

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

1795

The first law is passed to restrict the practice of medicine in Upper Canada. It is repealed in 1806.

An early Loyalist register lists 18 men who identified as doctors in the colony. The population of the colony at this time was about 25,000.



1796

The world's first vaccine is discovered by British physician Edward Jenner for treating smallpox.

In 1815, the number of estimated doctors rises to 36.



1818

A new Medical Act establishes the Medical Board of Upper Canada.

1819

Dr. John Gilchrist of Hamilton becomes the first doctor in Upper Canada to be licensed by the Medical Board.

1835

Kingston General Hospital, one of Canada's first public hospitals, begins admitting patients.

1843

The University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine is founded.

In 1851 there are 520 doctors practising in the colony to 952,000 people.



1862

Dr. Anderson Ruffin Abbott becomes the first Black Canadian to be a licensed doctor.

1865

A revised Medical Act for Upper Canada establishes the General Council of Medical Education and Registration to examine medical students and license them to practise.

1866

The General Council of Medical Education and Registration meets for the first time on May 2.

Doctor #1, Dr. George L. Beard from Oxford County, is registered on May 3.

Dr. Peter Edmund Jones/Kahkewaquonaby (Anishinaabe) becomes the first licensed First Nations doctor in Canada. Noted Mohawk doctor and businessman Dr. Oronhyatekha is licensed shortly after in 1867.

1867

Confederation – the British colonies of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the Province of Canada unite to form the Dominion of Canada. Upper Canada becomes Ontario.

1869

Amendments to the Medical Act officially establish the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

1870

The College's governing council passes its first regulations for matriculation and licensing examinations for medical students.

1870s

Germ theory of disease is established by Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch.

In 1870, there are 1,777 doctors in Ontario. The population is 1.6 million.



1875

Dr. Jennie Trout becomes the first female doctor to be licensed in Canada.

1876

Detective William Smith is hired as the College's official prosecutor of unlicensed practitioners. In lieu of a salary, he is allowed to keep the fines he collects.

1880

Ontario's Dr. Emily Stowe becomes the second licensed female doctor in Canada, although she had been practising in Toronto since 1867.

1887

An amendment to the Medical Act is passed enabling practitioners to be disciplined by the College. The first cases were brought to the Committee in 1889. Two concern false advertising, including one man whose name was erased from the Register for "advertising healing by laying on of hands and magnetic healing."

In 1907, there are 3,807 physicians registered as members of the College. The population of Ontario is 2.5 million.



1912

The Canada Medical Act is adopted and the new Medical Council of Canada assumes responsibility for examining medical students; students could still choose to take the College exams until 1933.

1915

Reciprocal registration with Great Britain allows Canadian doctors to practise in the British armed forces and hospitals during World War I. The College rushes to license new graduates who want to serve in the war.

1916

CPSO member Dr. Norman Bethune receives his medical degree from the University of Toronto. A medical innovator and tireless practitioner, he would become a hero in China for his treatment of both soldiers and rural people during the Second Sino-Japanese War.



1919

The Canadian Department of Health is formed. The first initiatives are shared-cost funding programs with the provinces to battle tuberculosis and venereal disease that returned with soldiers from the war.

1921

CPSO member Dr. Frederick Banting and his assistant Charles Best discover insulin.



There are 5,320 physician members of the College. Ontario's population is 2.9 million.



1925

The Drugless Practitioners Act is passed to allow osteopaths, chiropractors and other practitioners to self-regulate. The title of "doctor" is restricted to medical practitioners.

In 1928, there are 5,992 members of the College. Ontario's population is at 3.4 million.



1939

World War II begins. In 1942, College President Alexander Moir commends the many physicians who volunteered for service and called for more to join "so that when the history of the present conflict is written it will be seen that the medical profession has lived up to its highest ideals." Between the two world wars, 50 Ontario physicians gave their lives in active duty.

1966

The Federal Medical Care Act passes, extending insurance coverage for hospital care to doctors' services, and officially beginning Canadian Medicare.

1970

Betty Kennedy is appointed as the first public member of the Complaints Committee with the goal of encouraging "participatory democracy within the affairs of the College".

In 1970 there are 11,828 members of the College. Ontario's population is at 7.7 million.



1974

The Health Disciplines Act passes after a lengthy period of consultation. The Act formalizes the appointment of public members to Council and establishes the Health Disciplines Board to coordinate activities between the professions.

