

## Good medical practice is what the CPSA is about.

The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) helps maintain the safety and well-being of the public by ensuring Alberta's physicians are competent, caring and effective practitioners.

Granted the privilege of self-regulation by the Alberta *Health Professions Act (HPA)*, the College is governed by a Council which includes physicians, public members and medical school representatives. College funding is provided primarily through physician registration fees.

***Serving the public by guiding the medical profession*** is our mission, which we meet through the following lines of business.

## CPSA Lines of Business

- **Register physicians.** We review physician education, post-graduate training and when necessary, arrange assessments to determine whether applicants are ready to practise. Physician qualifications and practice details are reviewed annually.

*The College receives inquiries from physicians across Canada and around the world who want to work in Alberta. We review each application carefully before granting a Practice Permit, to make sure the physician meets Alberta's standards for medical education and postgraduate training.*

- **Investigate and resolve physician-related complaints.** We favor an educational or training approach, but apply discipline if necessary.

*When the College receives a written complaint, our Complaints Director determines how best to proceed based on options outlined in the HPA. These include complaint dismissal (due to insufficient evidence, or because the complaint is trivial or vexatious in nature); an informal process where the complaint may be resolved directly between the complainant and physician, or the complainant consents to the College working with the physician to make the necessary practice changes; or a formal investigation.*

- **Provide clinical review.** We look at data (including prescribing patterns, Continuing Professional Development activity and practice demographics) to identify at-risk practices. We conduct assessments when necessary, and work with identified physicians to make improvements. A College-sponsored program provides all physicians with feedback on their practice performance on a five-year cycle.

*Specific programs include:*

- **Assessment and Competency Enhancement (ACE)** – *The College administers practice readiness assessments for International Medical Graduates and physicians who are returning to practice after an extended period away. Physician assessments may also be conducted in response to a concern or a complaint, or when a physician requests College approval to expand the scope of his/her practice.*
- **Physician Prescribing Practices Program** – *The College reviews data about the prescribing of various medications, such as those listed in the Triplicate Prescription Program (prescription drugs prone to misuse and abuse). We offer physicians education, peer support and resource materials to help improve the quality of prescribing in Alberta.*

- **Physician Achievement Review (PAR) program** – Every five years, each physician is evaluated by patients, physician colleagues and non-medical coworkers in a wide range of areas, from medical competency and communications skills to office management. Quality improvement and professional development are the focus.
- **Physician Health Monitoring Program** – The College provides confidential support to physicians whose ability to practise may be impaired by a health issue. Physicians who are able to continue practising are monitored to ensure their health issues do not interfere with their ability to provide safe care. The College also works with the Alberta Medical Association’s Physician and Family Support Program to support physicians who do take time away make a safe return to work.
- **Accredit health facilities** – We inspect a variety of health facilities to ensure they meet stringent clinical and safety standards, and approve the physicians who work in these facilities.

*To enhance patient safety, the College sets standards for, inspects and accredits medical laboratories, diagnostic imaging facilities, non-hospital surgical facilities, pulmonary and neurophysiology diagnostic facilities, cardiac exercise stress testing facilities, hyperbaric oxygen therapy services, sleep medicine facilities and private in vitro fertilization facilities. We also conduct Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) audits to ensure physicians who reprocess reusable medical devices are doing so according to accepted standards.*

- **Guide professional conduct and ethical behavior.** The Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and Code of Conduct outline the College’s expectations of Alberta physicians.

*The College also administers the Research Ethics Review Committee, one of Alberta’s designated research ethics boards. The committee reviews medical research proposals from community-based physicians to ensure they are scientifically valid, ethical and do not put research participants at undue risk.*

- **Contribute to public policy affecting health care delivery.**

*The College is a registered lobbyist with the provincial government, and also works with other health care professions and community partners to promote an effective public health care system for Albertans.*

## Learn more about the CPSA

The College welcomes inquiries and input from physicians, the public and our partners in health care. You can learn more about our business or reach College staff through:

- **The Messenger** – Our monthly online newsletter helps physicians and others in Alberta’s health care community stay informed and provide feedback on College activities and issues affecting the medical profession.
- **Regional Tour** – Physicians are invited to meet locally with College staff and Council members, to talk about issues affecting health care in their communities and the medical profession in general.
- **Website** – A wealth of information is available to the public as well as physicians at [www.cpsa.ab.ca](http://www.cpsa.ab.ca). Our “Physician Search” online directory helps individuals identify physicians accepting new patients in their area. Website visitors can also find detailed information on our lines of business, including how to file a complaint about a physician, our Standards of Practice, our registration process and links to related resources.
- **Email** – [info@cpsa.ab.ca](mailto:info@cpsa.ab.ca)
- **Telephone** – Call 780-423-4764 in Edmonton and area, or toll-free 1-800-561-3899 province-wide.