

QPOR

2019 QUEEN'S PARK ON THE ROAD

RNAO's Queen's Park on the Road

2019 Member Toolkit

"Speaking out for nursing. Speaking out for health."



Thank you for your interest and participation in RNAO's 2019 *Queen's Park on the Road* (QPOR)! The work of the RNAO's Nursing & Health Policy department is not done until we've taken political action. QPOR is an exciting annual event that enables RNAO members to meet their MPPs within their local constituency office to discuss key nursing, health, and health-care delivery issues.

As a signature RNAO event, QPOR is a fantastic opportunity to engage your elected representatives where you live on the matters that matter to you as an RNAO member. This is your opportunity to bring your experiences and expertise to life for those we elect to deliver the best healthcare possible to Ontarians. This toolkit will support the initiation, planning and facilitation of a QPOR MPP meeting by offering tips and tools to guide you through the process.

This year, RNAO is providing Region and Chapter members the opportunity to reach out and connect with your local MPP by sending the initial meeting request. This is important, particularly as a constituent, in starting to build a rapport with your MPP. They need to know – and we want them to know – that you, their constituent, have things that you want to talk to them about.

This year, we will be pushing hard for change on just two current issues – a better approach to long-term care in Ontario and accidental opioid overdoses: a public health crisis. The focus on a more limited number of issues will allow for a deeper, more focused and informed discussion. It will also permit a greater opportunity to introduce you, your work, RNAO and our activities to your MPP.

We hope you find this political action opportunity productive and rewarding. RNAO's foundation is our members and our strength lies in your passion for nursing and health advocacy.

Doris Grinspun, RN, MSN, PhD, LLD(hon), Dr(hc), FAAN, O.ONT.
Chief Executive Officer
Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO)



Contents

Connecting with Your MPP4
Preparing for Your QPOR MPP Meeting4
Adjourning and Following-up on Your QPOR MPP Meeting5
Roles and Responsibilities6
Dos and Don'ts for Queen's Park on the Road Meetings7
Appendix A - Meeting Minutes Template8
Appendix B - Sample agenda for QPOR meeting with MPP9
Appendix C - MPP Meeting Invitation Script/Email10
Appendix D - Letter Template: Accidental opioid overdoses11
Appendix E - Letter Template: Accidental opioid overdoses13
Appendix F - Letter Template: A better approach to long-term care14
Appendix G - MPP Meeting Follow-up Script/Email16
Appendix H - Timelines and Milestones17



Connecting with Your MPP

1. Notify your policy and political action executive network (PPAN) officer of your interest in participating in QPOR. To find your PPAN officer, visit the RNAO [Chapter and Region website](#). Contact Kyle Dieleman, kdieleman@RNAO.ca, should you not be able to locate your PPAN officer.
2. To find your MPP and find contact information, please [click here](#)
3. Click on the member of Provincial Parliaments name on the following page – this redirects to the Ontario Legislative Assembly website
4. Record the contact information for the MPPs [constituency office](#)
5. Use the MPP meeting invitation script/email provided, appendix C, to connect with the MPP by telephone or email. Follow-up if necessary.

Note – while the Legislature is in session Monday through Thursday, MPPs who don't live in or close to Toronto are unlikely to be in their ridings. But the Legislature does not sit on Fridays or during "constituency weeks" so that MPPs can attend to matters in their ridings. The next constituency week is November 12th – 15th.

Preparing for Your QPOR MPP Meeting

- Notify, or assign someone to notify, RNAO home office, Kyle Dieleman, kdieleman@RNAO.ca, that your meeting is taking place so that it can be captured on the QPOR.RNAO.ca website.
- Visit QPOR.RNAO.ca to access all the required materials and tools. If you have scheduled a meeting, please contact RNAO home office to receive harddid not receive a QPOR package in the mail,
- Read and familiarize yourself with RNAOs priority issues fact sheets and political action bulletins so that you are confident presenting the information to your MPP.
- Read and print copies of the MPP "Ask" template letters, appendix D, E & F, to be provided to your MPP for submission to the appropriate person in response to your meeting. See "Adjourning and Following-up on Your QPOR MPP Meeting" for more information.
- Connect with other members of your Region/Chapter to identify additional participants. If applicable, determine roles (ie. Chair, Recorder).
- Ensure you know the location of your MPPs constituency office.
- Ensure you have a telephone number for the MPP's and other member participants in the event of an emergency
- Request in your correspondence with the constituency office to have a photo taken at some point during the meeting for social media or RNAO publication(s).