1981

The Peer Assessment program begins to monitor ongoing physician competency by randomly selecting physicians for office practice assessments.

1983

The College's current location at 80 College Street opens. The building was designed by Canadian architect Eberhard Zeidler, whose pioneering work includes the Toronto Eaton Centre and Ontario Place.

1990

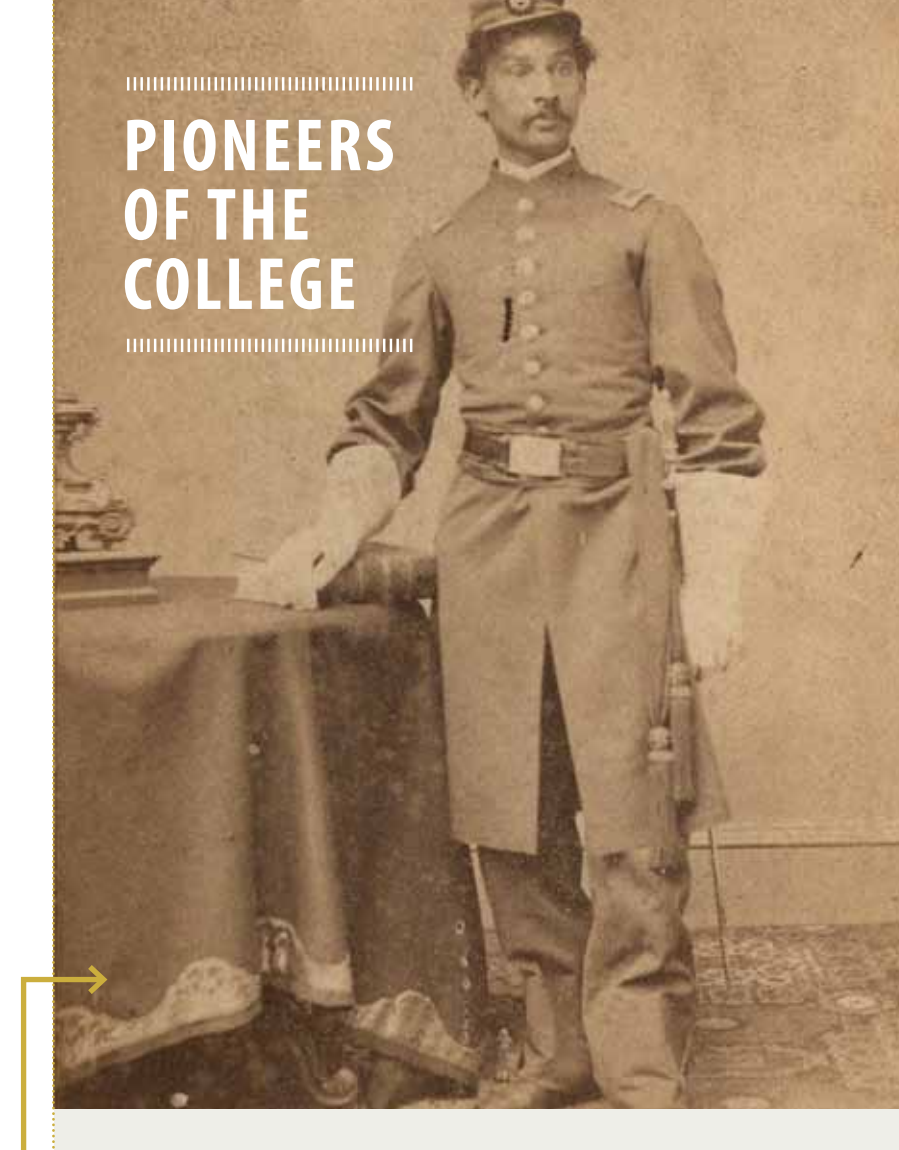
Dispute hearings and the governing council's meetings are opened to the public.

1991

The Report's Task Force on the Sexual Abuse of Physicians delivers its final report in November; a "zero tolerance" policy towards sexual abuse is adopted.

