



LOBBY REPORT, Fall 2020

As you know, the Ministry of Health did not correct its mistake of refusing temporary pandemic pay for most regulated health professions. We came close, but, in the end, we could not change the initial decision. However, you should be proud of your efforts. You, the membership, responded to the call to help lobby the government by contacting MPPs, highlighting our messages on social media, and participating in demonstrations.

Asking a politician to correct a mistake is always difficult. I believe that we succeeded in convincing the public service but lost when the Minister overruled their advice. In the end, we were not able to convince Minister Elliott to change her initial decision. She made a point of stating that no group was added beyond the initial additions (of respiratory therapists and paramedics) to the list of eligible professions/occupations.

When working to educate and influence government, we always understand that the final decision is with the political arm of government, and they will not always take our advice. It was nevertheless a tremendous effort by you, your leadership board, and CEO Greg Toffner. In particular, relationships and lines of communication with key public servants have been strengthened due to the round of meetings and our intense communication. Our contacts in government were open to our messages, and they helped ensure that they were seen and understood by the Minister.

After some reflection, I see OAMRS emerging stronger -- with its ability to influence government actually enhanced. In short, your work was not wasted. While some may argue that a strategy of all-out attack is the way to go, I believe that our firm but respectful approach allowed us to launch a hard, angry challenge to government without burning our bridges. This will stand us in good stead in the future.


Over the summer, we began to lobby government to find education money to replace the Allied Health Professional Development Fund (AHPDF) and to complete the regulations of The Oversight of Medical Facilities and Devices Act (2017), which is the new act to replace HARPA. Its purpose is to strengthen job security for you and to protect you and your patients from harm. In this new COVID-19 world, getting the act right will not be easy, so, again, we will need all hands on deck to help us with this work.

This fall will most likely bring a new Minister of Health, but our excellent contacts and relationships with the public service will remain intact. Building on this foundation, we will be calling on you to continue to support our lobbying efforts. The Queen's Park Lobby Reception has been postponed due to COVID, but we are launching a virtual lobby to keep OAMRS and your issues before public servants and politicians. We took

the opportunity during Sonography Week in October to meet via Zoom with the key decision makers, and we will do so again during Medical Radiation Technologists Week in November. As our plan proceeds, we may be asking some members to join in these meetings.

Regards

Len Domino
Leonard Domino & Associates



Len Domino is President of Leonard Domino & Associates and works with OAMRS as our Government Relations specialist. Len Domino is a former government official with an expertise in the operations and governance of non-profit organizations. Len has worked with OAMRS on many issues including regulation on Sonographers, modernizing of HARPA, AHPDF just to name a few.