

25 health care professions to be part of new system

Twenty-five health care professions will be included in a new provincial regulatory system which will replace current legislation, Health Minister Murray Elston announced last week. Seven of these professions will become a regulated health profession for the first time. They include audiologists, dieticians,

medical laboratory technologists, occupational therapists, respiratory technologists, speech-language pathologists and midwives.

A midwifery task force was established in January by Mr. Elston to recommend to him and Greg Sorbara, Minister of Colleges and Universities, a framework for how

midwifery should be practised in Ontario and how an educational program can be developed and implemented.

Recommendations for the regulatory reform were made by Toronto lawyer Alan Schwartz, who heads a team that has been reviewing health professions legislation since 1983.

"Regulatory reform is long overdue in this province. Some professions which are outside the current legal structure have assumed new roles and whole new professions have emerged," Mr. Elston said.

"One important issue has been to determine which health care professions required statutory regulation in order to protect the public interest."

For each health care profession, the review team asked the following questions: is regulation by the minister of health appropriate, is regulation necessary, is regulation possible and is regulation feasible?

In addition to the seven health care professions which met the criteria for the first time, these professions will continue to be regulated: chiropractors, chiropractors, dental hygienists, dental technicians, dentists, denture therapists, massage therapists, nurses, nursing assistants, ophthalmic dispensers, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physicians, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists and radiological technicians.

One group which is currently regulated-naturopaths-did not

meet all of the criteria.

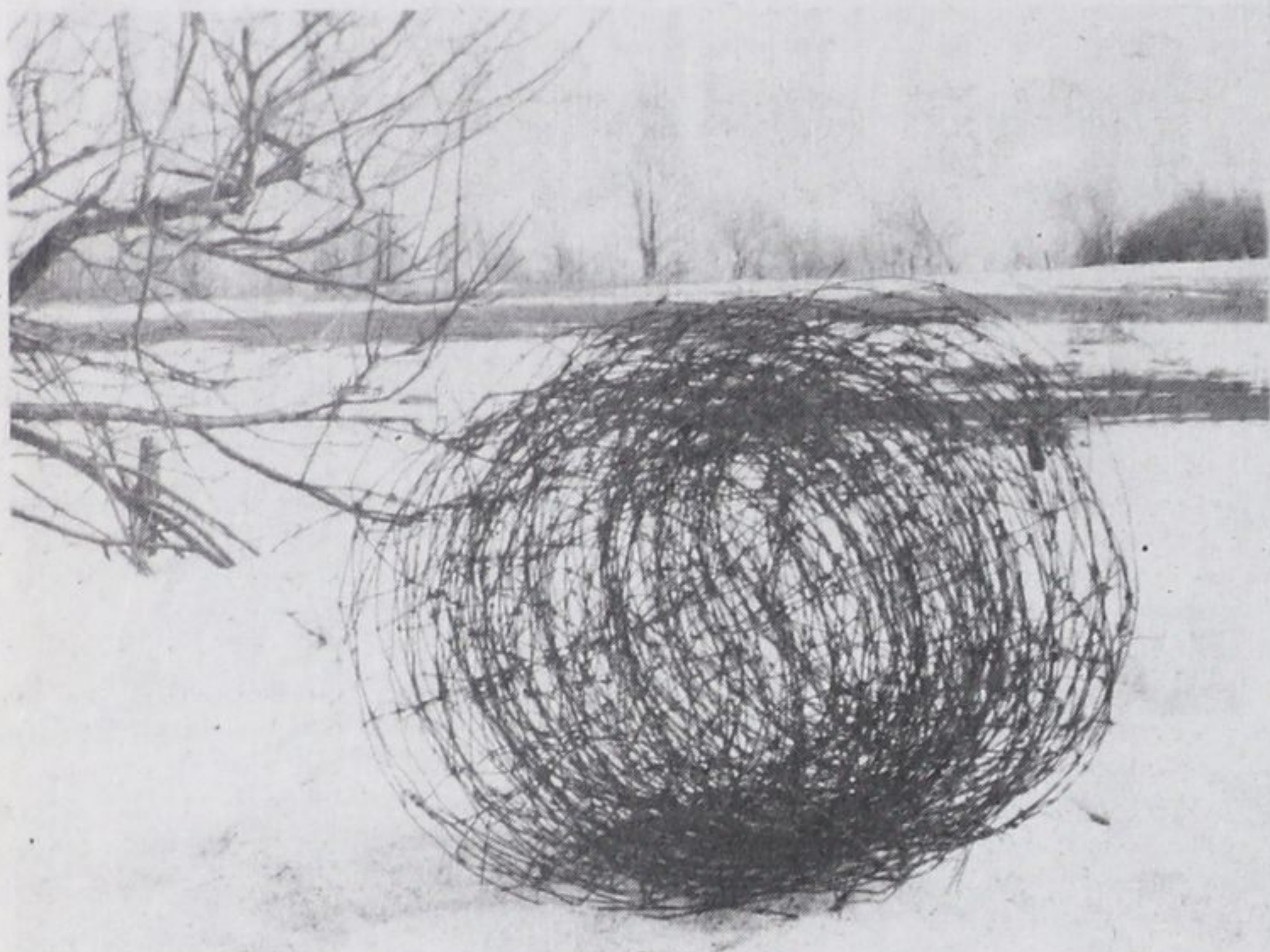
"Naturopathy is based on a philosophy of natural healing that makes it extremely difficult to define standards of practice. As a result, the continued regulation of this profession would not enhance protection to the public. Although naturopaths will not be regulated, they will be able to continue to practice," Mr. Elston said.

The review team will now move to the second phase of the legislation review which will define the scope of practice of the various health professions and address other issues that arise from the decision to

regulate.

"This phase will also develop procedural and legal reforms for the operation of the governing bodies. I am determined to see that the accountability of governing bodies to their own members, the legislature and the public is improved," Mr. Elston said.

"In the year ahead, we will begin the process of drafting legislation to translate the policy and procedural decisions into law. When the legislation is introduced, it will be one of the most important measures to be presented to the legislature."



This is not a tumble weed

No this is not a tumble weed, it's a fence that once was strung across the south end of Smith's Mobile Home Park's property just off King street in

Midland. It was recently taken down and rolled up to make way for an expansion program planned at Smith's that will see more than 50 mobile homes located on the new site.

Social workers annual meeting

The annual meeting of the Ontario Association of Professional Social Workers Huronia Branch will be held in Horseshoe Valley Resort starting at 5 p.m. on April 17.

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