1992

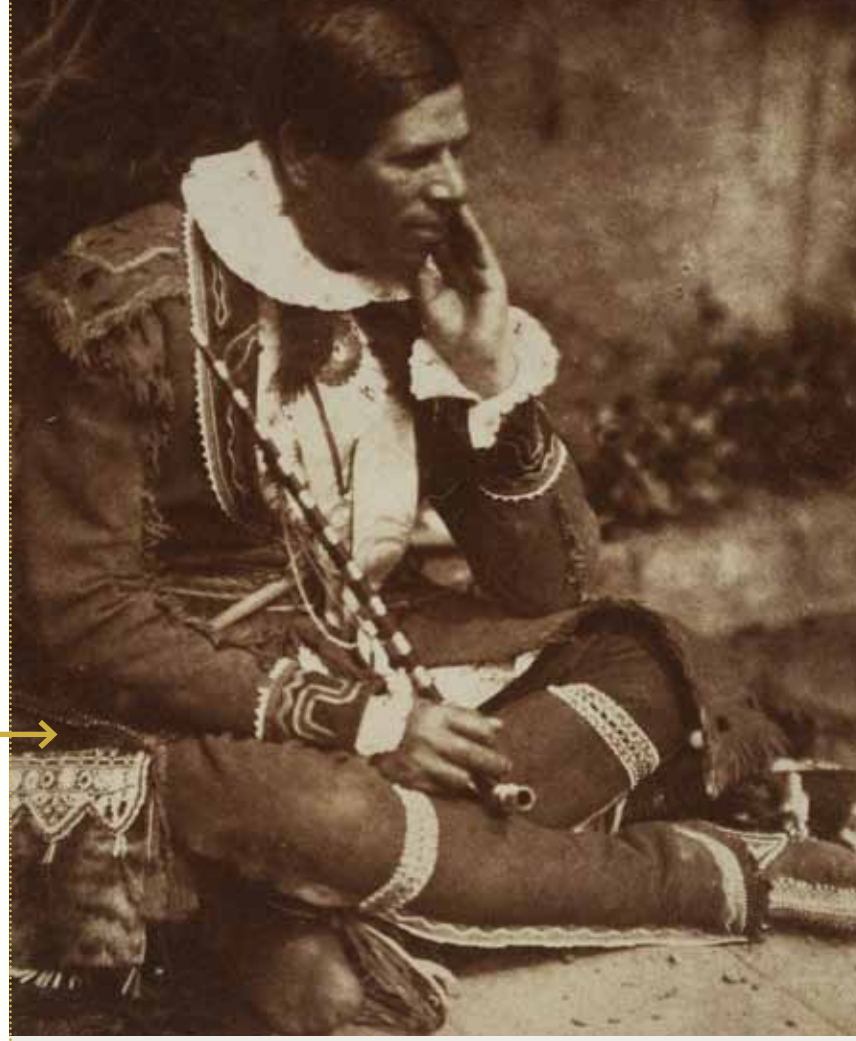
Canada's first female astronaut, Dr. Roberta Bondar, receives the CPSO President's Award.