- Post photos with the MPP to social media and send them to Kyle Dieleman (kdieleman@RNAO.ca).
- Ensure you arrange a debrief with other member participants offsite after the meeting to discuss overall impression of the event. Please use the recorder sheet, appendix A, to capture what was said during the meeting. This document should then be submitted to home office once completed.
- Remember to have fun!

Adjourning and Following-up on Your QPOR MPP Meeting

A new feature of QPOR this year will be the MPP “Ask.” Educating your MPP about RNAO and our issues is important. It is even better if, after hearing from you, they agree with us. But our goal is to change things. So, we are also asking our MPPs to do something about the issues that we bring to their attention. We want your MPP to join us in pushing for change.

You will find template letters in your toolkit. On the issue of the opioid crisis, we are asking that your MPP send a letter to the Minister of Health (appendix D). We are also asking that they send a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (appendix E), and CC your local MP. On the issue of staffing and funding of LTC Homes, we have included a template letter (appendix F) from your MPP to the Minister of Long-Term Care.

See instructions below on how to adjourn your meeting and present the Ask to MPPs.

- At the end of your meeting, summarize your recommendations
- Ask your MPP whether they support your recommendations
- If they do, present your MPP with the template letters, appendix D, E & F.
- Try to secure a commitment to send the letter(s) to the identified recipient. Invite them to put the letter into their own words if they so wish.
- Request your MPP submit these letters within a reasonable time-frame and that they copy you on the letter or, at a minimum, notify you when the letter has been sent.
- If you do not hear from your MPP within the mutually agreed deadline, follow-up – see appendix G for sample script/email.
- If your MPP does not support our policy position, let them know that you would make yourself available to answer any questions they may have or for a follow-up conversation at some point in the future.



- Whether or not they support our policy, please be sure to invite your MPP to participate in Annual *Queen's Park Day* on February 20, 2020

Roles and Responsibilities

It is helpful to attend your meeting with another member or members of your RNAO Region/Chapter. It is especially important to assign the role of the Chair and Recorder to ensure all responsibilities are assigned. Use the descriptions below to assign these roles to those who are attending the meeting.

Chair

The role of the Chair is to:

- Oversee and manage the meeting.
- Get the group to the meeting at the appointed time.
- Introduce the group (name, role with RNAO if any—Board, Chapter, Interest group member, student and/or constituent of the MPP)
- Keep the discussion on track.
- Present RNAO's "Asks" and letter templates for submission to the appropriate individual, appendix D, E & F.
- Thank MPP and request permission to take and post group photo
- Invite MPP to participate in Annual *Queen's Park Day* on February 20, 2020.

Recorder

The role of the recorder is to:

- Record the MPP's answers to issues on the recorder sheet provided.
- Highlight any disagreement with key issues (if any)
- Clarify and confirm MPP's request for information (if any)
- Note requests for follow up materials.
- Confirm who is following up with Home Office/MPP
- Send recorder sheets and any requests for additional information to the Coordinator, Nursing & Health Policy Department – kdieleman@RNAO.ca



Dos and Don'ts for Queen's Park on the Road Meetings

Dos:

- Do a little research on your MPP beforehand to see if there is a way to connect more personally. They live in your community. What do you have in common? Did you go to the same high school? Do your kids play sports together? This will set the tone for a focused but more relaxed conversation.
- Be punctual – start and end the meeting at the appointed time
- After the meeting has begun, be sure to stay focused. Don't let the MPP find a way to avoid what they may find to be a difficult conversation.
- Tell a story. As nurses you have compelling stories to tell. And certainly on these two issues, nearly everyone has a story to tell. Use your stories. Use personal examples from your work or community to support the key messages RNAO is trying to deliver in the meeting. Remember – politicians value and appreciate your knowledge and experience as a nurse. Be confident in your ability to use personal and work narratives to make your point about nursing and health care.
- Be sure to give your MPP time to express their view(s). Listen, understand and respond to what they are saying. We already know what we think. We want to know what they think!
- Be sure to ask the MPP whether they support your position and, if they do, be sure to turn that support into action!
- Raise the “Asks” found in the political action bulletins and present the MPP with the letter template developed by home office for submission to the appropriate politician. This will ensure the appropriate follow-up action is taken.
- Pay attention to and be polite to staff for three reasons: a) staff often control access to the MPP and their time; b) staff often need to understand the policy issues and nuances in greater detail than the MPP; and, c) just because!

Don'ts:

- Be late for the meeting—even if the MPP does not start on time.
- Speak for so long that there is no time left for questions.
- Speak negatively about the previous or current government.
- Contradict RNAO's positions.
- Say, in response to a question, “I don't know.” Instead, tell the MPP, “I will get back to you with details as soon as possible.”
- Refer to your own political party membership (if any). RNAO is a non-partisan organization that works with MPPs from all political parties.



Appendix A – Meeting Minutes Template

Name of MPP:	
Date:	
Location of Meeting:	
Name/title of any other MPP staff in meeting:	
Name of recorder:	
Names of other RNAO members in meeting:	
Response to Issue #1:	
Are they sending a letter and when?	
Response to Issue #2:	
Are they sending a letter and when?	

Complete this form and send to kdieleman@RNAO.ca along with any photos taken (with your #Nurses Rock! Prop card). Thank you!



Appendix B – Sample agenda for QPOR meeting with MPP

(RNAO members should meet 15 minutes prior to scheduled start time)

1:00 pm	<p>Thank MPP for meeting</p> <p>Introduction of RNAO members attending</p> <p>Introduce RNAO to the MPP. See “Intro Fact Sheet” in toolkit.</p> <p>Thank MPP for past support of RNAO events if applicable</p>	Chair
1:05 pm	Highlight two priority issues that will be addressed	Chair
1:10 pm	<p>Reinforcement of information found within political action bulletins</p> <p>Specific/personal examples of workplace/community</p>	All RNAO members
1:45 pm	<p>Ask for their support.</p> <p>Translate support to action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present “Ask” letter templates to MPP • Get a commitment from the MPP to send a letter to the Minister 	Chair
1:55 pm	<p>Conclusion – thank MPP for meeting</p> <p>Confirm follow-up details</p> <p>Ask permission and take group photo (with “Nurses Rock!” photo prop card)</p>	Chair
2:00 pm	Debrief at a separate location to document observations of MPP responses	Chair



Appendix C – MPP Meeting Invitation Script/Email

(MPP)
(Riding)
(Address)
(Email)

[insert date]

Dear (MPP),

I am a constituent and a/an (RN/NP/nursing student) concerned about health care in Ontario. I am also the [identify your position with RNAO or indicate that you are a member] of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO). RNAO is the professional association representing over 43,000 registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and nursing students in Ontario.

Annually for the last seven years, RNAO members visit their MPP in their riding to discuss issues opportunities to enhance nursing, health, and health-care delivery. We call this event **Queen's Park on the Road (QPOR)**. RNAO members are committed to political engagement and we value the positive working relationships we have with MPPs across the province. **QPOR** is an important initiative to foster these relationships.

Would you please set aside an hour of your time at your convenience to meet with [me or me and colleagues who live in your riding] in your constituency office [or Queen's Park office if that is more convenient]. I/we are keen to share our experiences in the health system with you in the hopes of positively influencing public policy.

Could you please let me know when you're available to meet by contacting me via email at [email address]. In anticipation of meeting you soon, I/we thank you very much in advance.

