

**Regulation of Physician Assistants under the
*Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991***

Feedback Questionnaire

Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council

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About Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council

The Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC) is established under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA), with a statutory duty to advise the Minister on health professions regulatory matters in Ontario. This includes providing advice to the Minister on:

- Whether unregulated health professions should be regulated;
- Whether regulated health professions should no longer be regulated;
- Amendments to the RHPA;
- Amendments to a health profession's Act or a regulation under any of those Acts;
- Matters concerning the quality assurance programs and patient relations programs undertaken by health colleges; and,
- Any matter the Minister refers to HPRAC relating to the regulation of the health professions.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care relies on recommendations from HPRAC as an independent source of evidence-informed advice in the formulation of policy in relation to health professional regulation in Ontario. In providing its advice and preparing its recommendations, HPRAC is independent of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the regulated health colleges, regulated health professional and provider associations, and stakeholders who have an interest in issues on which it provides advice. This ensures that HPRAC is free from constraining alliances and conflict of interest, and is able to carry out its activities in a fair and unbiased manner.

When considering health professions regulatory matters, HPRAC ascribes to the following overriding principles:¹

- Meeting public expectations for improved access to high quality and safe care;
- Supporting inter-professional care and optimizing the contribution of all health professionals;
- Applying standards for the regulation of health professionals;
- Ensuring a shared accountability agenda that encourages and values collaboration and trust;
- Using resources efficiently;
- Sustaining the health care system; and,
- Maintaining self-regulation.

HPRAC presents its recommendations in a report to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for consideration. This report is confidential until released by the Minister. As per the RHPA, HPRAC recommendations are advisory only. The Minister is not bound to accept HPRAC's advice. The release of an HPRAC report and any follow-up action are at the discretion of the Minister. Should the minister choose to accept HPRAC's advice, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is responsible for implementation based on the direction of the government.

Please visit www.hprac.org for more information about the HPRAC's mandate and role.

¹ Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council. (2008). *Critical links: transforming and supporting patient care*. Toronto: Author. pp. 2-3.

Minister's Referral to Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC)

The Honourable Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, has asked HPRAC to advise whether the practice of Physician Assistants ought to be regulated. The Minister stated that "Physician Assistants (PAs) are not regulated in Ontario but practise under the supervision of physicians and are only able to perform controlled acts under delegation. In keeping with this government's health quality agenda, I would like you to consider whether this profession ought to be regulated, whether independently or in conjunction with an existing profession, under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA) and if so, what would be the appropriate scope of practice, controlled acts and titles authorized to the profession, I would also like you to consider in the formation of your advice, what model of regulation, if any, is most conducive to inter-professional collaboration, In evaluating potential models of regulation, consider what factors would support effective future collaboration between PAs and other health professions in Ontario."

Feedback Submission Guidelines

Many organisations and individuals have extensive experience and interest in health care, public interest, and health professions regulation. The Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC) is keen to ensure that this experience and interest are fully reflected in its recommendation-making process. Therefore, HPRAC invites comments on the proposal submitted by the Canadian Association of Physician Assistants (CAPA) for regulation of Physician Assistants under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, (RHPA). For further details about the HPRAC criteria and the process for regulating a new health profession under the *RHPA*, please visit:

<http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/otherresources.asp>

How to Submit Your Feedback:

You can send your feedback online or in hard copy, by completing this form. This form is in fillable Portable Document Format (PDF). This means you can fill out the questionnaire on-line by typing your answers directly into the online form. To do so your computer must have Adobe Acrobat Reader to open it. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader, you must first download the Adobe Acrobat software. You can do so by visiting <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. Once completed, please make sure to save your input by clicking on *File* and then selecting *Save As*.

