



PERSPECTIVE

PROFESSIONAL • ETHICAL • QUALIFIED • ACCOUNTABLE

Educational Forums 2015 – St. Catharines and Barrie

In the fall of 2015, the College successfully ran its sixth series of Educational Forums. The objectives of the College’s Educational Forums are to:

- Educate.
- Provide a tangible benefit of registration.
- Offer opportunities for members to network with colleagues and make new contacts.
- Increase the College’s visibility with, and connection to, its membership.

Hosted in St. Catharines and Barrie, the Forums provided learning and networking opportunities for members and local social work and social service work students. Free for members and a benefit of College membership, both events included a College update, keynote address and buffet lunch.

This initiative began in response to members who wanted to stay connected to the College but were unable to attend the Annual Meeting and Education Day (AMED) in Toronto.

ST. CATHARINES

Members from across southern Ontario came to participate in the St. Catharines Educational Forum, which was held on September 25, 2015 at the Four Points St. Catharines. Approximately 80 members and students participated.

Keynote speaker Steven Solomon, PhD, RSW, presented on LGBTQ youth/gender independent (GI) children and their families. Steven presented at last year’s Forum in Timmins and was extremely well received. The repeat presentation in St. Catharines this year was just as beneficial and crowd-pleasing.

One member commented, “Steven is an amazing speaker. He is engaging and informative and has given me some helpful education and resources I can use.”

This sentiment was echoed by another member, who further stated, “Although I do not directly work with LGBTQ children and youth, it was very informative and helpful education and challenged my own understanding and awareness of these issues.”

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BARRIE

The Barrie Forum was held on October 15, 2015 at the Barrie Country Club. The event was popular for both members and students, with a total of 85 attendees.

Lisa Pont, MSW, RSW, provided the keynote address. Lisa's presentation, entitled *We Are All Connected: Working with Clients Who Overuse Technology*, was geared to social workers and social service workers working in a broad range of settings. Lisa explored the impact of technology overuse on clients and allowed participants to reflect on their own use. Information about the prevalence of this issue, risk factors, screening/assessment and current treatment practices were discussed. One hundred percent of those who responded to the post-event survey agreed that Lisa's presentation was both relevant and valuable.

"The presentation was very interesting," commented one member. "The presenter was professional, genuine, interesting throughout the entire presentation, and funny at times, which kept things lively."

The feedback the College received will be very helpful when planning the next series of Educational Forums in 2016.

The College would like to thank all those who participated in the Barrie and St. Catharines events, and to extend a special thank you to our keynote speakers Steven Solomon and Lisa Pont. We look forward to connecting with members in new locations in the coming year.

Apply for the Social Workers and Social Service Workers Professional Development Fund!

The SWSSWPDF provides funding for educational opportunities to social workers and social service workers who are registered and in good standing with the College. We encourage members to take advantage of this opportunity to advance their skills and knowledge.

For more information and to access the online application form, please visit www.swsswpdf.org.

Psychotherapy Update

NOTE: The information in this article is accurate at the time of printing. Given the evolving nature of the regulation of psychotherapy, members are advised to visit the College website at www.ocswssw.org for the most up-to-date information.

As members will know, the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW) learned in the spring of 2015 that some of the long-awaited legislative changes concerning psychotherapy were proclaimed into force as of April 1, 2015.

These developments affect members who practise psychotherapy and/or use the title “psychotherapist”, as well as those who wish to do so in future.

WHAT’S BEEN PROCLAIMED?

On April 1, 2015, most of the balance of the provisions of the *Psychotherapy Act* were proclaimed into force. These provisions:

- Created the new College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario (CRPO).
- Restricted the use of the titles “psychotherapist”, “registered psychotherapist” and “registered mental health therapist” to members of CRPO (among other things).

However, the government **did not proclaim into force** certain other provisions related to psychotherapy. These are:

- The provisions in the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (the “RHPA”) setting out the **controlled act of psychotherapy** and authorizing members of OCSWSSW to perform the controlled act of psychotherapy in compliance with the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* (the “SWSSWA”), its regulations and bylaws.
- The provision in the SWSSWA permitting OCSWSSW members who are authorized to perform the controlled act of psychotherapy to use the title “psychotherapist.”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The delay in proclamation of these provisions has

important implications for members of OCSWSSW. At this time, OCSWSSW members should note the following:

- OCSWSSW members **may continue to provide psychotherapy services** provided they are competent to do so.
- In addition to ensuring that they are familiar with the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, members should review the Practice Notes “But How Do I Know if I’m Competent’ – Issues to Consider” (available in the Resource Room on the College website at www.ocswssw.org) to ensure that they have considered and assessed their competence to provide psychotherapy services.
- Psychotherapy is not an entry-to-practice competency. Competent practice requires ongoing education and training, as well as regular supervision and consultation.
- Only members of the CRPO are permitted to use the title “psychotherapist”, “registered psychotherapist” or “registered mental health therapist.”

