

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Responsibility for a Medical Practice

Under Review: No

Issued By: Council: January 1, 2010 (*Direction & Control of a Medical Practice*)

Reissued by Council: July 1, 2018 (*Responsibility for a Medical Practice*)

The **Standards of Practice** of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (“CPSA”) are the **minimum** standards of professional behavior and ethical conduct expected of all regulated members registered in Alberta. Standards of Practice are enforceable under the *Health Professions Act* and will be referenced in the management of complaints and in discipline hearings. CPSA also provides **Advice to the Profession** to support the implementation of the Standards of Practice.

1. A regulated member **must** direct and take responsibility for his/her medical practice, including:
 - a. patient care provided, including the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, advice given and [referral](#) of the patient; and
 - b. compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and standards governing the practice of medicine.

2. A regulated member **must** also direct and take responsibility for the following, except where a Medical Director has responsibility:
 - a. all non-regulated staff [supervised](#) by the regulated member by:
 - i. setting appropriate roles and responsibilities;
 - ii. ensuring appropriate qualifications; and
 - iii. overseeing performance;
 - b. all regulated staff participating in the practice by ensuring:
 - i. appropriate qualifications; and
 - ii. effective collaboration in a team-based setting;
 - c. [billing](#) for medical practice;
 - d. [advertising](#) and promotion of services;

Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

- “Regulated member” means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered as a member of this College. The College regulates physicians, surgeons and osteopaths.
- “Must” refers to a mandatory requirement.
- “May” means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- “Patient” includes, where applicable, the patient’s legal guardian or substitute decision maker.

- e. quality assurance and quality improvement;
 - f. custody of health information, including maintenance and storage of [medical records](#);
 - g. notification to CPSA at least 30 days prior to:
 - i. establishing or [moving](#) the physical location of a practice¹, providing the street address and services to be offered; or
 - ii. initiating or resuming a service or procedure that requires [accreditation](#) and/or approval by CPSA, as identified in the [CPSA Standards of Practice](#) or [CPSA bylaws](#)²; and
 - h. clear identification to patients and the public coming into the practice setting of the qualifications for all care providers (e.g., nametag or notice) that includes:
 - i. for regulated healthcare professionals, their name and professional designation; and
 - ii. for non-regulated care providers, their name and job title.
3. Regulated members practising in a multi-physician setting³ without a Medical Director **must** designate one individual to represent the practice in interactions with CPSA, either:
- a. a medical lead, who is a regulated member, and accepts overall responsibility for any or all of subclauses 2(a) through (h); or

¹Excluding a hospital or facility operated by government or a provincial health authority.

²See [Medical Services Requiring Accreditation Outside of Hospitals](#), [Complementary and Alternative Medicine](#), [Reprocessing of Medical Equipment](#) and [CPSA bylaws](#).

³For the purposes of this standard, “multi-physician setting” refers to any practice arrangement between regulated members in which they share the use, benefits or costs associated with any of the following:

- a. advertising;
- b. office telephone number;
- c. medical records;
- d. clinical or administrative functions (i.e., [infection prevention and control](#), billing, etc.);
- e. premises, equipment, furnishings or other property; and/or
- f. staff.

Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

- “Regulated member” means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered as a member of this College. The College regulates physicians, surgeons and osteopaths.
- “Must” refers to a mandatory requirement.
- “May” means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- “Patient” includes, where applicable, the patient’s legal guardian or substitute decision maker.

- b. a contact person who is a regulated member.
4. Notwithstanding the above, clauses (2) and (3) **may not** apply to a regulated member working in a hospital or facility operated by government or a provincial health authority.

RELATED STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

- [Advertising](#)
- [Charging for Uninsured Professional Services](#)
- [Closing or Leaving a Medical Practice](#)
- [Patient Record Retention](#)
- [Re-Entering a Medical Practice or Changing Scope of Practice](#)
- [Referral Consultation](#)
- [Relocating a Medical Practice](#)
- [Supervision of Restricted Activities](#)

COMPANION RESOURCES

- Advice to the Profession:
 - [Advertising](#)
 - [Charging for Uninsured Professional Services](#)
 - [Medical Practice Observation](#)
 - [Physicians as Custodians](#)
 - [Referral Consultation](#)
 - [Responsibility for a Medical Practice](#)
- [CMPA's The Most Responsible Physician](#)

Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

- “Regulated member” means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered as a member of this College. The College regulates physicians, surgeons and osteopaths.
- “Must” refers to a mandatory requirement.
- “May” means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- “Patient” includes, where applicable, the patient’s legal guardian or substitute decision maker.