

PATIENT ADVOCATE

WHAT IS A COLLEGE PATIENT ADVOCATE?

Patient Advocates are College staff who will help you understand the College's role in resolving complaints. Patient Advocates will support you through the complaint process and be your contact when questions arise.

HOW PATIENT ADVOCATES CAN HELP YOU!

1) When you call, a Patient Advocate will:

- Listen to your specific concerns.
- Ask questions to clarify and better understand your concerns.
- Discuss what options are available to resolve your concerns. One possible option is to file a formal complaint with the College.

2) Patient Advocates are your link to the College's complaints process and will:

- Help you understand the complaints process and how it may apply to your situation.
- Explain the College's role in resolving complaints against physicians.
- Contact you on receipt of your written complaint to ensure we understand your issue(s).

3) If you choose to lodge a formal complaint with the College, a Patient Advocate will:

- Provide you with a copy of the College's *Complaint Reporting Form* and *Release of Information Form*.
- Meet with you in person, as necessary, to further discuss your complaint.
- Answer any questions you may have throughout the complaints process. A Patient Advocate may also contact you to obtain clarification or more information.
- Attend any required meetings with you at the College and provide debriefs.
- Discuss any correspondence you may receive from the College, including the decision letter which helps you understand why a particular decision was made.

HOW TO CONTACT A PATIENT ADVOCATE

Patient Advocates are available to take calls regarding complaints and complaint issues during regular business hours: Monday - Friday, 8:15 AM - 4:15 PM (MST). Please call 780-423-4764 or 1-800-661-4689 (in Canada).

Patient Advocates can help you gain a better understanding of our Complaint Process.

Call 780-423-4764 or 1-800-661-4689.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know if my concern justifies a complaint?

You have the right to speak to your physician directly about any problems or concerns. If your attempt to do so is refused or unsuccessful, contact a Patient Advocate who will explain the complaint process and how it applies to your situation.

How do I complain about a physician?

Complete both the *Complaints Reporting Form* and *Release of Information Form*. Print, sign and send these forms to the College. If you have questions and/or require assistance completing the forms, contact a Patient Advocate.

Will the doctor know that I am making the complaint?

Yes. The physician is given a copy of your written complaint.

Can I be sued for filing a complaint?

No, not for filing a complaint. However, if you distribute copies of the complaint to others, that may be considered libel and may put you at risk legally.

What happens after I complain about a physician?

1. The College's Complaints Director will review your written complaint and decide how best to proceed based on options outlined in the *Health Professions Act*.
2. A patient advocate may contact you to clarify the issue and desired outcome.
3. The College will send you written acknowledgement that we received your complaint and advise you as to how we are proceeding with your complaint.
4. The College will contact the physician identified in your complaint. He or she will also receive a copy of your written complaint.
5. The College may collect and review additional information, including medical records from physicians, institutions and other sources.
6. The patient advocate will keep you informed as to the status of your complaint.
7. You will receive a letter outlining the conclusion of the review.

Is there a time limit to file a complaint?

No, but the sooner you file your complaint, the more effective the process will be.

Will I be financially compensated if my complaint is upheld?

No. If that is the purpose of your complaint, you should obtain legal advice and consider a civil lawsuit.

How long does the complaint process take?

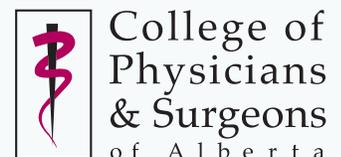
Reviewing a complaint can take several months or years, depending on the complexity of the complaint, length of investigation and availability of experts (if required).

What are possible outcomes of a complaint?

1. The complaint is dismissed. Evidence did not support the complaint or there was insufficient evidence to proceed.
2. The matter is resolved with consent. The complainant consents to the College working with the physician to make necessary practice changes.
3. The complaint is referred to a formal hearing, which may result in discipline.

How can I contact the College?

Address: 2700-10020 100 ST NW | Edmonton, AB T5J 0N3
Phone: 780-423-4764 or 1-800 661-4689 (toll free in Alberta)
Fax: 780-424-9617 | Email: complaints@cpsa.ab.ca
Web: cpsa.ca



Good medical practice - it's what we're all about