

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Continuing Competence

Under Review: Yes

Issued By Council: [date TBD]

023: For Consultation

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.

Note: a glossary of terms can be found at the end of this document. Glossary terms are indicated in teal with a “G” throughout this document.

PREAMBLE

The *Health Professions Act* (HPA) requires CPSA to establish a Continuing Competence Program requiring participation from regulated members to maintain their competence and enhance the provision of professional services¹ throughout their careers. The HPA authorizes CPSA’s Competence Committee to conduct practice visits, examinations, interviews or other competence assessments of regulated members².

The Competence Committee governs and provides direction for CPSA’s Continuing Competence Program. The Continuing Competence Program has two objectives: to establish a program requiring participation from all regulated members, to maintain their competence and enhance the provision of professional services throughout their careers (e.g., quality improvement), and to identify members whose competence may require further assessment and support (e.g., practice changes, quality assurance, education and remediation). The *Continuing Competence* standard of practice addresses the requirement for regulated members to participate in CPSA’s Continuing Competence Programs.

The Continuing Competence Program is comprised of three components:

- Continuing Professional Development

¹ Per Section 50(1) of the *HPA*.

² Per Section 50(2) of the *HPA*.

Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

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- General Assessment
- Competence Assessment

Information related to participation in Continuing Competence Programs is confidential, unless the Competence Committee feels a referral to the Complaints Director is necessary based on information obtained through the Continuing Competence Program that:

- the regulated member has intentionally provided false or misleading information;
- the regulated member displays a lack of competence that has not been remedied by participating in a Continuing Competence program;
- the regulated member may be incapacitated; or
- the conduct of the regulated member constitutes unprofessional conduct that cannot be readily remedied by means of a Continuing Competence program³.

Failure or refusal to comply with Continuing Competence Program requirements is considered unprofessional conduct and may result in sanctions, which may affect the ability of regulated members to renew their practice permit.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAM

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Regulated members are required to continue acquiring knowledge and skills throughout their careers. Details on how to fulfill the requirements below can be found in the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023].

1. A regulated member on a general register, provisional register, telemedicine register or limited practice register with an active practice permit **must** undertake CPD by participating in and complying with the requirements of one of⁴:

³ In accordance with Section 51.1(1) of the *HPA*.

⁴ Refers to regulated members registered on both physicians, surgeons, osteopaths and physician assistants registers, where these exist.

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- a. the Maintenance of Proficiency (Mainpro+) of the College of Family Physicians of Canada; or
 - b. the Maintenance of Certification (MoC) of the Royal College of Physicians & Surgeons of Canada.
2. A regulated member **must** keep records, in a form satisfactory to the Registrar, of any activities undertaken for the purpose of CPD for a minimum of six (6) years⁵.
 3. A regulated member **must**, on the request of and in accordance with the directions of the Registrar, provide copies of the records referred to in clause (2).
 4. A regulated member **must** submit a copy of the certification of completion of an applicable CPD program to CPSA upon request.

General Assessment

General Assessment includes, but is not limited to, CPSA's Physician Practice Improvement Program (PIIP) and Physician Prescribing Practices (PPP) program.

Physician Practice Improvement Program (PIIP)⁶

5. A regulated member on a general register **must** participate in PIIP over a continuous five-year cycle, in accordance with requirements outlined in the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023]⁷.
6. A regulated member on a provisional, limited, telemedicine or physician assistant register **may** be required to participate in PIIP over a continuous five-year cycle, in accordance with requirements outlined in the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023]⁸.

⁵ In accordance with CFPC's Mainpro+ [User's Manual](#) (2019).

⁶ While titled "Physician Practice Improvement Program" and "Physician Prescribing Practices Program," these assessments would apply to physician assistants where identified.

⁷ Refers to regulated members registered on both physicians, surgeons, osteopaths and physician assistants registers, where these exist.

⁸ Refers to regulated members registered on both physicians, surgeons, osteopaths and physician assistants registers, where these exist.

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7. Notwithstanding clauses (5) and (6), a regulated member required to participate in PPIP **may**, if extenuating circumstances exist, submit a request in writing to the Registrar to vary the period in which the physician practice improvement activity must be completed.
8. In accordance with the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023], a regulated member required to participate in PPIP **must** complete each of the following separate activities at least once over a five-year continuous cycle:
 - a. a practice-driven quality improvement activity;
 - b. a CPSA [Standards of Practice](#) quality improvement activity; and
 - c. a personal development activity.
9. A regulated member **must** retain all documentation related to PPIP activities for a period of six (6) years.
10. Upon request, a regulated member **must** provide documentation of PPIP activities to CPSA.

Physician Prescribing Practices (PPP)⁶

The PPP program establishes parameters to identify at-risk prescribing and monitors the prescribing of certain medications by regulated members.

11. A regulated member **may** be required to participate in an educational intervention in accordance with the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023].

Competence Assessment

Competence assessments include, but are not limited to, Individual Practice Review (IPR), Physician Assessment and Feedback (PAF) and the Physician Health Monitoring Program (PHMP). Details on how to fulfill the requirements below can be found in the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program

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Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023].

12. When directed, a regulated member **must** participate in a competence assessment (e.g., IPR, PAF, PHMP) in accordance with the requirements outlined in the Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023], for the purpose of evaluating the regulated member's competence:
 - a. competence assessments **may** require evaluations including:
 - i. practice visits;
 - ii. examinations;
 - iii. an individualized assessment of professional competence, which may include (but is not limited to) assessments of:
 1. professional knowledge or skills;
 2. communication skills;
 3. mental and physical health;
 4. professional ethics; or
 5. practice management;
 - iv. interviews; or
 - v. any other type of evaluation as required by the Competence Committee.

Actions to be taken

13. If the results of a general assessment or competence assessment are unsatisfactory, a regulated member **must** undertake any remedial action directed by the Competence Committee or Registrar, including, but not limited to:
 - a. successful completion of Continuing Competence Program requirements or professional development activities;

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- b. successful completion of any examinations, testing, assessment, training, education or treatment to enhance competence in specified areas;
- c. practising⁶ under the supervision of another regulated member;
- d. practice restrictions or limitations
- e. participation in the Physician Health Monitoring program;
- f. reporting on specified matters on specified dates, to the Competence Committee or Registrar;
- g. correction of any problems identified in the practice visit; or
- h. demonstration of competence gained in a specific area.

Members' responsibility for costs

14. A regulated member **must** pay the costs as directed by CPSA of:
- a. a competence assessment; and
 - b. any action that the regulated member must undertake in response to a direction by the Competence Committee or Registrar under clause (13).

GLOSSARY

Practising: the action of providing medical care—what member does (verb); “practice” refers to a member’s business (noun). For example, a doctor with a private practice practises privately.

RELATED STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

- *Standard*
- *Standard*
- *Standard*

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COMPANION RESOURCES

- CPSA Continuing Competence Program Manual [CPSA is currently in the process of developing the Program Manual, which will be available when the *Continuing Competence* standard takes effect in spring 2023]
- Resource
- Resource

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