

VERBAL SUBMISSION TO STANDING
COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY - BILL 283
MAY 13TH, 2021 4:00PM-5:00PM

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of our Network and the PSWs we represent.

As a certified PSW myself, and the founder of the Canadian PSW Network based here in Ontario, we represent many of these PSWs as an advocacy and support network that is a professional voice for PSWs on the issues they want heard with regards to their profession. Today we are here to speak primarily about title protection and effective certification or licensed based regulation (not registry based) as it pertains to Bill 283 in its present form. We are happy to see that the regulation of PSWs in Ontario is being proposed. This, along with title protection is needed, and wanted by PSWs. We included documentation and stats in our written submission on these two topics that PSWs were polled on.

Our concern with a registry at this time as it is presented in Schedule 2 of Bill 283 is that it will again be voluntary. This raises the concern that many, if not most, will not sign up for it. This is not conducive to being able to accurately document, or oversee PSWs if we do not know who they are or where they are working. There are only approximate numbers on how many PSWs are working in Ontario. We need to take care to not waste taxpayers money on something that has twice previously cost millions of dollars, and did nothing to ensure public safety. 89.4% indicated they were in favour of regulation versus merely a registry

Currently, PSWs have minimal accountability to provide clear Police VSS results. Those PSWs who are fired due to misconduct merely move to other regions to seek new employment. This evasive tactic is done to avoid detection when they are facing charges or investigations into potential criminal activity.

In fact, 83.7% indicated they agree with submitting a mandatory police VSS every 2 years to a regulatory body - NOT 3rd party background checks - in place of the "honour system" of self reporting. They feel this would further safeguard against less than optimal PSWs "flying under the radar" and would be a step in the right direction to ensuring public safety.

The other component next to regulation we need to see immediately is title protection. Currently there are over 50 terms for "PSW" in the province of Ontario which apply to trained and untrained care providers as well as non certificate and certificate holding PSWs. This is an issue because we do not know who is appropriately trained or educated. Without title protection, anyone can call themselves a PSW at this time.

Our stats showed:

89% were in favour of title protection

89.4% believed it would give recognition and respect to them by their peers and the public

83.7% believe it would also indicate they are properly vetted and equipped with a standard of training, education and practice as they also provide basic nursing skills.

A protected title would also be a step towards retention and recruitment.

We feel the Oversight Authority needs to be set up in an ethical and equitable manner with a verified and impartial 3 party organization with no vested interest monetarily in PSW's. Their purpose should rest on providing safety and protection to not only the PSWs, but to the vulnerable and public they serve. There needs to be input and discussions from all organizations representing PSWs including certificate holding PSWs, and PSW educators who are currently and actively working in the field.



THE CANADIAN PSW NETWORK

A professional voice for PSWs