubled primary care nurse practitioner education spaces from 75 to 200.

That's ensuring we have skilled NPs for our 26 Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics ...

Including two that will open this year.

You're helping to improve access to care for more than 27,000 Ontarians.

You're members of our family health teams ... working in our hospitals and delivering care in our homes.

And you're making Ontario a national leader when it comes to providing effective primary care.

You know, I've visited nurse practitioner led clinics on a number of occasions.

They have so many impressive features and services.

But perhaps the most impressive quality is the one that's hardest to achieve:

That's trust.

Patients trust you.

As a government, we could make the clinical case for expanding your scope of practice.

We could make the fiscal case.

We could generate facts, figures and charts.

But the concept can only work ... on the ground ... in communities ...

If the parent with a sick child ...

The senior with a chronic illness ...

Or the teenager with important questions ...

Trusts in your skills, competence and compassion.

And they do.

At the dawn of modern medicine, the famous physician William Osler said:

"The trained nurse has become one of the great blessings of humanity, taking a place beside the physician and the priest."

And as we continue to modernize medicine, Ontario's nurses remain one our greatest blessings.

Through nurse practitioner-led clinics, you're helping save Ontarians time ...

Stay healthy ...

And avoid trips to the hospital.

You're putting on casts ... ordering tests ... and writing prescriptions.

You're admitting and discharging patients from the hospital for us.

And you're helping to prevent illness by offering obesity programs ... smoking cessation tools ... and cancer screening.

Nurse practitioners are a real source of strength ...

And of value.

You are trained and qualified to do so much.

Our government is committed and determined to let you do it.

For one simple reason: We need you.

Because when we are working to improve access to care ...

Bring down wait times ...

And make universal care more sustainable ...

Making the most of your skills just makes sense.

And expanding your scope of practice stretches health care dollars.

Our goal is to make Ontario the healthiest place in North America to grow up and grow old.

But we've got challenges that are changing how we deliver health care.

That's why we have an Action Plan for Health Care to help get us there ...

So, I encourage you — all of you — to keep adding to your skills ...

To keep pushing for more responsibilities ...

Because we need you.

All of us.

After all, the people you care for are not just any people.

They are our mothers and fathers ...

Our brothers and sisters ...

Our sons and daughters ...

Our friends and neighbours.

They are the most important people in the world.

And we entrust them to your skilled, compassionate care.

You know, if we take a step back and look around, all around the world, the economy remains uncertain.

We know a strong economy is not a means in itself ...

But a means to a higher end: a strong, caring society.

On top of that, our global population is growing ... and aging.

So these are not challenges unique to us.

But, if you and I had to come together, and lock arms somewhere on this planet, where we might confront these challenges ...

We might say, "It'd be great to live in a place where they've got strong banks."

We've got the world's strongest.

We'd probably say, "You know in a global, knowledge-based economy where creativity and innovation are so important for growth ...

It'd be great to live in a place where they have a strong work force."

Well we've got the best among the 34 OECD countries.

It'd be great to live in a place where we have a diverse population so we could leverage that advantage in an era of globalization.

It'd be great to live in a place where we could walk outside right now, take in a deep breath of fresh air and not have to worry about air pollution.

I'd be great to live in a place, where if your 7-year-old at 9:30 tonight says, "I want a drink of water, dad" ...

You can go to the tap and without a second thought say, “here’s a glass of water” — you don’t have to worry about the quality of our water.

It’d be great to live in a place where the streets are safe, and the communities are strong.

And finally, we might say, “It’d be great to live in a place where if my daughter got sick, we wouldn’t have to sell the house in order to get great quality health care.”

Thanks to you ... and the work you do day in and day out ...

We’ve got that right here.

Ladies and gentlemen ...

It’s Ontario.

It’s the greatest province, in the best country in the world.

Thank you.