



Saskatchewan College of Psychologists

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Dear Colleagues:

I hope that this letter finds you well. It is again that time of year when the leaves fall, we begin to wrap our heads around the fact that winter will soon be here, and the annual license renewal period is around the corner. I am also writing to update you on some of the work that the College has been involved with over the last few months. It has been a busy and productive time for the College.

With regard to license renewal you will find enclosed an invoice for the 2011 practice year, your "Register Renewal Information 2011" form (pink form), the "2011 Regional Directory – Volunteer Disclosure of Information" form (blue form), and a committee interest form (purple form). Please remember that consistent with the legislation your license renewal fee is **due in the SCP office by December 1, 2010**. Fees received after this date will be assessed a late fee of \$10.00 per day. Please also remember that **you must submit the 2011 License Renewal form completed in full, with your renewal fee**. While this year you will receive paper copies of all renewal information including your receipt, we also be sending electronically, a copy of your invoice, and receipt (once your fee has been received). The goal is to move to sending out electronically the entire registration package and receipt. This will result in a savings of resources, and will hopefully minimize the problem of members not receiving their documentation in a timely manner, that is currently experienced with regular mail.

Over the last few months there have been a number of significant issues that have arisen for the College that I would like to highlight for you:

Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) – In May an omnibus Bill was proclaimed that amended the legislation of the regulated professions in the province to allow for compliance with the recent amendments to Chapter 7 of the federal/provincial AIT. In essence mobility between jurisdictions for professionals is now ensured for those licensed in another Canadian jurisdiction who are in good standing, and who have no history of complaint or formal discipline. Thus for example if one is licensed in Manitoba as a psychologist and they apply to this jurisdiction we must accept them to the Register with the same scope of practice they had in their home jurisdiction, and with no additional scrutiny of their eligibility for licensure here. It is important to note that the jurisdictions do not necessarily share the same philosophy in terms of licensure and regulation. The amendments to the AIT will apply pressure on the national regulators to move towards standardization of the licensure and regulation processes.

Amendments to the Legislation and Bylaws – A number of amendments were submitted to Government. Ultimately the bylaw amendments will come before the membership for ratification. The Regulatory Bylaw amendments pertain to issues such as good character, the expectation that one will take the first available oral examination, clarification of requirements for return to practice, and the inclusion of a Time Limited Register for temporary practice. Among the amendments to the Administrative Bylaws are the creation of a Past President position, an addition to the criteria for the removal of members from committees, and expansion of the roles of both the Nominations and Professional Practice Committees. The proposed legislative amendments involve provision for the expansion of the Executive Council, as well as an amendment to Section 20 which will require that credentials eligible for licensure are from Psychology programs which are recognized by the College.

Professional Practice Guidelines (Guidelines) – In the spring the Guidelines were enacted through a motion of Executive Council. The guidelines document represents the hard work over the last two years of various committees (in particular the disbanded Third Party Payer Committee), many members, and Executive Council. Recently a workshop to introduce the Guidelines to the membership was provided in both Saskatoon and Regina. The Guidelines are intended to be an adjunct to the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, to outline the expectations for practice and the profession, and to assist in the investigation and adjudication of complaints. Compliance with the Code and the Guidelines is required. The document is considered a living document and will be reviewed regularly and amended as the standards for practice change or issues in terms of application are identified and resolved.

Diagnostic Privilege - Since the inception of the College, discussions have occurred between the College and various bodies regarding the expansion of diagnostic privilege to the profession of social work. The Executive Council has reaffirmed the position that it believes the College has no role in the regulation of other professions, and as such the Memorandum of Understanding with the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers (SASW) is a temporary and rather unsatisfactory resolution of the issue from a public protection perspective. Further the Executive Council has reaffirmed the position that given the complexity and the impact that diagnoses can have on the lives of those served, high standards for the evaluation and establishment of diagnostic competence is essential, as are high standards for the practice of diagnostics. The College does not take issue of the right of the SASW to request the extension of the privilege from Government. At this point the Ministries of Health and Social Services are considering the issue and its potential resolution.

Issues for Psychologists Working in Saskatchewan Schools – The College has been invited by various bodies in education to discuss issues relevant to practice within the educational system. The intent is to try to clarify the expectations for the profession, to provide information regarding regulation, and to minimize the likelihood of members being caught between the expectations of the College and the employer. Clearly the issues are significant and change will take time, however, the fact that there is a desire to understand and find solutions which are satisfactory to both sides is very positive.

Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) - Currently under consideration is a proposal for the establishment of an independent investigator. It is felt that the proposed addition will further enhance the integrity of the investigation process, will reduce timelines, and will hopefully reduce the demand on volunteer time. The proposed plan recommends piloting the plan for a year and then evaluating whether the addition has resulted in the anticipated benefits.

Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations (ACPRO) - The Canadian regulators of Psychology have been working hard to “get in front of” the mobility issue. The amendments to the AIT essentially nullified the mobility agreements contained within the national Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA). The regulators are committed to maintaining the elements of the MRA which pertain to the core practice competencies and the Foundational Knowledge requirements. The regulators recognize that the changes to mobility highlight the differences that exist between regulatory jurisdictions in terms of regulatory philosophy. The regulators procured federal funding to explore regulatory practice across Canada and to work towards standardization as much as possible. The regulators are also in the process of establishing practice standards and regulatory agreement with regard to the provision of telehealth services. At the current time the regulatory requirement is that one must be licensed in the jurisdiction in which the client receives the service.

As I hope I have illustrated, the work of the College is varied, incredibly interesting and at times challenging. Our profession is undergoing significant change, and I anticipate that in the next few years the profession will look fundamentally different than it does today due to factors such as changing standards, changes to regulation, and the aging of the profession. I hope that you will continue to take an interest in the work of the College, and that you will continue to volunteer your time and expertise to assist in that work. I am grateful for the volunteerism of the membership and the opportunity to serve in this capacity.

With best wishes,

Karen Messer-Engel, M.A., R. Psych.,
Executive Director / Registrar