

**SUBMISSION for 2014**

**Presented to**

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE KATHLEEN WYNNE**

**Premier of Ontario**

**By**



**THE BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL  
WOMEN'S CLUBS OF ONTARIO**

Member of the Canadian and International Federation of

Business and Professional Women

July 2014



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario (BPW Ontario) is the coordinating organization for the active membership of dedicated working women in clubs across the province.

BPW Ontario membership represents a diverse group of women, in both the public and private sectors of business, industry, and the professions. Our members hold positions as business entrepreneurs, CEO's, managers and employees across a full range of occupational sectors.

Individual clubs within the provincial organization are members of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW Canada) founded in 1930, and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women (IFBPW) has members in over 100 countries around the world and maintains Consultative Status in the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Since 1910 BPW Ontario has worked to promote the interests of working women. We have made submissions to government, addressing issues of equal pay and benefits, employment opportunities, employment equity, part time work, child care, maternity leave, pension reform, health issues and other areas of concern to women. BPW Ontario promotes equality as a basic human right, ensuring the full participation of women who comprise 52% of the population. It is believed that through the realization of their full potential, Ontario working women will continue to drive the thriving business and economic climate of today and ensure prosperity for the generations to come.

For continued improvement in the status of women and betterment of the economic, political, employment and social aspects of daily living, BPW Clubs from across the province meet annually to discuss and approve resolutions submitted by individual clubs. The resolutions included in this brief were approved by our membership at the 68th Annual Conference held in Sudbury, Ontario June 6 – 8, 2014.

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## Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario

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Today, 97 percent of dental hygienists are female. In 2007, Ontario amended the Dental Hygiene Act to allow hygienists to operate independently of dentists. There are now over 400 independent dental hygienists across Canada.

Registered dental hygienists in most provinces are now authorized by provincial governments to assess a patient's teeth and provide an array of dental hygiene services without the presence of a dentist.

The Ontario Dental Hygienists Association is currently working to have the *Healing Arts and Radiation Protection Act* updated. The guiding principle behind the Act is that every dental client in Ontario has the right to expect a high quality x-ray examination with as minimal amount of risk as possible.

A major change recommended is to permit dental hygienists to take and prescribe x-rays without a 'prescription' from a dentist. This will ensure that dental hygienists in Ontario can work to their full scope of practice, by fully enabling a comprehensive oral assessment. Under the Act, dental hygienists can own radiography equipment, but they cannot take x-rays without a dentist's prescription.

Currently, dental hygienists in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, do not require a 'prescription' from a dentist to take an x-ray.

In addition, under current legislation in Ontario, dental hygienists cannot act as Radiation Protection Officers (RPOs), who are responsible for ensuring the x-ray machine is maintained in a safe operating condition. Currently, only members of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario can be RPOs for a dental facility.

As a result, Ontario law currently restricts dental hygienists from providing comprehensive dental hygiene service through the use of x-rays in settings such as seniors' homes, community health centres, rural or isolated areas where dentists may be in short supply, and independent dental hygiene offices.

The College of Dental Hygiene Ontario confirms that hygienists are well trained in the use of x-rays as part of assessments, and that radiation hygiene and safety is adequately covered in the dental hygiene radiography program to permit a dental hygienist to become a radiation protection officer.

Modernizing the *Healing Arts and Radiation Protection Act* will allow Ontario dental hygienists to realize their full potential as professionals in the field of dentistry and provide optimal care to Ontarians.



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**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario in support of the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario and the Ontario Dental Hygienists Association urges the Government of Ontario and the Minister of Health and Long Term Care to open and amend the *Healing Arts and Radiation Protection Act* to permit registered dental hygienists to prescribe dental x-rays within their scope of practice, and permit registered dental hygienists to be named as Radiation Protection Officers, thus allowing all Ontario registered dental hygienists to own and operate x-ray equipment .



## Equal Pay for Women: Closing the Gender Wage Gap

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### **Ontario Gender Wage Gap**

As women are equal to men in understanding and ability, it follows that the average woman's wage and the average man's wage in Ontario, Canada and around the world should also be equal. Sadly this is not the case and women in Ontario have continued to earn, on average, 28% less than men. This translates to Ontario's women working until April 16, of the subsequent year to earn what men have earned by the end of the current year. It also results in women in Ontario working 13 years longer than men in Ontario to retire with the same income. Shockingly, these numbers have recently worsened according to the most recent Stats Canada survey.