PIONEERS OF THE COLLEGE

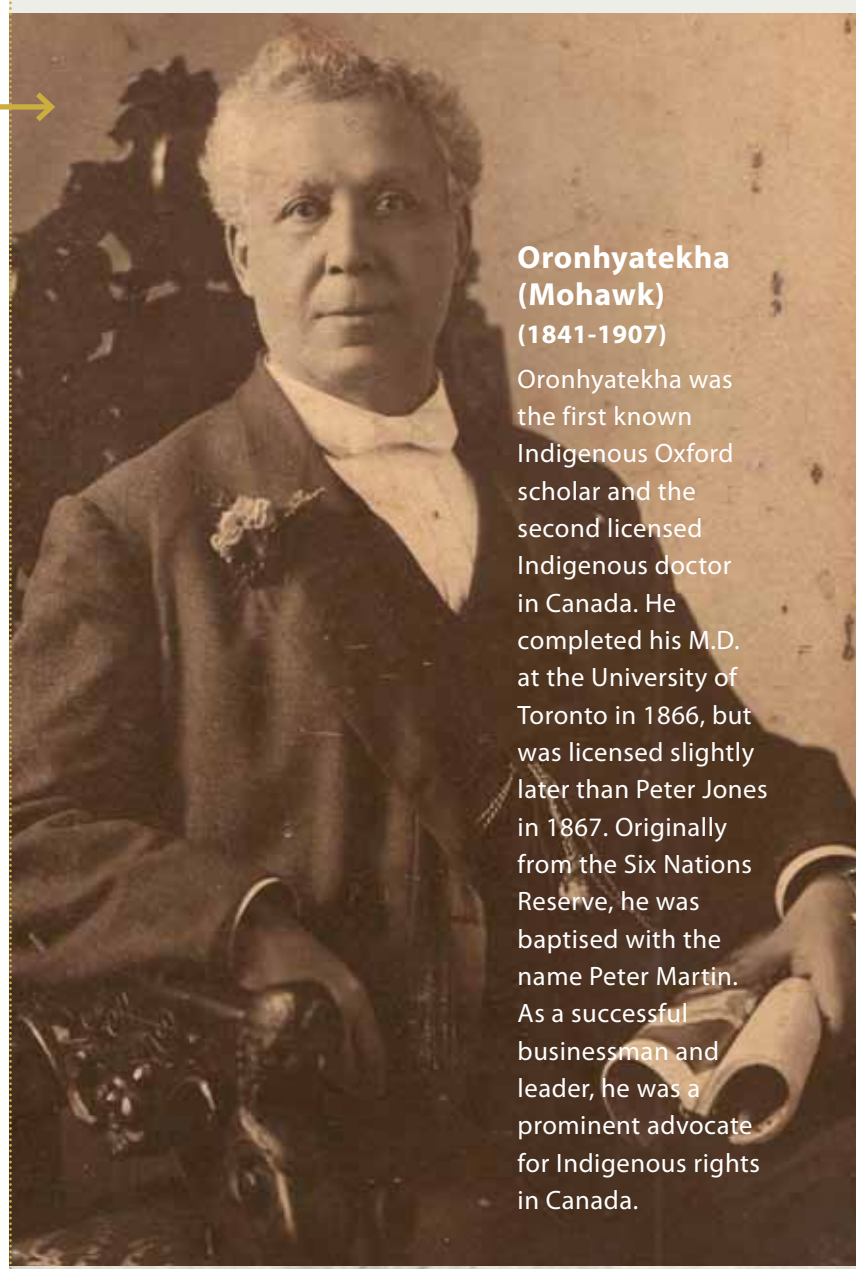
Anderson Ruffin Abbott (1837-1913)

Anderson Abbott was the first Black Canadian to be a licensed doctor. Born into an affluent family in Toronto, he received his medical degree from the Toronto School of Medicine in 1862. He served in the Union Army as a civilian surgeon during the American Civil War and administered to President Lincoln on his deathbed. Later, he would resume practice in Canada and write on Black history.



Peter Edmund Jones/Kahkewaquonaby (Anishinaabe) (1843-1909)

Peter Jones was the first known Indigenous doctor to be licensed in Canada. He received his M.D. from Queen's University in 1866 and set up practice at the New Credit First Nation. Later in his life, he became actively involved in politics as a Mississauga Ojibwa Chief, and advocated for the voting rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and for greater power over their own affairs.



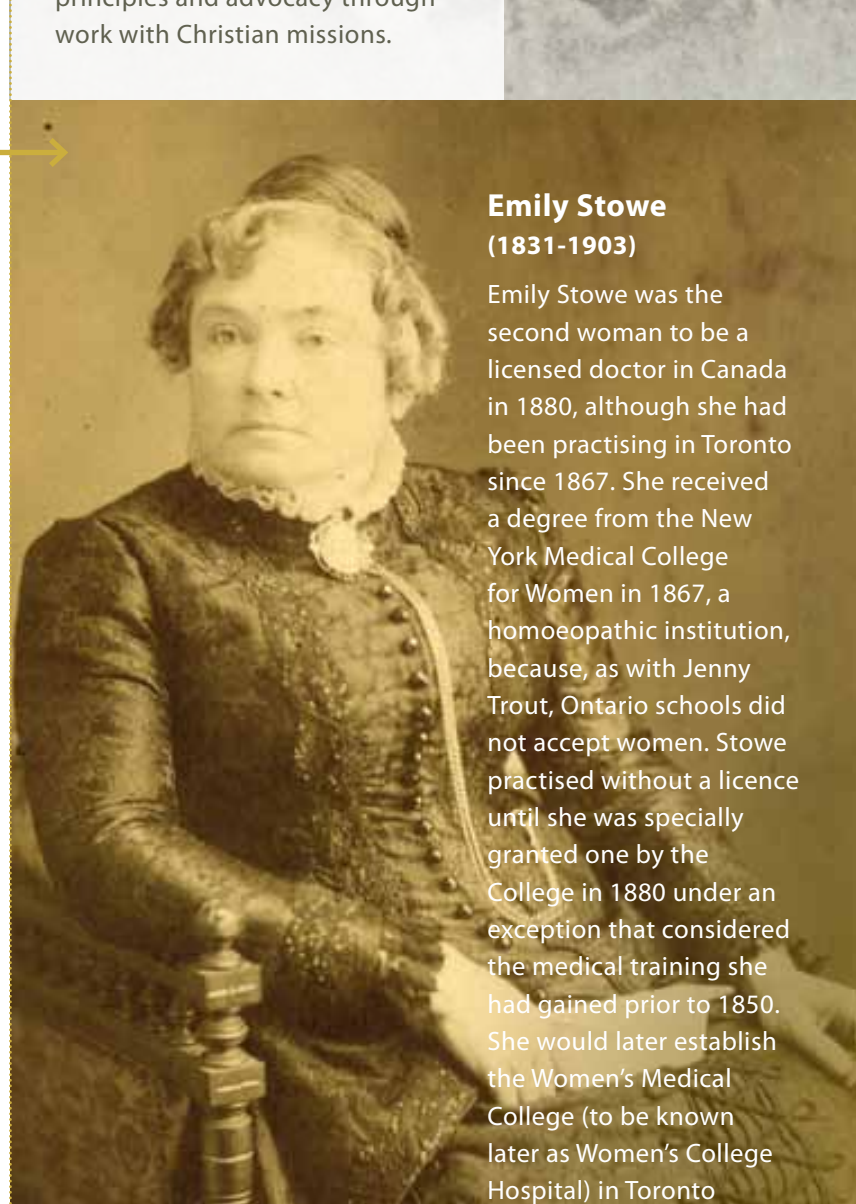
Oronhyatekha (Mohawk) (1841-1907)

