

Nurses to play greater role in running of hospitals - Minister

Nurses are to have a greater voice in the administration and planning of their hospital's activities, Health Minister Elinor Caplan has announced.

Under an amendment to the regulation which governs hospital administration, Ontario's 223 public hospitals will be required to pass bylaws to include representatives from both nursing administration and staff nurses on various hospital committees including those of patient care, utilization review, and emergency planning.

Nurses will also take part in implementing and operating hospital programs including occupational health and safety and health surveillance. In addition, they will sit on the new fiscal advisory committees which hospitals are required to establish under another amendment to the regulation.

Staff nurse representatives will be elected to the committees by nursing staff to ensure a full participatory process.

"A successfully run hospital is a partnership in decision-making between the administration and the professional staffs. Giving staff nurses a voice in administrative, financial, operational and planning decisions in their hospitals will strengthen the partnership and broaden the base from which decisions are made," Caplan said.

Four reports were recently received on nursing issues from the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, the Hospital Council of Metropolitan Toronto, the Ontario Nurses' Association, and the Ministry's Advisory Committee on

Nursing Manpower. All four addressed the workplace issue.

"One very important way to improve worklife quality is to give people a voice in decision-making," said Caplan.

"It is also a very good way of getting valuable input into a hospital's administrative decisions."

The minister also said that additional nursing involvement in hospital decision-making will be considered under the wide-ranging

review of the Public Hospitals Act which is about to begin.

The introduction of a fiscal advisory committee arose out of the conjoint review which looked into hospital operations in July 1988.

The review committee recommended that hospitals develop strengthened financial planning capabilities. It also emphasized the need for hospitals to operate as a partnership of their administrative staff and their care-giving staff.

The financial advisory committee, composed of representatives from the administration, the medical staff and the nursing staff, will make recommendations to the hospital board on a wide range of matters relating to the operation and staffing of a hospital.

"This committee will help address both the need for enhanced financial planning capability and the fostering of a partnership within hospitals," Caplan said.

Inquiry will take place into school's religious education

Dr. Glenn Watson, former director of education for the Brant County Board of Education, will conduct a Ministerial Inquiry into religious education in the public elementary schools, Education Minister Chris Ward has announced.

"This government believes there is an important role for religious education in the public elementary schools," Mr. Ward said. "While this view is shared by many religious groups, parents and educators, opinions differ on what should be contained in an appropriate policy on religious education."

"I have asked Dr. Watson to conduct extensive consultation with interested parties during his inquiry, and it is my expectation that he will solicit their input through a public process."

The regulation governing religious education in public schools

was introduced in 1944, and a review, in consultation with the many groups which make up Ontario's multicultural society, is "timely, appropriate and useful," Ward said.

The need for a review is underlined by recent developments, including the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, its interpretation by the courts, and the passage last year of a resolution by the Legislature to consider for Ontario schools a multi-grade, multifaith religious education curriculum.

Dr. Watson's will complete:

* A review of the existing policy with respect to religious education;

* The identification of curriculum options for an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools which responds to the multicultural and

multifaith nature of the population of the province;

* The identification of appropriate teacher preparation strategies to support the teaching of religious education; and