### **Ontario Pay Equity Act, 1987 - General Information comparing the Quebec and Ontario Pay Equity Acts**

The Quebec PEA was passed in 1996, modelled on the Ontario PEA passed in 1987. The Quebec Act implemented amendments in 2006/7 and again in 2009. The Ontario Act was reviewed and recommendations made but no significant changes have been made to the Act. This act, although productive initially has reached a plateau and is no longer meeting the needs of Ontarians.

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act AODA, 2005 – a model for good legislation**

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act AODA was passed in 2005 with an addition of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations ISAR in 2011. This comprehensive legislation utilizes the Ontario Human rights Code, the Employment Standards Act and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act of 2001. The AODA encompasses the creation of, among other things, a training and reporting structure for employers. The Act introduces a plan for Ontario businesses to become fully compliant by 2025. The training covers information from the Canadian Bill of Rights 1960, Charter of Rights and Freedoms 1982, Ontario Human Rights code 1962, Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act AODA 2005, Racial Discrimination Act 1944, Fair Employment Practices 1951, and the Fair Accommodation Practices Act 1954.

The AODA is an example of effective legislation which has been built on previous legislation with a goal of realizing a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. This comprehensive legislation model should be used as a template to enact successful legislation to close the Gender Pay Gap in Ontario. Revising the current Ontario Pay Equity Act and building on it, as the AODA had done with the original Ontarians with Disabilities Act, would create the training, reporting and compliance legislation missing or ineffective in the current Ontario PEA. Establishing a plan for an Ontario where the Gender Wage Gap has been eliminated by the year 2025, would enable Government and Business to successfully work towards that common goal.

As long as there is an economic inequality between men and women there will be an imbalance of power. The imbalance of power is a leading cause of many social issues, including violence against women. If Ontario can equalize the balance of power by obtaining gender economic parity and closing the gender wage gap, it will help to shift our societies' views of women. With a more valued vision of women in our society, we will correct many of the social inequities women face every day. Our society requires a culture shift where women and the work they do is no longer undervalued. The 10 Steps noted below are a potential tool for the process.



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### **10 Steps to Closing the Pay Gap by CCPA**

1. Treat closing the gap as a human rights priority; 2. Raise awareness through annual Equal Pay Days and education; 3. Develop closing the gender pay gap plans; 4. Enforce and expand pay equity laws; 5. Implement employment equity law and policies; 6. Promote access to collective bargaining; 7. Increase the minimum wage; 8. Provide affordable and accessible child care; 9. Mainstream equity compliance into government laws and policies; 10. Mainstream equity compliance into workplaces and businesses.

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**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women of Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, and in particular the Minister of Labour, to review the existing Ontario Pay Equity Act and revise as needed, in particular to include:

- a) regular reviews of the act with implementation of the recommendations from the reviews,
- b) pay transparency through regular disclosure of incomes,
- c) mandatory training and reporting by all Ontario employers

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women of Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, to set goals for closing the gender wage gap in Ontario, in particular that this issue be considered at all levels of the government in every committee and as related to all endeavours and legislation; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women of Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, and in particular the Minister of Labour, to establish comprehensive legislation modeled after the structure of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, AODA, to eliminate the Gender Wage Gap by the year 2025.



## Women's Empowerment Principles

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### Undervaluing of Women in the Workforce

With the continuing economic downturn it is clear that the “TIME IS NOW” to utilize all societal and economic assets to leverage the untapped potential of over 50% of our workforce, women. Comprising over 50% of the graduates from Ontario's universities, employers will realize their return on tax dollars and benefit by fully engaging post-secondary educated women. Despite legislated policies that support the universal precept that gender equality is a fundamental human right, we have not yet realized a life where opportunities are open to everyone, regardless of gender.

The **Women's Empowerment Principles** offer a blueprint by which we can bring about the necessary cultural and behavioural changes in the workplace. Employers and Governments who explore these seven principles will find new perspectives and new opportunities to create a workplace where women are empowered and equal in employment, and can establish a prosperous and just community and society.

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential to build strong economies; establish more stable and just societies; achieve internationally agreed goals for development, sustainability and human rights; improve quality of life for women, men, families and communities; and propel businesses' operations and goals. Ensuring the inclusion of women's talents, skills, experience and energies requires intentional actions and deliberate policies.