WHAT’S NEXT?

Throughout the summer and fall of 2015, the College worked collaboratively with the five other Colleges whose members will have access to the controlled act of psychotherapy (once it is proclaimed), and with representatives from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) to further clarify the definition of the controlled act. This clarification had been requested by the MOHLTC to ensure there was a consistent understanding of the controlled act among practitioners and the public prior to proclamation. The College will keep members informed as further information becomes available.

For further information, please visit the College website at www.ocswssw.org or contact Kathleen Lanoue, Director of Professional Practice at klanoue@ocswssw.org.

The Results Are In! 2015 Member Communications Survey



The results for the College's 2015 Member Communications Survey are in! More than a thousand members participated in the survey. The demographic data was as follows:

- 86% of the respondents were social workers, while 14% were social service workers.
- The respondents represented various work settings, the most common being in a social service agency/organization (24%), hospital (20%) and in community-based health care (13%).
- The age composition of the respondents was: 1) 35 and under, 21%; 2) 36-50, 32%; 3) 51-65, 39%; and 4) over 65, 8%.

SURVEY HELPS COLLEGE BETTER SERVE MEMBERS

The College created the survey to gain an improved understanding of its members' communications habits and preferences. The survey results were very revealing and will help us better serve members in the future.

Through the survey results, the College discovered that the Perspective newsletter is regarded as a valuable resource for most members (75%), followed by the website, ebulletins and member USB. Seventy percent of respondents said they read the ebulletins, with

an even larger majority agreeing that the ebulletins contain "the right amount of information."

GROWING USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The results show that members receive their news from a variety of platforms ranging from radio to television. However, more and more members are relying on social media. In fact, 73% of College members use social media and 48% use it as a news information source. Both of these figures represent increases of at least 10 percentage points when compared to last year's results.

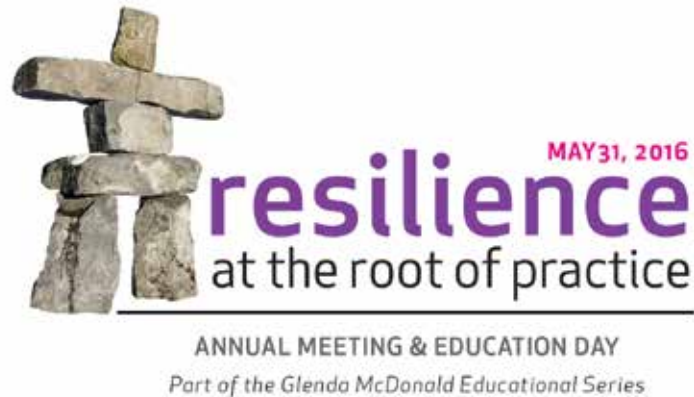
When asked about the College's social media channels, members indicated that they would like these channels to be used for multiple purposes, the most popular being to:

- Alert members of new learning tools, materials and content.
- Communicate social work and social service work research.

The College would like to thank members for participating in the 2015 Member Communications Survey.

2016 Annual Meeting and Education Day

Resilience: At the Root of Practice



The College invites you to the 2016 Annual Meeting and Education Day (AMED) for an engaging day of networking and learning.

AMED is part of the Glenda McDonald Educational Series, named in honour of the College's late founding Registrar. This year's iteration of AMED will take place on May 31, 2016 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in Toronto. The event theme is *Resilience: At the Root of Practice*.

The morning portion of AMED 2016 includes the Annual Meeting, which will feature a keynote presentation and remarks from College Registrar Lise Betteridge, MSW, RSW, and College President Bob Thompson, MSW, RSW. In the afternoon, attendees will have the option of selecting from eight unique breakouts during the education component.

CAF'S SUZANNE BAILEY TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The College is pleased to have Lt.-Col. Suzanne Bailey, MSW, RSW, a senior social work officer with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) as the event's keynote speaker. Building on lessons learned over a decade of developing and implementing a resilience program for the CAF, Lt.-Col. Bailey's presentation, *Resilience & Well-Being*, will discuss simple strategies social workers and social service workers can employ to build resilience in themselves, their clients and their environments.

ENHANCING THE AMED EXPERIENCE

As the College strives to make AMED more accessible to College members, we are happy to announce that the afternoon educational breakout sessions will be broadcast live via webcast for the first time. Once again, the College

will promote AMED on its Twitter feed and encourages members to connect with us on Twitter during the event, using the #AMED2016 hashtag.

