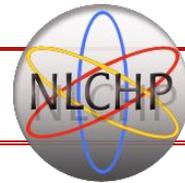


# Making Connections



May 2015

Message from the Council Chair

Vol. 3, Spring 2015

The last edition of *Making Connections* focused on ensuring competency. It was noted that participation in mandatory education as directed by your College, is a mechanism set out in the legislation aimed to ensure that registrants maintain competency throughout their work life. The NLCHP is now starting to compile information on compliance with the continuing education (CE) requirement and we are very pleased that registrants are meeting the obligations as set in the *Health Profession Act*.

During renewal of registrations we have seen over a 95% compliance with College required CE. In addition, during the audit of randomly selected registrants who were required to submit their CE portfolios, feedback by the Quality Assurance (QA) Assessors has been positive. As with any new process there is always a need for additional work by the Colleges to strengthen the requirements of their CE programs and for more education by the colleges to assist members in the appropriate categorization of CE credits.

In this edition we wish to introduce a new topic that is both timely and a sensitive subject for many registrants. The topic is a registrant's personal conduct and behavior and how it relates to your profession's code of conduct. Over the past couple of months there have been a number of examples in the media where an individual's behavior outside of the workplace has resulted in consequences for the individual in their workplace.

Colin Power BSc, MLT

## **Personal behavior and Professional Conduct: Does it matter?**

As has been commented in earlier editions of *Making Connections*, being a member of a self-regulated health profession is a privilege granted to the profession by government on behalf of the public. As a self-regulated profession, the profession establishes a set of standards of practice and expectations for professional behavior and has an obligation to ensure that registrants live up to these expectations.

It is important for registrants to understand that your profession's code of ethics/conduct speaks to what the profession expects of its members. Honesty, integrity, respect, accountability, and confidentiality are often the words used within a profession's code of ethics (sometimes called

code of conduct). Over the past 20 years there has been an increasing acknowledgment in the literature as well as adoption of specific principles in many health professional codes of conduct referencing that members of a profession must act with honesty and integrity and ensure that their behavior does not damage the public's confidence in the member or their profession.

Czimbabala and Brooks in an article "Ethics and Integrity"<sup>1</sup> state that an organization's success depends on the integrity of its employees. The authors include that personal integrity is the foundation for ethical behavior and a person who has worked hard to develop a high standard of integrity will likely transfer these principles into their professional life.

Health care providers are highly respected for the work that they perform personally and the work of their profession. In order for the profession to maintain this level of public confidence, the public must have confidence in its individual members. Health professionals who are viewed by the general public to exhibit unacceptable behavior whether that be in the workplace or in their private lives reflect negatively on the profession.

The expectation that a registrant's personal behavior is considered when applying to be registered in this province is reflected in the *Health Profession Act (Act)*. The Act requires applicants to include a criminal records screening and vulnerable sector check with their applications and registrants are required to declare any convictions with renewal of registration. This information remains confidential but is reviewed by the NLCHP Registration Committee who determine if the conviction has or has the potential to impact the work of the applicant. If the conviction is deemed to potentially have impact on the work of the applicant the application may be denied registration and/or restrictions may be placed on the applicant's registration and practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Czimbabala, B., Brooks, M. (2007) Ethics and Integrity  
[http://www.abundancecompany.com/ethics\\_integrity.htm](http://www.abundancecompany.com/ethics_integrity.htm)

With the demand by the general public for increasing transparency and openness, there are discussions nationwide for more transparency by regulatory bodies...

## NLCHP Mission....

We ensure that our registrants are competent health professionals **providing quality care/service to the people of the province.**

With the demand by the general public for increasing transparency and openness there are discussions nationwide for more transparency by regulatory bodies including the disclosure of any criminal convictions. Such disclosure is aimed at allowing the public to make an informed choice about who and where they wish to seek treatment or services.

Many of us attempt to keep our personal and our work lives separate, and question why one would impact on the other. In today's society with the increased demand for information, the increasing use of social media and other forms of communication, such separation appears to be a myth and not a reality.

Question to ponder:

If offered a choice would you wish to receive service or treatment from a registered health professional who has disclosed a criminal conviction regardless of the nature of that conviction?

## Reminder: New Requirements

All registrants are asked to please be reminded that as part of the 2015 continuing education, all colleges require that registrants complete the following mandatory education programs focused on provincial legislation during the calendar year (January-December 2015).

- 1) **Jurisprudence education for your profession.** The on-line module is available on the NLCHP web site: [www.nlchp.ca](http://www.nlchp.ca) under the tab *Education/Resources*;
  
- 2) **Newfoundland and Labrador Personal Health Information Act education.** The on-line modules: Custodian-Direct Contact with Personal Health Information, and Direct Contact with Personal Health Information, are accessible on the NLCHP web site [www.nlchp.ca](http://www.nlchp.ca) under the tab *Education/Resources*.

If you require additional information or clarification of the content of this communication please feel free to contact staff at the NLCHP office.

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Curtis Martin, Chair

## *HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT, 2010*

- Support the quality and safety of Health Services;
- Enhance public protection;
- Improve patient safety;
- Strengthen the regulatory system;
- Facilitate patient-centered, interprofessional collaboration and care.