

The Articulator

November 2002

Vol.6 Edition 1

Health Professions Act

Update

Government proposes substantial amendments

The Government of British Columbia has proposed substantial amendments to the Health Professions Act. The amendments are a result of Health Professions Council's extensive review of health legislation, and subsequent report "**Safe Choices: A Model for Regulating Health Professions in British Columbia**". The proposed amendments, if passed into law, will substantially change some aspects of health regulation in BC. Specifically, the amendments propose to increase the mandate and responsibility of the Quality Assurance Committee. Under the proposed changes, the QA Committee will have broad powers similar to the Inquiry Committee. Further, Colleges must demonstrate that their quality assurance programs are effective. Other areas being considered for amendment include:

- ◆ Implementing the Reserved Act model,
- ◆ Uniform health regulation under the HPA,
- ◆ Enhanced accountability of Health Professions,
- ◆ Improving quality of health care,
- ◆ Increasing public access to information,
- ◆ Changing the bylaws approval process,
- ◆ Restrictions on the use of specific phrases, and
- ◆ Changes respecting "parties" to discipline proceedings.

The proposed amendments were released in July 2002, with the closing date for comments set at September 16, 2002. Some of the amendments are controversial.

Some colleges, especially those with legislation other than the HPA, continue to lobby against the amendments. Other colleges, including the College of Denturists, have made submissions designed to improve and/or clarify existing sections of the Act. The Government intended to pass the amendments during the fall session of the legislature, however after receiving many submissions about the amendments, the Minister has decided to postpone introducing the amendments until the spring session. For more information on the amendments please visit the following links:

http://www.healthplanning.gov.bc.ca/leg/pdfs/hpa_withsig.pdf

http://www.healthplanning.gov.bc.ca/leg/pdfs/hpa_unofficial.pdf

Board Meeting Dates

2002-2003

The Board of the College will meet on the following dates:

- ◆ November 29, 2002
- ◆ February 21, 2003
- ◆ June 6, 2003
- ◆ September 27, 2003 AGM
- ◆ November 28, 2003

Keeping Patient Records

Protecting yourself

The Inquiry Committee of the College is increasingly dealing with issues related to patient records. Patient records are critical to your practice for a number of reasons. They ensure quality of care and provide the necessary information to deal with any patient complaints that may arise.

When the College receives a complaint, the registrant is requested to complete a questionnaire and send a copy of the patient's record. The record which you make, keep and maintain in your office belongs to the patient. This concept is entrenched in section 75 of the bylaws. Note that the registrant must keep and maintain the original of the record for at least 10 years.

You may use any format for the patient record. The bylaws establish the type of information and detail that is required. Registrants may use pre-formatted (like those available from the Denturist Association of BC), printable computerized, or individualized forms. Generally a pre-formatted, computerized, or preprinted form is preferred ensuring the opportunity to consistently collect the required information. It is the responsibility of each registrant to ensure that the information is collected and entered into the record in a timely fashion. This means that the information must be entered contemporaneously, as treatment progresses and is completed.

Some health professionals book the last appointment of their day to complete patient records. Others do tape dictation for entry the following day by office staff. Which ever way you decide is the best for your practice, the sooner entries to records are completed, the better off you are.

A past edition of the Articulator discussed appropriate types of comments. It is worth mentioning again that Registrants should not use adjectives implying a diagnosis of a patient's mental, emotional, or psychological state.

With the advanced scope of practice, records must contain even greater amounts of detail. Odontograms must reflect the presence of natural teeth. A patient record is inaccurate if an odontogram is present, shows full dentition, yet complete dentures have been provided. Consider a patient complains that the service provided, a single upper denture, fails to meet the standards of practice because it is loose. The patient record shows only six lower anterior teeth remain, and that a lower partial denture was recommended but rejected by the patient. This may well support a finding that the treatment was appropriate.

Please take the time to look critically at the quality of patient record you make. It is worth the effort.

