



A WORD FROM THE REGISTRAR

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

With recognition on the Canadian landscape generally of the need for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), I've had cause to think more closely about what that means within a professional health regulatory context. As a first step, Council has adopted a Land Acknowledgement and we have – staff, Council and Committee members – taken a certificate towards Truth and Reconciliation by completing the First Nations University's 4 Seasons of Reconciliation. We will also ask Council, at our October 2022 Council meeting, to approve a mandatory Truth and Reconciliation certificate as part of the College's Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for 2023. The College is further committed to endorsing an EDI suite of courses for annual mandatory completion as part of every Registrant's CME requirement. The College has started with a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and will move forward to include courses in the future that speak to BIPOC and other EDI initiatives. The rationale for Registrants learning about EDI, particularly focused on removing barriers to accessing healthcare, is to assist Registrants in bettering their understanding of what barriers in healthcare look like and how Registrants can take meaningful steps to remove barriers from their own practices to best serve the public. Significantly, we know that a lack of EDI in healthcare can have adverse outcomes for patients.

All of these efforts are worthwhile, and I'm very proud of Council's and the College's progressive steps towards embracing and living EDI. But it's led me to question whether EDI means something more for a professional health regulatory body? It's an important question for professional health regulators to ask themselves for many reasons, as highlighted by the fact that we are duty bound to account for our respective EDI measures in the College Performance Measurement Framework (CPMF), a transparent reporting tool to the Ministry of Health.

In considering EDI and how it relates to the College of Chiropodists, I started from the foundational principle of the College's mandate which is, namely, to protect the public. How does EDI intersect with our work to ensure the public receives safe treatment by Chiropodists and Podiatrists? Given the College's extensive requirements in respect of EDI as demonstrated in the CPMF, I've concluded that it must also mean that the College is required to take notice and take action when it is apparent that there is inequity in accessing the kind of care our Registrants provide, particularly when the evidence shows that our Registrants provide critical care with significant health implications to their patients. The available, recent Ontario-based data demonstrates that rates of lower limb amputation are significantly higher among



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Ontarians living in remote Northern and rural communities as well as those within First Nations and Indigenous communities. The data particularly demonstrates that Ontarians with access to treatment by Chiropodists and Podiatrists are less likely to experience serious, adverse outcomes related to diabetes and Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD). That data is available here: <https://www.cmajopen.ca/content/8/4/E659>

As the College lives its commitment to EDI, guided by our strategic plan, we will continue to support initiatives that go to the heart of meaningful protection of the public. Protection of the public includes equitable access to footcare, and Council has endorsed the Podiatry Model as the model that best supports public protection. The College is committed to working with its stakeholders to modernize the professions of Chiropody and Podiatry with the adoption of the Podiatry Model, aligning as it does with further realizing EDI. We are excited about the future of footcare in Ontario, for what it will mean for Ontarians and how we, as the professional regulator, can better do our important work of protecting the public.

To monitor our progress, please follow our website regularly, review our strategic plan and watch for important announcements about the College and its commitment to EDI.

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