Oronhyatekha was the first known Indigenous Oxford scholar and the second licensed Indigenous doctor in Canada. He completed his M.D. at the University of Toronto in 1866, but was licensed slightly later than Peter Jones in 1867. Originally from the Six Nations Reserve, he was baptised with the name Peter Martin. As a successful businessman and leader, he was a prominent advocate for Indigenous rights in Canada.



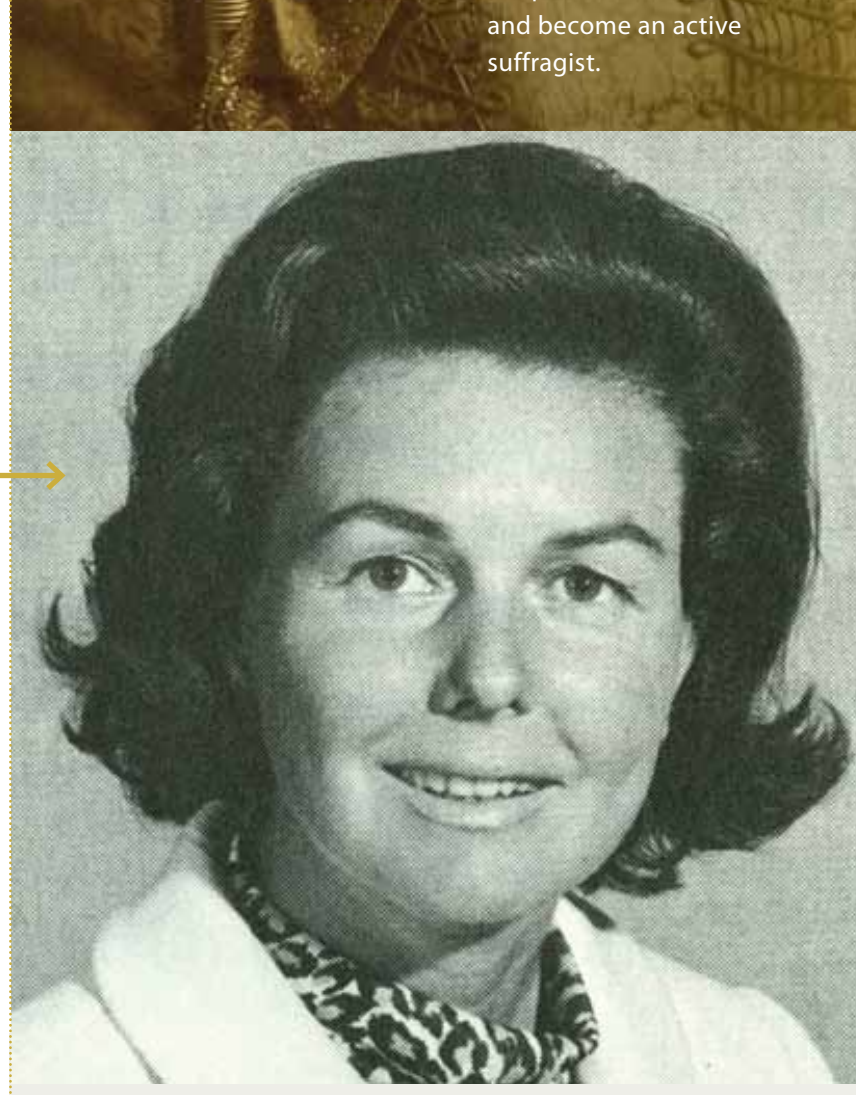
Jennie Trout (1841-1921)

