

Bill 160: Ontario's Omnibus Health Bill

Ontario Health Policy Education Initiative | Ontario Medical Students Association

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More info: [Announcement](#), [Backgrounder](#), [Bill](#)

Bill 160, officially known as “An Act to amend, repeal and enact various Acts in the interest of strengthening quality and accountability for patients” is an omnibus bill (a proposed law covering many diverse policies) that went through its first reading on September 27th, 2017, and its second reading on October 26th, 2017. The bill is now awaiting its 3rd reading, before royal assent to become law. The bill is over 200 pages, and can be difficult to navigate without sufficient background.

Below is a brief summary of the bills that will be introduced or updated by Bill 160. .

New Bills:

1. **The health sector payment transparency act, 2017:**
 - Requires doctors (and other healthcare professionals) to report all financial relationships within Ontario's healthcare system including funding from pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers. This requirement extends to financing within research and education and all documented financial information will be stored in a publicly accessible online database.
2. **Oversight of health facilities and devices act, 2017:**
 - Introduces a system for ensuring safety and oversight of community health facilities and medical radiation devices such as X-ray machines, CT scanners and ultrasound machines.
 - Increases regulation and public reporting through an enhanced inspection regime.
3. **Medical radiation and imaging technology act, 2017:**
 - Governs the practice of medical radiation and imaging technology for the purpose of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, as well as the evaluation of images and data related to these procedures.
 - Expands the regulatory oversight of the profession by including diagnostic medical sonographers as well as those using radiation technology.

Updated bills:

1. **Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990:**
 - Adds the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion as recipients for disease/event reports, allows the minister (subject to limitations) to issue orders related to new emerging diseases.
 - Regulates personal service settings such as nail salons, tattoo parlors and barber shops to prevent infection

- Permits the regulation of public water facilities such as splash pads and wading pools to increase safety for infants and children.
2. **Long-term care homes act, 2007:**
 - Minimizes the restraining and confining of residents within care homes, and strengthens the right of residents to plans of care and their rights.
 - Increases penalties for long-term care homes to promote compliance.
 3. **Retirement homes act 2010:**
 - Allows the minister to amend the memorandum of understanding with the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority in certain circumstances, and allows the minister to establish advisory committees.
 - Increases the specific clauses around the confinement of residents in a retirement home.
 - Increases regulatory capacity to investigate retirement homes through increased transparency and accountability.
 4. **Ambulance act 1990:**
 - Allows for increased inspection of ambulance and paramedic services
 - Increases the directives of the minister, and the rules regarding fees for paramedics.
 - Provides increased flexibility for paramedics, including transporting patients to non-hospital facilities to better address their needs as appropriate (e.g. mental health facilities and home/community care resources).
 5. **Excellent care for all act, 2010:**
 - Increases the Ontario Health Quality Council's access to and usage of personal health information, and allows for an exemption of FIPPA for records in control of the council that were prepared by the patient ombudsman.
 - Allows the government to make regulations for what the HQO includes in its yearly reports.
 6. **Ontario Drug Benefit Act, 1990:**
 - Specifies that regulations are not required for the minister and executive officer to disclose personal information.
 - Updates language to extend prescribers to some non-physicians (e.g. nurse practitioners). Reimbursement criteria for benefits may be established by the executive officer.
 7. **Ontario Mental Health Foundation Act, 1990:**
 - Repeals the Ontario Mental Health Foundation Act, as its mandate of diagnosis and treatment is now delivered by other groups. The Health System Research Fund will manage the act's research mandate.