**The Women's Empowerment Principles**, a partnership initiative of **UN Women** and **UN Global Compact (UNGC)**, provide a set of considerations to help the employers focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace. Enhancing openness and inclusion throughout corporate policies and these principles provide a “**gender lens**” through which governments and business can survey and analyze current practices, benchmarks and reporting practices.

Despite the progress of UN Women and the UN Global Compact, with more than 8,000 business participants and other stakeholders involved in more than 135 countries, women continue to confront discrimination, marginalization and exclusion, even though gender equality is a fundamental human right. Canada has affirmed this value through the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 and the Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000. These conventions help shape Ontario's common values.

Gender economic parity can be accomplished through the integration of principles and actions on corporate responsibility, diversity and inclusion, the full participation of women throughout the private sector – from the CEO's office to the factory floor to the supply chain. Current research demonstrating that gender diversity helps business perform better signals that self-interest and common interest can come together. UN Women, the UN Global Compact, other leading





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UN agencies, the World Bank and the World Economic Forum, reinforce these findings.

Governments also recognize that women's inclusion drives development, and acknowledges that achieving the Millennium Development Goals and national economic and development plans requires rapidly moving towards gender equality. In a globally interdependent political, social and economic environment, partnerships play an increasingly vital role to: Create a vibrant business environment involving a broad spectrum of actors, collaborators, contributors and innovators to open opportunities for women and men; and enable the active and interactive participation of governments, international financial institutions, the private sector, investors, nongovernmental organizations, academia and professional organizations to work together.

### **Ontario Gender Wage Gap**

In Ontario women continue to earn, on average, 13% less than men. This translates to Ontario's women working until April 16, of the subsequent year to earn what men have earned by the end of the current year. It also results in women in Ontario working 13 years longer than men in Ontario to retire with the same income.

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**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women of Ontario urges the Government of Ontario, to adopt the UN Women and UN Global Compact – Women's Empowerment Principles:

- a) to shape all Government policy, b) to shape all Ministry procedures ,
- c) to use when contracting outside resources for Ministry business.

These are:

Principle 1: Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality

Principle 2: Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination

Principle 3: Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers

Principle 4: Promote education, training and professional development for women

Principle 5: Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women

Principle 6: Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy

Principle 7: Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality



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**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women of Ontario urges the Government of Ontario and in particular the Minister of Labour, to set goals for closing the gender wage gap in Ontario, by creating legislation to adopt the Women’s Empowerment Principles; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the Business and Professional Women of Ontario urges the Government of Ontario and in particular the Minister of Labour, to set goals of Government and Business compliance for the adoption of the Women’s Empowerment Principles by the year 2017.



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## 2014 Brief Reference/Source Data

### 1. Modernizing the Healing Arts and Radiation Protection Act

“Dental Hygienists in Ontario: their changing role and what it means to you”  
[http://www.thestar.com/life/health\\_wellness/news\\_research/2012/04/01/dental\\_hygienists\\_in\\_ontario\\_their\\_changing\\_role\\_and\\_what\\_it\\_means\\_to\\_you.html](http://www.thestar.com/life/health_wellness/news_research/2012/04/01/dental_hygienists_in_ontario_their_changing_role_and_what_it_means_to_you.html)

*Healing Arts and Radiation Protection Act* (Sections 6 and 9)  
[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90h02\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h02_e.htm)

“Radiographs in Dental Hygiene Practice” – College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario  
[http://www.cdho.org/milestones/milestones\\_nov08.pdf](http://www.cdho.org/milestones/milestones_nov08.pdf)

Provincial Council of Women 2013 Resolution  
<http://jura123.com/pcwo/showpage.asp>

### 2. Equal Pay for Women: Closing the Gender Wage Gap

Hennessy’s Index -  
<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/canadas-pay-gap>

Statistics Canada - <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/pick-choisir?lang=eng&p2=33&id=2020102>

Statistics Canada - <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/labr69a-eng.htm>

10 Ways to Close Ontario’s Gender Pay Gap -  
<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/10-ways-close-ontario%E2%80%99s-gender-pay-gap>

Pay Equity Commission of Ontario -  
<http://www.payequity.gov.on.ca/en/about/pubs/genderwage/index.php>



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### **3. Women's Empowerment Principles**

The Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Canada -  
<http://bpwcanada.com/en/about-bpw-c/projects.html>

The Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Canada -  
<http://www.weprinciples.org/>

Pay Equity Commission of Ontario -  
<http://www.payequity.gov.on.ca/en/about/pubs/genderwage/index.php>