Election Schedule 2003

Nominations open Dec 31, 2002

Nominations close Jan 30, 2003

Ballot deadline Mar 10, 2003

New term begins April 1, 2003.

Notice is hereby given of the upcoming election of members of the Board of the College. The election rules are set out in the bylaws of the College. Please note the following:

- Each registrant may nominate a maximum of four active registrants.
- Nominations must be received not later than 60 days before the end of term - January 30.
- Nominees must sign the *Letter of Consent and Declaration of Nominee*.

Discipline and Inquiry Reports

The activities of the Discipline and Inquiry Committees are reported in this newsletter. These summaries are published pursuant to the bylaws of the College, the inquiry summary section 59(4)(b), and discipline summary section 63(3). There are a number of issues that continually arise in the complaints the Inquiry Committee deals with. These are patient records and failing to respond to a request for information. Information regarding patient records is elsewhere in this newsletter.

In order for the College to comply with its mandate, registrants are required to respond when the College issues a request for information. The right of the College to the information is in the *Health Professions Act*. In section 28, the Act defines the articles and types of information that an inspector for the College may examine, including the premises, equipment, materials, and records of the registrant. The College bylaws also provide for a request for information to be made to a registrant and a requirement that the registrant respond to the request. Generally, most registrants respond to requests in a timely fashion, however the Inquiry Committee has been forced to take a hard position because some registrants do not respond, even when more than one request is issued.

The Committee generally gives more than two weeks for a response. If you feel that the information requested cannot be produced by the deadline it is crucial that you write to the Committee, at the earliest opportunity, and advise of the delay. Although registrants can provide an alternative date, be advised that the Committee will not accept a lengthy delay.

Annual General Meeting

Changes for next year

In past years the College's AGM has been in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Denturist Association. In recent years the meetings have not been well attended.

After the 2002 AGM, the Board considered options for improving attendance. The Board also considered the resolution at the Association's AGM that more continuing education sessions be offered during the Convention.

The Board of the College passed a resolution that the Annual General Meeting of the College be held on September 27, 2003. It will not be held in conjunction with the Association. The College has scheduled a regular meeting of the Board during the Association's convention weekend. Registrants who wish to attend are welcome.

Call For Examiners

The Registration Committee of the College requires examiners for the 2003 clinical examinations. Registrants from all areas of the Province who have a variety of experience are encouraged to apply. The clinical examinations have changed vastly since most registrants completed the process. Come out and see what is new. Members of the exam team receive credits to their Quality Assurance Record, a per diem, and reimbursement of expenses. If you are interested or require more information please contact the College office.

Exam Dates: July 7 - 10, 2002

www.cd.bc.ca

Letter of Consent and Declaration of Nominee

Denturists have been granted the privilege of self-regulation. With this privilege come certain obligations. The *Health Professions Act* establishes the duty and responsibility of the board as follows:

It is the duty of a college at all times to serve and protect the public, and to exercise its powers and discharge its responsibilities under all enactments in the public interest.

It is the responsibility of the board to govern, control and administer the affairs of the College in accordance with the *Health Professions Act*, the regulations, and the bylaws.

In agreeing to let my name stand for election to the Board of the College, I agree to the following:

- To observe and uphold all provisions of the *Health Professions Act*, the Denturists Regulation, and the bylaws of the College.
- To uphold the duty of the College to act in the best interests of the public at all times.
- To abide by the procedures related to the election and conduct of the election

The College Board has established a Conflict of Interest Policy. If elected to the Board of the College, I agree to be bound by the terms of the policy and will sign the conflict of interest statement.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2003.

Signature

Print Name

The ***Articulator*** is the newsletter of the College of Denturist of British Columbia. It is meant to provide information to registrants, members of the public, and other organizations. In the event of a disagreement between information in this newsletter and the *Health Professions Act*, Denturist Regulation, bylaws, or policies of the College, the wording of the Act, Regulation, bylaws, and policies take precedence. Letters to the editor are welcome. The Board reserves the right to edit submissions for length or to refuse to publish any letter or article. Copyright December 2002.

Write to:

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