



CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION OF
CRITICAL
CARE
NURSES

For Immediate Release

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The **Canadian Association of Critical Care Nurses** (CACCN) welcomes the decision the Supreme Court of Canada released today in the case of *Mr. Hassan Rasouli v. Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Dr. Brian Cuthbertson and Dr. Gordon Rubinfeld*.

The Court held that the consent regime imposed by the Ontario *Health Care Consent Act* applies and requires physicians to seek consent to the withdrawal of life support treatment. The decision recognizes the complexity that this issue poses for health care providers, critically ill patients and their loved ones.

“We appreciate the thoughtful review of this issue by the Justices of the Supreme Court of Canada and are very pleased that the perspective of critical care nurses was considered in the process,” said CACCN President Teddie Tanguay. “It is our desire that today’s ruling will provide clarity and consistency in Ontario in providing best end of life care for patients, families and their health care providers,” added Ms. Tanguay.

As an organization that represents critical care nurses across the country, the CACCN will continue to support patients, their families and physicians in this challenging and important aspect of their shared work in a manner consistent with the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision.

As an intervenor before the Court, CACCN was represented on a pro bono basis by the legal team of Rahool Agarwal, Nahla Khouri and Nicholas Saint-Martin of Norton Rose Fulbright Canada LLP.

Ms. Tanguay, Karen Dryden-Palmer, Vice President, and Kate Mahon, Past President of CACCN, will be available for interviews and comments. Legal questions regarding CACCN’s oral and written submissions should be directed to Rahool Agarwal.

Background (December 2012)

The **Canadian Association of Critical Care Nurses** (CACCN) has been granted intervenor status before the Supreme Court of Canada in the case of *Mr. Hassan Rasouli v. Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Dr. Brian Cuthbertson and Dr. Gordon Rubinfeld*. CACCN’s

participation in this proceeding will ensure that the perspective of Canadian critical care nurses regarding end of life decision making will be heard at the highest court in the country.

This case illustrates the difficult nature of decision making at the end of life and the need for direction in those instances where the health care providers and the family or substitute decision maker disagree on what is in the best interests of the patient. Critical Care nurses are healthcare providers who are closely engaged with families, patients and the healthcare team throughout their hospital stay including the end of life. As such, we are pleased that the Supreme Court of Canada has recognized the need to understand these complex issues from the unique perspective of critical care nurses.

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