AMED 2015 A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

This year's event follows a successful AMED 2015, which had more than 500 attendees and 269 webcast participants. According to post-event survey results, 96% of AMED 2015 attendees found the experience to be "relevant" and "clearly presented."

Survey respondents had the following to say about AMED 2015:

"First time I have attended an Annual Meeting in a long time. I would encourage more of my co-workers to attend for next year."

"Always a wonderful, learning opportunity. Able to reconnect and network. Delicious lunch. Whole day renews me and allows me to go on."

If you're interested in attending AMED 2016, please register quickly. Space is limited.

For more information on AMED 2016, please visit www.ocswws.org where you will find more detailed information and a registration form. We look forward to seeing you at AMED 2016 – in person and virtually!

If you have any questions regarding the event, please contact John Gilson, Communications Coordinator, at jgilson@ocswws.org.

Council Highlights for December 3-4, 2015

DECEMBER 3, 2015

- Bob Thompson, RSW, President, presented his report to Council. The report touched on a number of topics, including: orientation and training for committee chairs; the upcoming strategic planning process; the appointment of the Deputy Registrar; as well as the occasions at which the President represented the College and Council at meetings and events.
- Lise Betteridge, RSW, Registrar, presented her report to Council and outlined the College's progress on a number of identified priorities, including online member cards and tax receipts, the CCP evaluation, and new Council Member Orientation. She also shared statistics on membership and renewals and gave updates related to operations, practice and regulatory leadership.
- The Registrar announced that Laura Sheehan will be joining the College as Deputy Registrar, effective January 11, 2016.
- The Annual Meeting and Education Day, as well as the Educational Forums, will now be presented as part of the Glenda McDonald Educational Series.
- Council reviewed and approved the Financial Statements as of October 2015.
- Council reviewed and approved the Statement of Operations for October 2015.
- Council went in camera to discuss the 2016 Budget, as well as an update on a confidential legal matter.
- Proposed amendments to the Registration Regulation concerning the elimination of the Provisional Class and the creation of a new Retired Class of Registration were discussed. These changes were approved in principle by Council.
- Other proposed amendments to the Registration Regulation, which related to professional liability insurance and criminal record checks, were also discussed. Council will consider further information at its next meeting before deciding how to proceed with these proposed amendments.
- Lisa Foster, Public Member, was appointed to Council

on October 21, 2015 for a three-year term. Lisa was appointed to the Standards of Practice, Corporations, and Titles and Designations Committees by the Executive Committee at its November 17, 2015 meeting. Gary Cockman, RSSW, was appointed as her mentor.

- Council discussed the evaluation summary of the *New Council Member Orientation and Mentorship Program*. The responses indicated that the New Council Member Orientation, and in particular the mentorship program, was working well to date.
- Council reviewed the Executive Committee's suggested topics and speakers for Council professional development.
- Council reviewed and discussed the Strategic Planning Update presented by the Registrar. The Strategic Planning session will take place during one day of the March 10 and 11, 2016 Council meeting.
- Council approved revisions to Policy B-007 (Committee Description: Executive) presented by Thomas Horn, RSW, Chair of the Governance Committee. Council also approved as amended Policy B-011 (Role Description: Non-Council Committee members).
- Bob Thompson, RSW, President, presented his Professional Development Report which summarized his attendance at the Association of Social Work Boards' Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly.

DECEMBER 4, 2015

- Council participated in an educational session presented by Marc Spector and Cathi Mietkiewicz from Steinecke Maciura Leblanc – *Hottest Trends in Regulation and Regulation Gone Wild*.
- Reports were received from the following statutory and non-statutory committees: Executive; Complaints; Discipline; Fitness to Practise; Registration Appeals; Standards of Practice; Election; Nominating; Finance; Corporations; Titles and Designations; and Governance.
- The next Council meeting dates were changed to March 10 and 11, 2016.

Council Highlights for March 11, 2016

- Bob Thompson, RSW, President, presented his report to Council. The report touched upon the College's meetings with the Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW) and the 2015 audit.
- Lise Betteridge, RSW, Registrar, and Laura Sheehan, Deputy Registrar, presented their report to Council, which highlighted ongoing College processes such as registration renewals, website updates and the upcoming database upgrade.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Financial Position as of January 2016.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Operations for January 2016.
- Council reviewed proposed amendments to the Registration Regulation regarding the elimination of the Provisional Class of Registration and the creation of a new Retired Class.
- Council reviewed proposed amendments to the Registration Regulation that would require registered members to obtain professional liability insurance and undergo a criminal background check. Neither of the proposed amendments was approved by Council.
- The Registrar gave an update regarding Bill 119, and in particular the College's response to the provisions related to the provider registry for the shared Electronic Health Record (EHR).
- Council reviewed and approved use of Decision Matrix and Decision Tree documents, so that Council decisions will always favour public protection over all other interests.
- Reports were received from the following statutory and non-statutory committees: Executive; Complaints; Discipline; Registration Appeals; Fitness to Practise; Standards of Practice; Election; Nominating; Finance; Governance; Corporations; and Titles and Designations.

