



## Registrar & Executive Director's Message

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### Discrimination in RD Hiring Practices & Legislative Initiatives

**T**he College has started to welcome the new graduates of the Internationally Trained Dietitians Pre-Registration Program (IDPP) from the Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University. Congratulations to these candidates and to the program leaders, teachers and Registered Dietitians who act as preceptors. You are making a significant contribution to the dietetics profession.

#### Dietetic Internship Program or Equivalent

The first graduating candidates from the IDPP program have been assessed by the College as having education and practical training that is equivalent to graduates from accredited academic and internship programs. Beyond registration with the College, our internationally educated RDs are now looking forward to full employment in dietetics. However, it is obvious from some employment ads that they face discrimination and, sadly, it may be inadvertent. Let's look at the wording that appears all too frequently in RD employment advertising:

"Education - Successful completion of dietetic internship program accredited by *Dietitians of Canada* required."

This internship requirement is discriminating against internationally educated professionals who have qualified to practice in Ontario with equivalent practical training. It is a discrimination based on country of origin and some may even perceive this as a bias against race and creed. Employers who continue to restrict hiring to Canadian trained RDs are vulnerable to a challenge under the *Human Rights Code*.

**I would strongly urge RDs and employers involved in hiring to review their employment advertisement with sensitivity to how the wording of the requirements may be discriminating against internationally educated professionals and others.**

The College registers qualified applicants and has a requirement for either completion of an accredited program of practical training **or the equivalent**. The *Canadian Dietetic Registration Examination* is a validation of competence to practice.

Receiving a General Certificate of Registration from the College means that a Registered Dietitian has met both the academic and practical training requirements to practice in Ontario.

#### Legislative Initiatives

##### BILL 124

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration has introduced Bill 124, an Act to provide for fair registration practices in Ontario's regulated professions. The Bill's intent is to ensure that regulatory bodies' registration policies and practices are transparent, objective, impartial and fair.

If the Bill is passed into legislation, a Fairness Commissioner will assess the registration practices of regulated professions and oversee a formal audit of every regulatory body, paid for by the Colleges, to make sure that they comply with the requirements set out in the Bill. Our clear preference is that the government invest more in training and education opportunities for internationally trained professionals rather than in more expensive infrastructures that require Colleges to pay for costly audits.

We are confident that the registration practices of the *College of Dietitians of Ontario* are transparent, objective, impartial and fair. We continually work to explore opportunities to reduce barriers for internationally educated dietitians. The IDPP program, and programs like this for other professions, is making the difference for access to professions in Ontario.

##### AMENDMENTS TO THE RHPA

The report of the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council's (HPRAC) entitled *Regulation of Health Professions in Ontario: New Directions*, was released on May 19. It presents recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for the regulation of new health professions and changes in scope of practice for two professions. Most importantly, it recommends amendments to the legislative framework for regulated health professions. The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care is planning to introduce the legislation to the Provincial Legislature in the early Fall of 2006.

##### Profession-specific highlights:

- Regulate Pharmacy Technicians, Homeopathy, Naturopathy, Kinesiology, Hearing Instrument Practitioners, and Psychotherapy.
- Create a new controlled act for prescribing or dispensing a hearing aid for a hearing impaired person.
- Expand the scope of practice of Optometrists to include prescribing therapeutic pharmaceutical agents with the exception of anti-glaucoma medications.

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