Warm regards,

(name)
(email)
(optional telephone)

CC: Kyle Dieleman, RNAO, kdieleman@RNAO.ca



Appendix D – Letter Template: Accidental opioid overdoses

Hon. Christine Elliott
Minister of Health
80 Grosvenor Street
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

[insert date]

Re: Remove barriers to opening and accessing life-saving supervised consumption services in Ontario

Dear Minister Elliott,

The province of Ontario has seen a devastating increase in opioid-poisoning deaths over the past years. With an average of four Ontarians dying each day from an accidental opioid overdose, it is no wonder that many have proclaimed this public health emergency as the defining health crisis of our time. As the MPP representing [insert riding], I cannot continue to ignore the pleas from my constituents, including service users, family members and health professionals, who are calling for access to consumption treatment services (CTS) in my riding.

As you'll know supervised consumption services (SCS), whether they are supervised injection services (SIS), overdose prevention services (OPS), or consumptions and treatment services (CTS), are vital health services that help keep people alive in a context of increasingly dangerous drug supply. These services allow people to inject previously-obtained drugs under the supervision of registered nurses (RN), nurse practitioners (NP), and other trained health workers, who provide sterile supplies, overdose prevention and management, as well as other health and social support services.

These services prevent fatal poisonings by quickly administering oxygen and/or Naloxone. They enable health professionals and outreach workers to build relationships with people who use drugs. By meeting with people in a non-judgmental and compassionate way, these services support people with addictions to access primary health care, treatment, and rehabilitation services, if and when they are ready to do so.

I am requesting the following of you:

- Lift the cap on CTS sites and provide consumption treatment services in every community in need of such services.



- Ensure sufficient funding and support to address the current shortage of treatment, recovery resources and mental health and addiction services mandated by the CTS model.
- Seek a province-wide exception under [site the Act and appropriate exception] from the Federal Government
- Streamline and expedite the Province's CTS application process to prevent unnecessary deaths

Thank you for consideration. The deaths and consequent pain and suffering that my constituency has experienced from opioid poisoning must end. I urge you to implement these recommendations as soon as possible. I'd be happy to talk about this or any other matter impacting my constituency at your convenience.

[MPP Name]
[Riding]
[Address]

CC: Kyle Dieleman, RNAO, kdieleman@RNAO.ca



Appendix E – Letter Template: Accidental opioid overdoses

Dear Prime Minister,

[insert date]

Re: Ontario's opioid crisis

[An opening of your choice – eg. Congratulations.....]

Accidental deaths resulting from a toxic opioid supply are impacting communities, large and small, across the country. The recent report of the Public Health Agency of Canada placed the number at 12,000 deaths across Canada over the last three years alone. Ontario, and my riding of _____, has not escaped this public health crisis. Ontario's own public health agency, Public Health Ontario, recently reported that the number of accidental opioid deaths was escalating, reaching almost 1500 in 2018. That's an average of four Ontarians every day.

I am seeking your support to address this crisis. As it now stands, both the federal and provincial governments have separate application processes for supervised consumption sites in Ontario. These application processes are both duplicative and onerous, causing delays in our collective ability to respond and, consequently, unnecessary deaths. I am asking you to provide a blanket exemption for the Province under section 56.1 of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) so that we can respond more speedily to this crisis and save lives.

Thank you very much for your attention to this issue and I look forward to working with you to end this public health crisis.

Yours sincerely,

[MPP Name]

[Riding]

[Address]

CC: [Federal Minister of Health]
[Provincial Minister of Health]
[Member of Parliament your riding]
Kyle Dieleman, RNAO, kdieleman@RNAO.ca



Appendix F – Letter Template: A better approach to long-term care

Hon. Merilee Fullerton
Minister of Long-Term Care
6th Floor, 400 University Ave.
Toronto, ON
M7A 1T7

[insert date]

Re: Establishing minimum staffing levels and transforming funding models to improve quality of care and resident safety in Ontario's long-term care homes

Dear Minister Fullerton,

In order to ensure the safety and security of the residents of long-term care homes, Ontario needs to change how they are funded and staffed. This point was made clear by the report of the The [Public Inquiry into the Safety and Security of Residents in the Long-Term Care Homes System](#). I am asking you to accept and implement, as a priority of your Ministry, two of the report's recommendations in particular:

1. Recommendation #85

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care should conduct a study to determine adequate levels of registered staff in long-term care (LTC) homes on each of the day, evening, and night shifts. The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care should table the study in the legislature by July 31, 2020. If the study shows that additional staffing is required for resident safety, LTC homes should receive a higher level of funding overall, with the additional funds to be placed in the nursing and personal care envelope.

