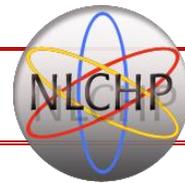


Making Connections



May 31, 2014

Message from the Council Chair

Vol.1, Spring 2014

It's a pleasure to introduce the first edition of the NLCHP Newsletter for registrants. We hope that *Making Connections* will be the go-to place for news and education regarding what's going on with regulatory matters within this jurisdiction. The objectives of the newsletter are to provide information on the activities and directions of the NLCHP as a regulatory organization, as well as to keep registrants informed of issues and trends in professional regulation.

The NLCHP through its Council and staff are part of a regulatory process assisting the self-regulation of 6 health professions in NL. The governing NLCHP "Council" is made up of 18 members; 2 from each college, as well as 6 public representatives. These volunteers, elected by each of the health professions or appointed by government, provide the NLCHP with their time, expertise and experience to ensure that we meet the mandate as set out in the *Health Professions Act* (2010).

The Council since it began operation in September 2012 has completed registration and renewal registration for 6 different health professions in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The NLCHP now has over 1050 registrants and has registered members of the following health professions: audiology, dental hygiene, medical laboratory technology, respiratory therapy, speech-language pathology and traditional Chinese medicine acupuncture.

As the title suggests, this communique is about connecting with our registrants and providing information/education about the work of the Council and the policies/practices. The processes adopted by the Council allow us to achieve our mandate, that of ensuring that the public receive quality service/treatment from appropriately prepared and competent health professionals.

As the first communication edition, Council decided that it was important for registrants to understand self-regulation for health professionals in this province. The Council and Colleges believe that self-regulation is so important for health professionals they have worked to develop an on-line module on jurisprudence for each of the health professions currently within its jurisdiction. These modules have been completed and will be available over the next few months. Your college and the Council web sites will advise when the jurisprudence modules can be accessible.

In the meantime, we hope that the following article will assist your understanding of what it means to be a self-regulated health profession in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As we work to further develop our web site www.nlchp.ca and establish a formal communication strategy, we will utilize this electronic communicate to keep you updated on activities, policies/practices that impact you as a registered member of your health profession.

Colin Power BSc, MLT

What's self-regulation all about?

It is important to understand that not all professions who request self-regulation are afforded the opportunity to be recognized as a profession with a distinct body of knowledge. Being provided the **privilege** of self-regulation makes a statement to the public. It says that government trusts in the professions ability to monitor itself and to ensure that the public receives quality service from its members.



Self-regulation represents a contract between the profession and society. It is a model of regulation whereby a profession enters into a formal agreement with government to allow it to regulate the members of its profession.

Regulation is always focused on protection of the public, not the profession or the individual professional.

Having been afforded this privilege, the profession takes on the responsibility to ensure that the profession establishes standards of practice, and that members adhere to those standards in providing services/treatment. If the Council and Colleges do not live up to their responsibilities under the legislation called the *Health Professions Act* (HPA), self-regulation can be taken away and the rules that govern your practice would be set by an external body generally without the benefit of insight/input from your profession.

Specifically, self-regulation is achieved through a legislative framework that describes the extent of legal authority delegated to the profession's regulatory body. In the case of

SELF-REGULATION AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

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your profession this regulatory process would be through your college and the NLCHP. The purpose of the HPA and the regulatory framework are to promote good practice, prevent poor practice and to intervene in situations of unacceptable practice.

Consider what could happen if you were regulated by government and not under a framework that allows for self-regulation. The Council, staff and committees could be made up of any combination of individuals (physicians, nurses, employers, politicians, members of the general public etc.) appointed by government. The professions code of ethics, standards of practice, discipline processes would be enforced by a government appointed Council and not by a group of your peers.

The HPA legislation establishes the ability of the profession, through its college, to set educational standards for entry into and maintaining competency in your profession, to set its scope of practice (services and procedures) and to establish standards of practice as well as its code of ethics. The Council actually carries out the registration of health professionals, ensures that registrants meet the standards as set out by their college (i.e. audits health professionals' practices) and can receive allegations/complaints regarding a registrant's practice.

One of your key obligations as a member of a regulated profession is to maintain your competency and fitness to practice your profession. This means ensuring that you have the knowledge, skills and ability to safely and efficiently fulfill your role. It also means having the physical, emotional and mental capacity to safely perform your duties, and accepting accountability for your own practice. Building trust and respect for a profession is a dedicated effort and can be easily broken. Professionals must hold themselves accountable to colleagues, the college and to the Council for their actions as each plays a very important role in ensuring that the public receives quality service/treatment from competent professionals.

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Colin Power, 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.