HR HealthCheck

Ontario Government Expands Role of Registered Nurses

Date: November 8, 2023

Incoming changes to the *Nursing Act* (*Act*) will soon permit registered nurses (RNs) to prescribe certain drugs to their patients.

On November 6, 2023, the Ontario government filed Ontario Regulation 336/23 (Regulation), amending the general regulation (O. Reg. 275/94) made under the *Act*. The Regulation supports the incoming changes to the *Act* and sets out, among other things, the drugs that RNs will be able to prescribe to their patients to treat certain conditions. These include contraception, immunizations, smoking cessation and topical wound care.

To qualify for this expanded practice, RNs in the general class will have to complete supplemental education programs, which will be offered at certain colleges and universities. As announced by the Ontario Ministry of Health, the programs are being developed and require approval from the Council of the College of Nurses of Ontario. Registration for these programs is expected to begin in January 2024.

The amendment to the *Act* permitting RNs to prescribe certain drugs to their patients and the Regulation both come into force on December 4, 2023.

If you have any questions about these new changes, please contact your regular Hicks Morley lawyer.