



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Students at Many Private Career Colleges Could be Receiving Inadequate Training: Auditor General

(Toronto) The province's 500 private career colleges are providing students with training that may not provide the skills needed in today's job market, and the province is not meeting its duty to regulate these colleges, says Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk in her *2021 Annual Report*.

Graduates of private career colleges work as paramedics, personal support workers, massage therapists, hair-stylists, truck drivers and many other occupations that serve the public. But almost 1,400 programs that are being delivered today were approved more than five years ago.

"Students are paying for training that may not prepare them properly for employment in their chosen field," said Lysyk. "That is especially true for students hoping to work in fields that change rapidly, such as paramedicine and information technology."

Even if the training programs are adequate, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities doesn't actually know if they are being delivered as designed. Government inspectors don't check that.

The Ministry is also not detecting private career colleges that charge students more than they have told the Ministry they charge. Our audit found that 33% of a sample of them charged a higher fee, averaging \$485 higher per college.

The audit also found that when the Ministry posts information on private career colleges' graduation rates and graduate employment rates, the information is at least two years old. But for up to 83% of college programs, performance indicators are not available at all. Also, the Ministry does not analyze complaints about colleges or publish repeat complaints. All of which means students are missing important information when making decisions about their vocational training.

"Quality, up-to-date education is critical to ensuring private career college graduates are better positioned to contribute to Ontario's economy," said Lysyk.

The audit report contains 22 recommendations for improvement.

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For more information, please contact:
Bonnie Lysyk
Auditor General
(647) 267-9263

Read the report at www.auditor.on.ca

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