Once completed, you can send your feedback form by:

Email: HPRACSubmissions@ontario.ca
Subject: Feedback on Proposal to Regulate Physician Assistants

OR

Mail:
Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council
56 Wellsley St. W, 12th Floor
Toronto, ON. M5S 2S3
Attention: Feedback on Proposal to Regulate Physician Assistants

OR

Fax: 416-326-1549
Subject: Feedback on Regulation of Physician Assistants

The final date for responses is Friday March 30th, 2012, but earlier expressions of views would be greatly appreciated.

Access to Information

Comments submitted will be considered by the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (Advisory Council) and will help it to determine appropriate recommendations to make to the Minister. To ensure transparency and encourage open dialogue, the feedback received by the Advisory Council may be posted on our website in accordance with our Privacy Statement, available at: www.hprac.org/en/privacy.asp.

Please note that unless requested and otherwise agreed to by the Advisory Council, any information or comments received from organizations will be considered public information and may be used and disclosed by the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council may disclose materials or comments, or summaries of them, to other interested parties (during and after the consultation period). An individual who makes a submission and who indicates an affiliation with an organization in his or her submission will be considered to have made his or her submission on behalf of the affiliated organization.

The Advisory Council will not disclose any personal information contained in a submission of an individual who does not specify an organizational affiliation in his or her submission without the individual's consent unless required to do so by law. However, the Advisory Council may use and disclose the content of the individual's submission to assist it in fulfilling its statutory mandate.

The Advisory Council reserves the right to refuse to post a submission, in whole or in part, that, in its sole discretion: is unrelated to the issue under consultation, and, is abusive, obscene, harassing, threatening or includes defamatory comments. If you have any questions about the collection of this information, you can contact the Advisory Council at 416-326-1550.

Contact Information

I am responding (select the appropriate answer from the drop-down list and click to make the selection):

Name of Respondent (First/Last):

Title:

Occupational Type (select the appropriate answer from the drop-down list and click to make the selection):

Organization Name:

Organization Type (select the appropriate answer from the drop-down list and click to make the selection):

Geographical Location (select the appropriate answer from the drop-down list and click to make the selection):

Telephone (including area code):

E-Mail Address:

1. In your view, does the applicant meet the 'risk of harm' threshold? In other words, has the applicant demonstrated that Physician Assistants pose a risk of harm to the health and safety of the public if the profession is not regulated under the RHPA?

Please explain the rationale for your position. You may include evidence and/or citations where applicable. If you require more room than the space provided, please attach a separate page.

2. In your view, has the applicant demonstrated convincingly that it is in the public interest that Physician Assistants be regulated under the RHPA?

Please explain the rationale for your position. You may include evidence and/or citations where applicable. If you require more room than the space provided, please attach a separate page.

3. From your perspective, has the applicant convincingly demonstrated that existing mechanisms (e.g., certification, supervision, etc.) are insufficient to address risk of harm arising from the practice of the Physician Assistant profession? You may comment on issues such as alternatives to regulation.

Please explain the rationale for your position. You may include evidence and/or citations where applicable. If you require more room than the space provided, please attach a separate page.

4. In your view, does the applicant convincingly demonstrate that regulation under the RHPA is appropriate for the profession? You may comment on issues such as body of knowledge and scope of practice, education requirements etc.

Please explain the rationale for your position. You may include evidence and/or citations where applicable. If you require more room than the space provided, please attach a separate page.

5. In your view, does the applicant convincingly demonstrate that regulation under the RHPA is practical to implement for this profession? You may comment on issues such as economic implications and members' commitment and ability to support the costs and development of statutory regulation.

Please explain the rationale for your position. You may include evidence and/or citations where applicable. If you require more room than the space provided, please attach a separate page.

6. From your perspective, does the applicant convincingly demonstrate the extent of the impact by which the regulation of Physician Assistants will have on Ontario's wider health system? You may wish to comment on such issues as inter-professional collaboration, labour mobility, access to care, health human resource productivity and health outcomes.

Please explain the rationale for your position. You may include evidence and/or citations where applicable. If you require more room than the space provided, please attach a separate page.

7. Do you have any other general comments?



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