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Bill or item of business: **2022 Pre-Budget Consultations**

Full name

Ohood Elzibak

Paste submission

Attention: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

I am a licensed Physician Assistant in Ontario currently practicing in Orthopaedic Surgery. In the midst of Ontario's healthcare staffing crisis, our hospitals, clinics and long-term care homes could use all hands on deck. One type of clinician that is often overlooked is the Physician Assistant (PA). PAs are trained in the medical model and can diagnose, order and interpret investigations and prescribe treatments in all medical settings. Since our introduction in Ontario in 2007-2008, we have helped alleviate wait times and have played a key role in caring for Ontario's patients in high-volume areas, including emergency medicine, orthopaedic surgery and family medicine. We have also expanded care to rural and under-served communities in Northern Ontario.

At present, Ontario has two civilian education programs for PAs- one through McMaster University and another through a collaboration between the University of Toronto, NOSM and the Michener Institute of Education through UHN. In total, there are less than 60 combined PA student seats in these programs, while the demand for PAs continues to grow in our community and jobs continue to go unfilled.

In your budget preparations, I respectfully request that you consider allocating more funding and support for Ontario's Physician Assistant education programs to increase student enrolment and boost the PA workforce. I also request examining the current funding models for Physician Assistants in more detail to ensure a sustainable, long-term solution for the profession with improved integration and retention.

I am attaching several publications outlining the value, utility and contributions of Physician Assistants to Canadian healthcare.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ohood Elzibak, MPAS, CCPA
Physician Assistant in Orthopaedic Surgery
Assistant Clinical Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences
McMaster University

Citations:

Burrows, K.E., Abelson, J., Miller, P.A. et al. Understanding health professional role integration in complex adaptive systems: a multiple-case study of physician assistants in Ontario, Canada. BMC Health Serv Res 20, 365 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-020-05087-8>

Desormeaux M, Stewart M, Grimes K, Prada G. Gaining efficiency: increasing the use of physician assistants in Canada. The Conference Board of Canada: Ottawa; 2016.

Vanstone M, Boesveld S, Burrows K. Introducing physician assistants to Ontario. Health Reform Observer. 2014;2(1) <https://doi.org/10.13162/hro-ors.02.01.04>.