The College Welcomes New Deputy Registrar

The College is pleased to announce Laura Sheehan as its new Deputy Registrar. Laura brings a wealth of regulatory experience to the College. Most recently, Laura served as the Deputy Registrar of the College of Early Childhood Educators. A teacher by profession, she also worked for the Ontario College of Teachers during its foundational years in a senior leadership role responsible for accreditation.

Laura has been asked on numerous occasions to speak on the merits of self-regulation having been a conference speaker on the topic in Scotland, Australia, the U.S. and Canada. Additionally she has worked in an advisor capacity to the Office of the Ontario Fairness Commissioner.

"I believe my experience has prepared me well for my role with the OCSWSSW," she said. "I look forward to working with College stakeholders, staff and Council as they continue to fulfill the College mandate of protecting the public interest."

As Deputy Registrar, Laura is responsible for operational oversight, strategy development, customer service, registration and member services as well as leading a technology improvement strategy to support initial registration and member management. Additionally, Laura works closely with the Registrar and Council on the College's governance mandate.

Laura is a long-time supporter of professional self-regulation.

"I am a strong proponent of self-regulation for professionals and genuinely excited about applying my knowledge of regulatory bodies, customer service, organizational development and stakeholder relations to build on the success of the College."

Laura will make a great addition to the OCSWSSW. We are very happy to have her on board.

Please join us in welcoming Laura to the College.

Did You Know? Social Work Diagnosis

The *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA), S.O. 1991, c. 18, restricts the performance of certain controlled acts “in the course of providing health care services to an individual”, including the controlled act of “communicating to the individual ... or his or her personal representative a diagnosis identifying a disease or disorder as the cause of symptoms of the individual in circumstances in which it is reasonably foreseeable that the individual ... will rely on the diagnosis.” Members of the College are not among those professions authorized to perform the controlled act of communicating a diagnosis.

The provision of a social work diagnosis does fall within the scope of practice for social work, however. The scope of practice for the profession of social work includes “the provision of assessment, diagnostic, treatment and evaluation services between a social worker and client”. *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, defines a social work diagnosis as:

“that series of judgments made by a social worker based on social work knowledge and skills in regard

to individuals, couples, families and groups. These judgments:

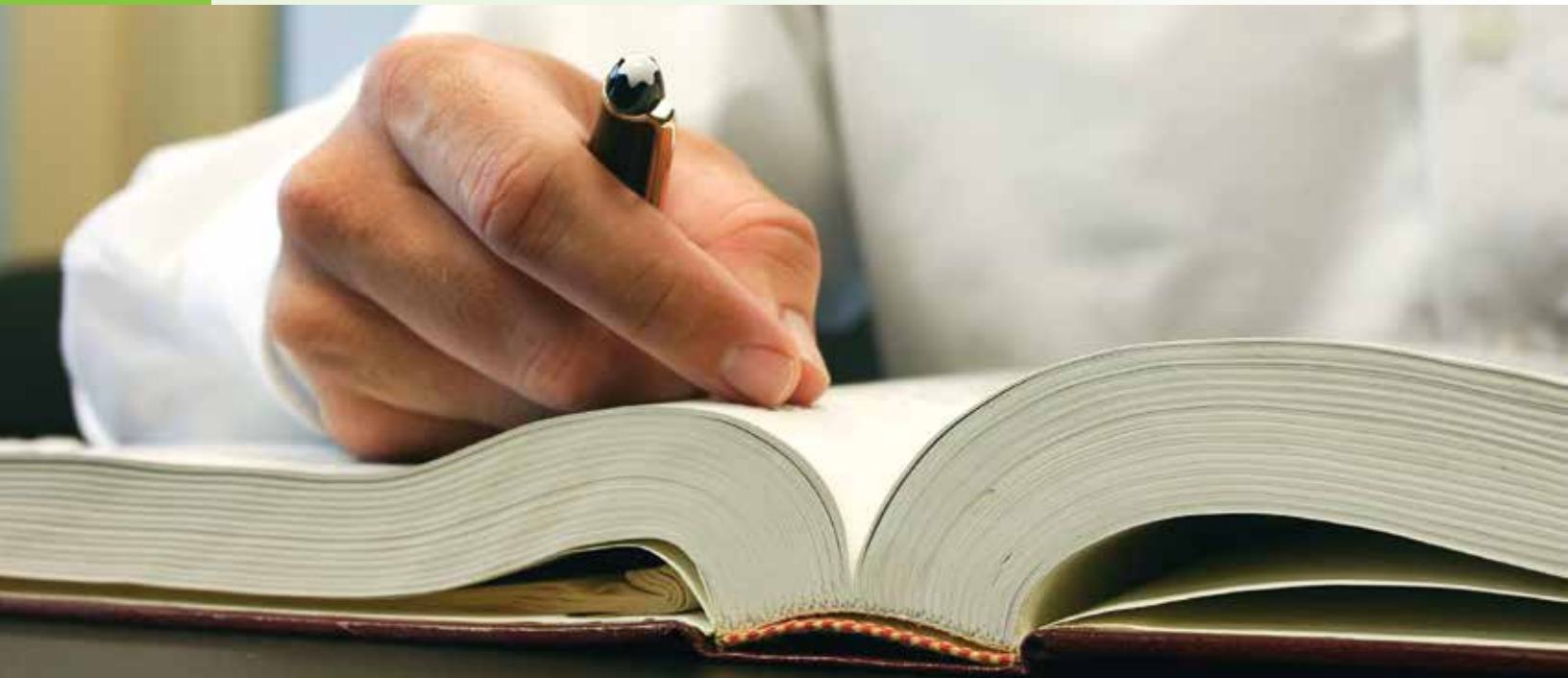
- a. serve as the basis of actions to be taken or not taken in a case for which the social worker has assumed professional responsibility and
- b. are based on the Social Work Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.”

