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presentation

Presentation to Law Amendments Committee on Bill 193

Friday, October 18, 2019

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to present to you today on Bill 193.

My name is Amy-Lynne Graves and I'm President of the Massage Therapists' Association of Nova Scotia. MTANS represents some 1200 massage therapists in Nova Scotia, or approximately 90 percent of the practitioners in the Province.

Massage therapy is the complementary therapy that Canadians use most frequently. Our clients include very young children and frail seniors. They are often in pain from injuries or they suffer from chronic illness.

Trained massage therapists understand the techniques that will bring relief without inflicting damage. Our patients, and often the referring doctor, trust us to provide compassionate, effective treatment. They also trust us to respect and maintain professional boundaries.

Yet, we've all heard of examples where individual massage therapists have, through a lack of knowledge, actually aggravated the original complaint. We've heard of massage therapists who have exploited the vulnerability of a patient.

The majority of massage therapists in Nova Scotia are well-trained. MTANS and other associations require approved continuing education to maintain membership. And we investigate any allegations of inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour by a member.

The very small number of massage therapists who do not maintain our professional standards are of concern to the majority of MTANS members.

That is why MTANS has supported self-regulation for the profession of massage therapy for many years. We believe that Nova Scotians who are looking for a massage therapist need the security of knowing that a regulatory body is establishing and maintaining the highest professional standards.

The Title Protection Legislation you are considering today is a significant first step toward that level of public safety. It will ensure that massage therapists are well-trained and that their professional knowledge is current. It will also provide the profession with a greater degree of authority to manage situations where an individual practitioner has not met the standards, whether that be through education or a more serious sanction.

We welcome the legislation and are looking forward to its implementation.

In closing, I would like to recognize the work of officials in the Department of Health and Wellness with MTANS and other associations. Cindy Cruickshank and Sarah Savage have kept us informed through every step of the process. We appreciate their open, co-operative approach.