

UPDATE FOR COLLEGE MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

New Proposed Legislation

As you are aware, the College has committed a great deal of time and money to the amendment of the Chiropody Act to have the Ontario Government establish new Scope of Practice which would, among other things,

1. assist the public of Ontario to obtain appropriate and timely treatment of their foot care needs;
2. resolve public confusion caused by the use of the terms “Chiropody” and “Podiatry” and the titles “Chiropodist” and “Podiatrist”, by establishing a single profession entitled “Podiatry”, whose members would be called “Podiatrists”;
3. ensure that the new model would appropriately protect the public by allowing each member to work to his or her established competencies;
4. allow members to perform additional authorized acts, such as communicating a diagnosis and bone surgery (currently limited to Podiatrists) once they had satisfied the College that they had taken the necessary additional training and education to be able to perform those acts safely and competently; and
5. resolve issues related to labour mobility so that members (including Podiatrists and Chiropodists) licensed in other provinces would be entitled to be registered in Ontario and work to their established competencies.

Prior to the departure of Minister Hoskins, the College was advised that the Government would consider making the changes that the College had requested (before the June 7th election) if the College provided draft legislation to create the new Podiatry Act as well as drafts of the consequential amendments. These would be needed to allow all members with established competency to order laboratory test, MRI's and diagnostic ultrasound as well as to take radiographs. In an effort to assist the current Government in expediting the changes which had been requested, the College worked with the Minister's office to prepare all of the required legislative and regulation amendments. The College was also advised that it would have to resolve certain concerns that the Ministry had with regard to the new Act and amendments.

The College attempted to get information about these concerns and, when told that a meeting would be necessary, to set up a meeting with Ministry officials. Despite our best efforts, the Ministry officials were not able to meet with us until February 27, 2018 and the Assistant Deputy Minister, who was supposed to be in attendance at that meeting, was in fact unable to attend. A second meeting with the Ministry officials took place on April 4, 2018. The Assistant Deputy Minister was in attendance at that meeting and she advised the College that there was no ability to introduce the new legislation which the College had sought until after the June 7th election.

In discussing ways forward, she indicated that the Ministry was sympathetic to the argument that members should be allowed to obtain additional education and then practise to the level of their established competencies. She suggested that the Ministry would be willing to continue to dialogue with the College to see what could be accomplished in this regard, specifically referring to the possible use of advanced practice concepts that had been used for other Regulated Health Professions. However she also advised that the Ministry has no intention of removing the Podiatry cap from the existing Chiropody Act in the foreseeable future. If this is indeed the new Government's position, members in the Chiropody Class will not be able to perform those authorized acts which are currently restricted to Podiatrist Class member, namely, communicating a diagnosis and bone surgery, regardless of whether or not they are competent to do so. This is not what the College Council had proposed and it was very disappointing to hear.

Council will have to consider all of the information available and decide what next steps to take but the Executive Committee felt that it was important for all members and interested stakeholders to understand what has taken place to date.

Amendments to the Drug Regulation

The amended drug regulation was submitted to the Ministry in the fall of 2015. The College has continually followed up with the Ministry trying to make it understand the importance of the amendments which allow our members to provide their patients with prescriptions for the most effective medications. Despite these efforts and despite having answered all questions from the Ministry and its policy persons on a timely basis, there has been no movement on the drug regulation. This issue was raised in the meeting with the Assistant Deputy Minister referred to above. She indicated that the Ministry has begun its policy work on narcotics and the three professions included in the New Class of Practitioners Regulation and that this must be done before it could consider our proposed drug regulation amendments.