Such judgments and the procedures and actions leading from them are matters for which the social worker expects to be accountable.

Members may be unclear as to the limits of their scope of practice or may misunderstand the meaning of the controlled act of communicating a diagnosis. As more highly-templated assessment forms, progress notes and other documents have become more common, members may also be confused by drop-down menus which include DSM diagnoses as options. Members should ensure that their record-keeping and communication with clients, colleagues and others does not suggest that they are communicating a diagnosis.

Practice Notes: Professional, Ethical, Qualified, Accountable: The Benefits of Registration

KATHLEEN LANOUE, MSW, RSW, DIRECTOR, PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE



Practice Notes is designed as an educational tool to help Ontario social workers, social service workers, employers and members of the public gain a better understanding of recurring issues dealt with by the Professional Practice Department and the Complaints Committee that may affect everyday practice. The notes offer general guidance only and members with specific practice inquiries should consult the College, since the relevant standards and appropriate course of action will vary depending on the situation.

The College regularly receives inquiries about the need for social workers or social service workers to be registered, or sometimes, if registered, a caller may want to know what the College is doing for them and their practice. These are important questions that can be explored by understanding fully the mandate of the College, the services offered to members and to the public, and the importance of being a registered professional.

Consider the following scenario:

A practitioner with a social work degree who had recently obtained employment in a small community agency called the College wondering whether to become registered. The caller was unsure as to the need to be registered since her employer did not require this as a condition of her employment. She was also unclear about the role of the College and what benefits she might get from her registration.

This scenario is best addressed by reviewing the mandate of the College, which highlights the importance of registration from the perspective of members, the public and employers.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS MANDATE

Social workers and social service workers are regulated under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* (SWSSWA). The College's mandate is to to serve and protect the public interest through self-regulation of the professions of social work and social service work. It accomplishes this by setting entry-to-practice requirements, setting and maintaining professional standards, ensuring members adhere to a code of ethics and standards of practice, requiring continuing competence activities and maintaining rigorous complaints and disciplinary processes. Despite its name, the College is a **self-regulatory body** and not an educational institution or school. Its role is also distinct from that of a professional association, whose mandate is

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to promote the profession and advocate in the interests of the profession and individual practitioners¹. The College is accountable to the Ministry of Community and Social Services. **Self-regulation** is a specific kind of regulation, in which the government delegates to a profession the power to regulate its peers. It is a privilege given to professions when they have reached a level of maturity such that:

- There is broad support for regulation within the profession(s).
- The profession has a specialized and recognized skill set and knowledge base which enable it to set standards and judge the conduct of its members.

Regulation is designed to ensure that the public receives services that are provided by **professional, ethical, qualified and accountable** practitioners. **Self-regulation** recognizes that those within the profession are in the best position to determine, evaluate and enforce the standards of practice of the profession. The SWSSWA protects the titles “social worker/registered social worker”, “social service worker/registered social service worker” as well as their short forms and French equivalents. Only those who are registered with the College can use any of the protected titles. Registration is also required for an individual to represent himself or herself or hold out as a “social worker” or “social service worker.”²

For the public, seeking a social worker or social service worker who can demonstrate they are registered with the College provides an element of legitimacy and assures potential clients they can expect a level of education, ethics, professionalism and accountability; it also provides a route (through the College’s complaints and discipline processes) for them to address concerns about a member’s practice.

