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**ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMENDS REGULATING NEW HEALTH CARE  
PROFESSIONS**

*Health Minister Receives Report And Seeks Input From Public And Stakeholders*

TORONTO – The McGuinty government will consider regulating six new health care professions, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman said today after receiving a report by an independent advisory council, which reviewed the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA).

“Our government is committed to ensuring the health and safety of patients through the Regulated Health Professions Act,” Smitherman said. “I’d like to thank the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council for its thorough review of the act, and its advice concerning the possibility of regulating new professions. We’ll be introducing changes to the act this fall that would make it more responsive to the needs of Ontarians, and this review will help in making this happen.”

Smitherman said the government now wants to hear from providers, stakeholders and the public about the report, which is posted on the ministry’s website at [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca). People have an opportunity to comment on the report through a feedback form on the website.

The RHPA sets the framework for the regulation of 23 health professions in Ontario, and helps protect patients by ensuring that practitioners meet high standards of practice and competence.

In February 2005, the minister asked the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC) to review the act to see what changes should be made to benefit the public and to help the regulatory colleges that govern various health professions in the province better protect Ontarians. HPRAC examined practices, experiences and legislation in other jurisdictions and conducted consultations.

HPRAC’s recommendations include regulating six new health care professions through the RHPA – pharmacy technician, homeopath, naturopath, kinesiologist, psychotherapist and hearing instrument practitioner.

Last December, the government introduced legislation to regulate traditional Chinese medicine.

HPRAC also recommends streamlining the complaints process to make it faster and more transparent. An expanded complaints committee would in a new, simplified, and more transparent approach, resolve inquiries and complaints. The new approach would be fair to both members of regulated health professions and patients.

“We believe this report will contribute to Ontarians receiving the safest and best care while

maintaining the province's position as a leader in the regulation of health professions," said HPRAC chair Barbara Sullivan. "It addresses the important issues of efficiency, accountability, performance, quality and transparency of our health professionals and the colleges that regulate them."

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health, building a system that delivers on three priorities - keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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