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NEW HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL ROLES

The McGuinty government is launching *HealthForceOntario*, a new health human resources strategy aimed at ensuring Ontario has enough health care professionals to meet the needs of Ontarians.

One of the key components of the strategy involves establishing innovative new health care professional roles in areas of high need. These new roles are:

Physician Assistant

Assists supervising physicians to deliver medical services, such as conducting patient interviews, histories, physical examinations; performing selected diagnostic and therapeutic interventions; ordering and interpreting patient laboratory and radiological results; and counselling patients on preventive health care.

Nurse Endoscopist

A registered nurse with extended specialized education (in anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology) who works with a physician to perform flexible sigmoidoscopies (diagnostic procedure used to screen for abnormalities in the lower third of the colon).

Surgical First Assist

Works with the surgeon and the rest of the operating room team to ensure the safe outcome for a surgical patient before, during and after surgery. A registered nurse can perform this role with an additional certification in surgical assistance.

Clinical Specialist Radiation Therapist

Medical radiation technologists (radiation therapists) with additional training to provide more specialized care. They will work with the radiation oncologists, nurses and medical physicists to ensure safe and optimal patient outcomes.

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