Although regulation has as its ultimate goal the protection of the public, social workers and social service workers enjoy a less tangible benefit through their registration with the College - a level of professionalism that comes

with demonstrating to potential clients that they are a professional, ethical, qualified and accountable practitioner.

As a result of her contact with the College, the practitioner in the scenario above gained a better understanding of the College and its role, the legislation governing the practice of social work and social service work in Ontario, and the benefits of registration. She also learned that although the College does not regulate her employer by determining the qualifications for a given position, there were many good reasons for her to register with the College.

THE BENEFITS OF REGISTRATION FOR THE PUBLIC, EMPLOYERS AND MEMBERS

When a member of the public is looking for a social worker or social service worker, they often call the College or access the College’s online Public Register through the College website. The purpose of the Register is to help the public identify that a person is a social worker or social service worker registered with the College, and determine the person’s registration status, business address and discipline history, if any. This information assists the public, potential clients and employers in determining whether the professional in question is in good standing, subject to any terms, conditions or limitations on their certificate of registration, and/or discipline. The Register is another mechanism the College has which assists it in achieving its mandate of public protection.

Employers who choose to hire registered social workers and social services workers know that their employees’ membership in the College provides another level of accountability. This accountability and professionalism is clearly a benefit to clients, potential clients and (in the view of many employers) the agency.

Another important benefit of registration for both employers and members is the clear direction provided by the College in the form of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook*. This important resource sets out the

1 The Ontario Association of Social Workers: <http://www.oasw.org/public/about-oasw/vision-and-mission-statement.aspx> and The Ontario Social Service Workers Association: <http://www.osswwa.ca/aboutus/>

2 The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers Use of Title and Holding Out Provisions; www.ocswssw.org/publications

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minimum standards of practice for all members, but also guides practice leaders, managers, and others in leadership roles about the particular standards of practice from which they can build client services and develop policies. The College often receives inquiries from employers wishing to clarify standards as they build policy for their organization and make decisions for client groups.

PRACTICE RESOURCES AND THE NEED TO REMAIN COMPETENT

The benefits of registration also extend to those who are practising the professions. All members of the College must follow the minimum standards of practice set out in *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*.³ The standards of practice are an essential resource to guide members throughout their career - whether they are teaching, training, working in policy or providing frontline clinical service, members must be aware of the minimum standards to which they are held accountable. *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* also defines the scopes of practice for each profession; it is a kind of road map for members which, when utilized with other guiding legislation, policies and procedures in your work environment, as well as your professional judgment, can assist you immeasurably in your practice. The standards of practice consist of eight principles ranging from Responsibility to Clients, to Competence and Integrity, Fees, The Social Work and Social Service Work Record (documentation) and Confidentiality, all of which are meant to guide members in their decision-making. The standards of practice are the basis for guiding and assessing professional conduct, and the main resource in consultations with the College's Professional Practice Department (another important resource for members).

The College also provides a range of other resources to members which support and promote excellence in practice. These include: Practice Guidelines; Practice Notes and other articles found in the *Perspective* newsletter and in the Resource Room on the College website; and presentations, upon request, to members in their practice

environments and to educators and students in social work and social service work programs.

All of these resources help College members to ensure that they are practising competently and ethically, in accordance with the standards of practice. They are also meant to assist social workers and social service workers in puzzling through the complex and challenging issues they may face in their practice settings throughout their career.

Consider the following scenario:

A registered social service worker called the College requesting guidance about how to manage a client whose challenges and needs were beginning to feel overwhelming for the member. He was concerned that he did not necessarily have the skills and competence required to assist the client, yet he felt that he might be obligated to continue to see the client. He was seeking guidance from the College about what to do.

Members of the College frequently call the Professional Practice Department, asking for assistance in interpreting the standards of practice and applying them to dilemmas that they are facing. Some members, like the one in the scenario above, feel they are obliged to continue with a client with whom they have begun to provide service; they may be worried that not continuing to work with a client they feel they may not be qualified to assist might be unprofessional or unethical.

Professional Practice staff assisted the member by helping him to identify the issues involved and the relevant standards that he should consider in order to determine his next steps. Principle II: Competence and Integrity states that "College members are responsible for being aware of the extent and parameters of their competence and their professional scope of practice and limit their practice accordingly. When a client's needs fall outside the College member's usual area of practice, the member

³ *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008* available on the College website at www.ocswssw.org.