In 1875, Jennie Trout became the first woman to receive a medical licence in Canada. She attended the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia because no medical school in Canada would accept a woman. She founded the Kingston-based Women's Medical College, which merged with the Toronto Women's Medical College in 1894. She later channeled her feminist principles and advocacy through work with Christian missions.



Emily Stowe (1831-1903)

Emily Stowe was the second woman to be a licensed doctor in Canada in 1880, although she had been practising in Toronto since 1867. She received a degree from the New York Medical College for Women in 1867, a homeopathic institution, because, as with Jenny Trout, Ontario schools did not accept women. Stowe practised without a licence until she was specially granted one by the College in 1880 under an exception that considered the medical training she had gained prior to 1850. She would later establish the Women's Medical College (to be known later as Women's College Hospital) in Toronto and become an active suffragist.



Betty Kennedy (1926-)

The first public member to serve on a committee of the College's governing council was renowned Canadian broadcaster, journalist, author and senator, Betty Kennedy. The College appointed Ms. Kennedy to the Complaints Committee in 1970, well before legislation required the inclusion of public members on Council. In response to public concerns over the handling of some complaints, the Council asked the government to appoint a lay person to the Complaints Committee. Ms. Kennedy's appointment was viewed by the Council as a way to support the principle of "participatory democracy within the affairs of the College." In 1974, under the rules enacted by the new Health Disciplines Act, the government appointed three members of the public to our Council. Today 15 public members sit on Council.



1994

The Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) comes into force, including Bill 100, which adds legislation relating to patient sexual abuse. The RHPA changes definitions of practice to a set of "controlled acts" that can be performed by certain professions and requires the development of quality assurance programs to monitor ongoing performance outside of complaints.

More than 26,000 physicians are members in 2003 to a population of 12.2 million

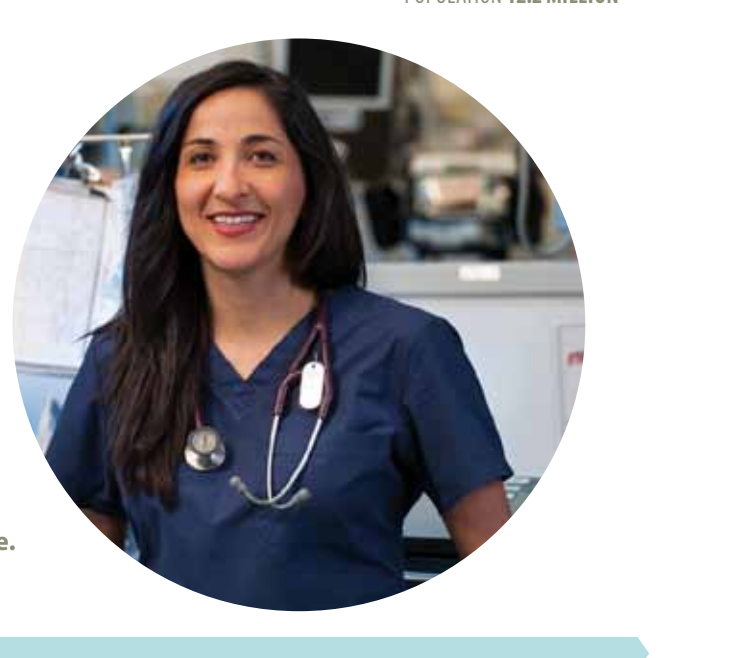


2012

The College launches its transparency initiative to review ways to provide the public with more useful physician-specific and process information on the College website.

2013

The College registers Doctor #100,000: Dr. Alaina Aguanno of London, Ontario.



2016

The College marks 150 years of regulating the practice of medicine.

There are 35,000 registered doctors for 13.6 million people in Ontario.