2. Recommendation #20

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care should encourage, recognize, and financially reward long-term care homes that have demonstrated improvements in the wellness and quality of life of their residents.

I would also urge, in addition to these recommendations, that savings flowing from the implementation of best practices and consequent improved resident health be wholly invested in measures to further improve resident health. This initiative would, I believe, incent the implementation of best practice guidelines and serve residents and their loved ones well.

Quite apart from the issues raised in the report, we know that Ontario's long-term care sector is facing some very significant challenges. We currently have a significant shortage of beds in the sector, a problem compounded by an aging population with increasingly complex health issues.



I urge you to take the opportunity presented by the report and its recommendations to ensure that we fix the staffing and funding issues in the sector, ensuring that we have long-term care homes in Ontario that are able to provide the best care possible to their residents now and into the future.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. If you have any questions or concerns about any of the above, I'd be happy to address them.

[MPP Name]
[Riding]
[Address]

CC: Kyle Dieleman, RNAO, kdieleman@RNAO.ca



Appendix G – MPP Meeting Follow-up Script/Email

[MPP]
[Riding]
[Address]
[Email]

[insert date]

Dear [MPP Name],

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to you and your constituency office team for meeting with me/us on [date] to discuss the future of Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) and staffing and funding for long-term care homes in Ontario. We hope you found the meeting useful and that it will serve to inform you in your role as our Member of Provincial Parliament.

You will recall that we left you with two template letters drafted to the Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care setting out RNAO's recommendations on the issues we discussed. We also left you with a template letter to the newly-elected Prime Minister, copied to the federal Minister of Health and our newly elected Member of Parliament. I received confirmation from you [or your office] that these letters would be submitted to their intended recipients. [OR, As of today, I have not received confirmation from your office that these letters were sent and I am following-up with you to request a status update.] Thank you so much for taking action on these critical issues. Submission of these letters demonstrates your support as an MPP in creating a healthier Ontario. Please keep us advised of any response that you may receive and please know that we'd be happy to provide further support on these or any other issues related to health and health care in our riding or Province. [OR, We were sorry to hear that you have decided not to take action on these issues that impact on all of us in your riding and in the Province. In the hopes that you will keep your mind open to our recommendations, please know that we would be happy to discuss any questions or concerns that you may have.]

I am hoping that our meeting was just the start of a dialogue between us about issues related to health and health care in our riding and our Province. If at any time you have questions or concerns related to health or health care, please let us know. We'd be happy to assist.

Warm regards,

[name]
[email]
[optional telephone]

CC: Kyle Dieleman, RNAO, kdieleman@RNAO.ca



Appendix H – Timelines and Milestones

Activity/Action	Timeline/deadline
Notify your Chapter or Region's PPAN officer you are interested in participating in QPOR	October-November
Contact MPP constituency office and confirm meeting date	October – November
Notify RNAO home office that meeting is confirmed (email Kyle Dieleman at kdieleman@RNAO.ca)	October – November
Visit QPOR.RNAO.ca and read supporting materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority issue fact sheets and political action bulletins • MPP Ask letter templates • QPOR 2019 Toolkit 	October – November <i>Member participants should be familiar with all materials by the MPP meeting.</i>
Confirm other member participants from within your Chapter/Region	October – November
Confirm meeting with MPP's constituency office	Two days prior to meeting
MPP Meetings Note: be sure to ask permission to take a photo and share with RNAO for social or publication.	October 21 – November 29, 2019
Connect with home office and submit meeting recorder sheet as well as any photos that were taken	Following meeting
Thank you email and MPP Ask follow-up (if necessary)	December 2019 onwards