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informs the client of the option to be referred to another professional".⁴

In the course of the practice consultation, the member determined that he was justified in helping the client make the successful transition to another professional who had the particular skill set required to assist them. He realized that helping a client to move on to another professional may be in the best interests of the client and thus a professional and ethical decision that is supported by the standards of practice.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE

Registration with the College demonstrates to the public that you are qualified and current in your practice, and that you continue to learn and develop as a professional. This assurance of your currency and commitment to ongoing education is also a benefit to you, as a member of the College. In accordance with the Registration Regulation, O. Reg. 383/00 made under the SWSSWA, all members must provide evidence of their continuing competence to practise social work or social service work, according to the guidelines set by the College.

Consider the following scenario:

A member of the public contacted the Professional Practice Department with a concern about a social work member in private practice to whom she had recently brought her teenaged son for support. Although the caller's son seemed to like the social worker, the mother's concerns stemmed from reading material that the social worker had provided to them as a resource. The resources seem old and out of date, leaving the mother to wonder if the social worker was current in her practice and competent to provide service to her young son.

It is important to consider the standards of practice in addition to the continuing competence requirements in the Registration Regulation when considering this scenario.

The following interpretations in Principle II: Competence and Integrity are relevant:

2.1: College members are committed to ongoing professional development and maintaining competence in their practice.

2.1.2: College members remain current with emerging social work or social service work knowledge and practice relevant to their areas of professional practice. Members demonstrate their commitment to ongoing professional development by engaging in any continuing education and complying with continuing competence measures required by the College.

2.1.5: As part of maintaining competence and acquiring skills in social work or social service work practice, College members engage in the process of self-review and evaluation of their practice and seek consultation where appropriate.

In this scenario, the member may wish to review her resources and materials to ensure they reflect an awareness of the current literature. Engaging in such a review is something the member could do as part of her Continuing Competence Program (CCP) requirements.

The CCP is mandatory for all members of the College (including those who are not currently practising, are Inactive members, are on maternity, parental or sick leave, or who registered late in the year). Its primary purpose is to promote quality assurance with respect to the practice of the professions of social work and social service work, and to encourage members to enhance their practice in an ongoing way. The CCP, which is self-directed and highly flexible, provides multiple opportunities through which members ensure ongoing competence. Reading articles, doing research on the internet, reading books, volunteering, as well as attending workshops, conferences or seminars (including webinars) or supervising students are all legitimate learning activities under the CCP.

⁴ Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008, Principle II; Competence and Integrity, 2.1.1.

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Maintaining competence through the CCP is one of the ways a practitioner can ensure that they are providing services to clients “that are appropriately substantiated by evidence and supported by a credible body of professional social work knowledge or credible body of social service work knowledge.”⁵

CONCLUSION

The College regulates the practice of social work and social service work in Ontario and ensures that the

thousands of registered social workers and registered social service workers in the province are professional and accountable to the public that they serve. Benefiting the public, employers and members, your registration is a clear indicator that you are ethical, professional, qualified and accountable.

For more information, please contact the Professional Practice Department at practice@ocswssw.org.

⁵ Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008, Principle II; Competence and Integrity, interpretation 2.1.4

Discipline Decision Summary



This summary of the Discipline Committee's Decision and Reasons for Decisions is published pursuant to the Discipline Committee's oral decision rendered on July 24, 2015 and written reasons dated November 10, 2015.

BY PUBLISHING THIS SUMMARY, THE COLLEGE ENDEAVOURS TO:

- Illustrate for social workers, social service workers and members of the public, what does or does not constitute professional misconduct.
- Provide social workers and social service workers with direction about the College's standards of practice and professional behaviour, to be applied in future, should they find themselves in similar circumstances.
- Implement the Discipline Committee's decision.
- Provide social workers, social service workers and members of the public with an understanding of the College's discipline process.

PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

EMILY BEECKMANS, RSW

MEMBER #527581

AGREED STATEMENT OF FACT

The College and the Member submitted a written statement to the Discipline Committee in which the following facts were agreed:

1. Emily Beekmans ("Ms. Beekmans" or the "Member") graduated with a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Toronto in 1998 and

was registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the "College") in November of 2000.

