



# PARO

Inspired by our  
love of medicine

April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The Honourable Christine Elliott  
Ontario Minister of Health  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Hepburn Block  
80 Grosvenor Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Via Email: [christine.elliott@ontario.ca](mailto:christine.elliott@ontario.ca)

Dear Minister Elliott:

**Re: Ontario Pandemic Pay for Frontline Workers**

We are pleased to see the Government of Ontario's recent announcement of pandemic pay for Ontario's frontline workers fighting COVID-19.

The Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO) is the representative body for Ontario's 5,500 resident physicians who are hospital employees providing indispensable service in hospitals throughout the province, while also undertaking specialty training. The compensation for our members is set out by agreement between PARO and the Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario, the provincial association of hospitals that employ residents. As you may know, the starting salary of a first-year resident who works on average 80 hours per week is \$60,397.72.

We are writing to seek your assurance that pandemic pay will be available to our members. Resident physicians are a key part of the frontline teams treating COVID-19 patients. They work in every part of the hospitals in which they are employed, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. They frequently work as much as 100 hours per week, diagnosing and caring for the people of Ontario. Particularly overnight and on weekends, resident physicians comprise the majority of doctors on call in our teaching hospitals and, in some clinical settings, are often the only doctor physically in the hospital seeing patients after hours.

During the COVID-19 outbreak we have seen our members redeployed to support Ontario's efforts to manage the spread of the disease. We are extremely proud of the contributions our members are making during these extraordinary times, just as we are proud of the work our members do in over 300 hospital and clinic sites around the province each day.

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We were pleased that, when Quebec established its COVID-19 pandemic pay, the resident physicians of Quebec were recognized for the important frontline work they perform and were included among the caregivers who qualify for pandemic pay in Quebec. We noted, however, that resident physicians were not listed among the employees expressly included as eligible for pandemic pay in the Government of Ontario's recent announcement.

We would ask that you provide your assurance that the Government of Ontario will apply the COVID-19 pandemic pay to resident doctors so that we can provide this assurance to our members. Every day, our members continue to work long hours, often under difficult conditions, and at personal risk to support Ontario's health care system and combat COVID-19.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Respectfully yours,

Anthea Lafreniere, MD  
PARO President

cc. Helen Angus, Deputy Minister of Health  
Anthony Dale, OHA President & CEO  
David Brook, OHA VP Labour Relations & Chief Negotiations Officer