

## PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE A PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER (PSW) REGISTRY IN ONTARIO

**INTRODUCTION:** The launch of a provincial registry of Personal Support Workers in Ontario has the potential to improve protection for seniors and vulnerable populations and to help drive improvements in quality care by supporting appropriate training for PSWs.

The province can ensure the registry is launched successfully and fulfills its potential by learning from the experience of other jurisdictions, drawing on the expertise and capacity of stakeholders, and observing ten key principles.

In order to ensure stakeholder buy-in and clarity of objectives, it is essential there be a clear definition at the outset of who the registry represents, as well as its purpose and authority. It is recognised that public protection is important, but not to the detriment of the rights of personal support workers.

**PRINCIPLE ONE:** The Registry will support and facilitate the involvement of consumers (including clients and their informal caregivers) and Personal Support Workers in the development of the registry. These important stakeholders will have a strong role in the Registry's governance and setting of PSW educational standards and core competencies.

**PRINCIPLE TWO:** Registration should be mandatory for any individual in the province of Ontario wishing to work as a personal support worker. Initially all service providers that receive provincial funding to deliver personal support will be required to verify employees are registered if they are providing personal support after a target date. Service providers under the Direct Funding Program for Persons with Physical Disabilities are exempted from this requirement.

**PRINCIPLE THREE:** All current employees of service providers that receive provincial funding – and have therefore demonstrated an ability to meet provincial quality requirements - will be “grandparented”, meaning they will be automatically eligible if they currently provide personal support and register by the target date.

**PRINCIPLE FOUR:** The experience of other jurisdictions shows that a registry can be effectively launched if supported by a targeted communications plan that clearly articulates the first three principles to employers, employees, and consumers while offering personal support workers recognition. Stakeholder consultations and the setting of benchmarks will also enable a successful implementation.

**PRINCIPLE FIVE:** There may be a grace period after the prescribed grandparenting period. This means that after the target date, the registry may announce grace periods of 30/60/90 days to allow time to complete registration of all employees. The Direct Funding Program for persons with physical disabilities is exempt from this requirement.

**PRINCIPLE SIX:** There will be a mechanism for the reporting of evidence-based disciplines and dismissals for reasons of theft or abuse or breach of trust or neglect of care recipients. This will trigger immediate suspension of registration. Appeals will be heard by a provincial mediator from a pre-approved list. If there are allegations of wrongdoing, an administrative note could be added to the person's record, but that information would not appear publicly until such time the allegations have been proven.

**PRINCIPLE SEVEN:** After the grace period, new registrants shall be required to show proof they have successfully completed a personal support worker program that is accredited, or registered for accreditation.

**PRINCIPLE EIGHT:** For Ontarians who rely on respite and self-directed care – such as caregivers of children with special needs or adults with physical disabilities - the registry will facilitate access to qualified providers of appropriate respite and self-directed care as well identify those that have professional liability insurance.

**PRINCIPLE NINE:** The qualifications required of new registrants as well as the overall functioning of the registry will be reviewed annually. Program standards will also be reviewed to take account of evidence-based best practice, such as innovations in training PSWs in dementia awareness and self-directed care.

**PRINCIPLE TEN:** Government will work quickly to incorporate any review of education, training, and certification of PSWs into the development of the PSW registry. Any work on educational standards, core competencies or credentials will be done in partnership with stakeholders.

**PRINCIPLE ELEVEN:** The registry will be publicly-funded, independently hosted, and governed in the public interest. There will be an ongoing evaluation of the Registry. The registry will support a key role for stakeholder governance, which will include geographic representation.

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