



April 28, 2020

Ms. Helen Angus,
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health

Dr. David Williams,
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Ministry of Health

Via email

RE: 'Pandemic Pay' Support for Frontline Practitioners Fighting COVID-19

Dear Deputy Minister Angus and Dr. Williams;

The Ontario Physiotherapy Association congratulates the government on the announcement made by the Premier and Ministers on April 25th that promised temporary pandemic pay supplements for health care workers at the front line of the fight against COVID-19 on behalf of all Ontarians. These health care professionals, including physiotherapists and physiotherapist assistants, are faced with additional challenges, not only of providing care in a high-risk environment, but also the additional costs of providing essential services while themselves having to meet the requirements of physical distancing on behalf of their families and communities. Anything we can do at this time to help and support is critical to retaining the skilled workforce that will see us to the other side of this pandemic. We were therefore very concerned not to see those providing physiotherapy services included in the list provided as background material to the announcement.

We understand from our inquiries that the Command Table for the Emergency Operations Committee is responsible for determining eligibility for the program. I am writing you today, as Co-Chairs of the Committee to ask for confirmation that the physiotherapists and physiotherapist assistants who are working on the front lines of the pandemic are eligible for the supplementary payments.

Registered physiotherapists and physiotherapist assistants work in acute care hospitals, including in ICU units, in long-term care homes, in licensed retirement homes, in-home care and in community care, most because of their regular employment, but some as a result of being deployed by their employer for the duration of the crisis. In the current pandemic physiotherapists are dealing directly with COVID-19 patients at all levels of acuity and are, thereby, exposed to the same risks and to the same demands and pressures as registered nurses, nurse practitioners and personal support workers. The intent of the policy to support front line workers will be only be realized if the eligibility is based on the workplace and the risks associated with that workplace and

not on the professional affiliation of the health care worker. All health care professionals who face the same risk should be eligible for the same pandemic pay supplements.

We look forward to your confirmation at your earliest opportunity, so that we may advise our members who are anxious to know where they stand in terms of the supplementary wage benefits. Thank you for your consideration and we are available at any time to meet to further discuss this request.

Yours sincerely,



Dorianne Sauvé
Chief Executive Officer