

Illegal practitioner prosecuted



THE STANDARD OF CARE.

For Immediate Release

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The College of Nurses of Ontario participated in the successful prosecution of an Ontario woman charged with identity theft and working as a nurse without proper qualifications.

On September 30, 2011, Eva Donna Akinyi Okello was sentenced in Ontario court to eight months in jail. Her DNA has also been ordered into the national databank system.

“From the College’s perspective, this finding is a good outcome,” says Karen McGovern, the College’s Director of Professional Conduct. “The Crown sought a significant penalty because Okello is a repeat offender. She compromised the public’s safety by posing as a nurse when she did not have the qualifications to provide nursing care. This penalty should serve as a deterrent to others engaging in similar conduct.”

In a statement presented to the court, the College explained its role in ensuring public protection and maintaining the public’s confidence in the nursing profession. *Public safety includes protecting the public from harm or likely harm that can result from individuals who engage in deception in their provision of health care*, the statement reads.

“Honesty is a quality that the public expects in health care providers and nursing has always been among the most trusted of professions,” explains McGovern. “The College maintains the public’s trust in the nursing profession by holding nurses accountable for the care they provide. Illegal practitioners like Okello erode the public’s confidence because they are not accountable to any governing body.”

This is not the first time Okello has been prosecuted as an illegal practitioner. In 2005, the College laid charges that resulted in a guilty finding and a fine of \$8,000.

The College maintains a list of illegal practitioners on its website at www.cno.org/illegal-practitioners. An individual’s registration status can be checked on Find a Nurse, the online register of the College’s members, or by calling Customer Service at 416 928-0900, or toll-free at 1 800 387-5526.

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