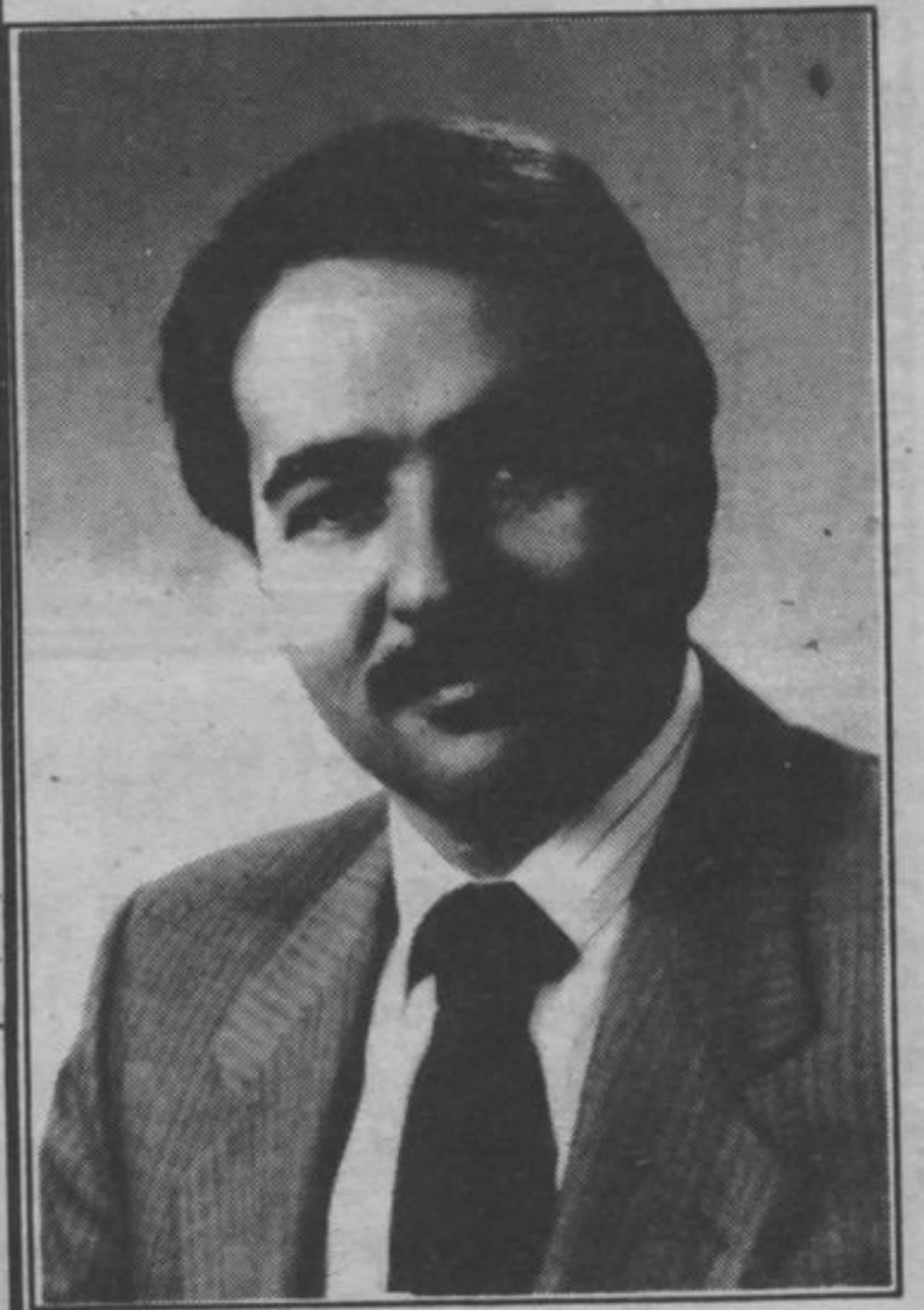
* The delivery of recommendations with regard to the adoption of an appropriate religious education policy for Ontario.

Dr. Watson will report and make recommendations to the minister by January 31, 1990.

"This mandate outlines a very interesting project, and I am both pleased and excited to have the opportunity to be involved in this challenging task, which focuses on an important issue in education today," Dr. Watson said.

Dr. Watson's inquiry office is at 1200 Bay Street, 11th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M5R 2A5. He can be reached by telephone at (416) 963-3356.

Ontario Hydro



Larry V. Doran
Director - Northwestern Region

The appointment is announced of Mr. Larry V. Doran to the position of director - northwestern region, Ontario Hydro, effective February 1.

Doran has extensive experience in Hydro's regional operations and was operating superintendent in the northwest from 1979 to 1983. He then joined operational audit at corporate headquarters in Toronto. Prior to this appointment to Thunder Bay and the northwest, he was manager of protection and control in transmission operations division, in Toronto.

As director, Doran will be responsible for the largest geographic slice of the province. Ontario Hydro's northwestern region services 11 municipal utilities, 16 direct industrial and approximately 38,000 rural and remote community customers in a 930,000 square kilometre area stretching east to White River, west to the Manitoba border and north to Hudson's Bay.



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