2. Between July 4th, 2011, and July 23rd, 2013, Ms. Beekmans was employed by [place of employment] as an Employee Assistance Counselor where she provided short term counseling service. [Place of employment] is Canada's largest provider of employee and family assistance programs.
3. Ms. Beekmans was away from her private practice employment for cancer surgery from November 2011 until mid January 2012. She returned to work while undergoing chemotherapy.
4. On February 2nd, 2012, Ms. Beekmans conducted an intake meeting with a client who was referred to her for counselling services by [place of employment]. Prior to the first session, the client filled out an intake questionnaire. Part of the intake questionnaire was the Major Depression Inventory ("MDI"), a self-report mood questionnaire, which Ms. Beekmans reviewed with the client and which indicated that he had "severe depression symptoms." Ms. Beekmans additionally set goals and identified actions to support those goals with the client, under headings "Goal(s)", "Intervention / Actions to support goal(s)" and "Next steps / homework."
5. After the initial meeting with the client, Ms. Beekmans consulted a social work colleague due to concerns that she had of a potential conflict of interest. In the event that this matter proceeded to a contested hearing, Ms. Beekmans would have taken the position that the conflict of interest was that she felt that she could personally identify with some of the experiences and issues that the client had identified in the initial meeting. They also knew some people in common. The College disputes Ms. Beekmans' position and would have taken the position that Ms. Beekmans was concerned about a mutual attraction that she felt between herself and the client. She was directed to explore in her second session if the conflict existed and, if she concluded that it did, she was advised that she should transfer the client's file.
6. Ms. Beekmans met with the client a second time on February 21st, 2012. During this second meeting, Ms.

Discipline Decision Summary

Beeckmans identified that a conflict of interest did, in fact, exist. She ended the meeting and explained to the client that she would need to transfer him to another counsellor due to the conflict of interest.

7. Ms. Beeckmans subsequently contacted the [place of employment] call centre to transfer the file, explaining that she had a conflict of interest. She was directed to contact the client herself and inform him to call into the call centre to set up an appointment with a new counsellor.
8. On February 23, 2012, Ms. Beeckmans called the client to provide him with the name of his new counsellor. During the call, Ms. Beeckmans reviewed the conflict of interest with the former client and apologized for the inconvenience.
9. During the February 23, 2012 phone call, the former client additionally asked Ms. Beeckmans out for a coffee and to have social contact. Ms. Beeckmans redirected the client, respectfully explaining to him that for her to accept his invitation would be inappropriate by virtue of their professional relationship. Notwithstanding, she told the former client that she would consider his request and they exchanged their private cell phone numbers.
10. A few weeks later, Ms. Beeckmans texted the former client after seeing an article about him in a local newspaper. The former client called her. At his request, Ms. Beeckmans agreed to a private social meeting with the former client in late March 2012. The meeting occurred in Ms. Beeckmans' office in order that the parties would have privacy. Ms. Beeckmans subsequently began to go on dates with the former client and engaged in a consensual romantic and intimate relationship involving sexual contact.
11. The former client's girlfriend subsequently disclosed Ms. Beeckmans' romantic and intimate relationship with the client to her own telephonic counsellor on July 9, 2013. That counsellor, in turn, contacted his Regional Clinical Manager at [place of employment]. During the course of the internal investigation conducted by [place of employment], Ms. Beeckmans disclosed the personal relationship with her former client to her Regional Clinical Manager on July 11, 2013.

12. Ms. Beeckmans' employment with [place of employment] was terminated on July 23, 2013.

DECISION

The Discipline Committee accepted the Member's Plea and the Agreed Statement of Fact and found that the agreed facts support a finding that the Member committed acts of professional misconduct and, in particular, that the Member:

1. Violated section 2.2 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle VIII of the *Handbook* (as commented on in Interpretations 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 8.7) by engaging in behaviour of a sexual nature with a client or former client when she established a personal and sexual relationship with the former client to whom she provided counselling services.
2. Violated section 2.2 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle I of the *Handbook* (commented on in Interpretations 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7) by failing to be aware of her own values, attitudes and needs and how those impact on her professional relationships with clients; failing to distinguish her needs and interests from those of her client; failing to ensure that her client's needs and interests remain paramount and failing to maintain an awareness and consideration of the purposes, mandate and function of her employer when she established a personal and sexual relationship with a former client to whom she had provided counselling services.
3. Violated section 2.6 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation by using information obtained during her professional relationship with the client to coerce, improperly influence, harass or exploit the client when she established a personal and sexual relationship with the client to whom she provided counselling services.
4. Violated section 2.2 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation and Principle II (2.2) of the *Handbook* (commented on in Interpretations 2.1.5, 2.2.1 and 2.2.2) by failing to maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in her professional relationship when she established a personal and sexual relationship with a former client to whom she provided social work

Discipline Decision Summary

services. In doing so, she placed herself in a situation involving a conflict of interest in which she ought reasonably to have known that the client would be at risk and used her professional position of authority to exploit the client.

5. Violated section 2.36 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation by engaging in conduct or performing an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional when she pursued and established a personal and sexual relationship with a former client to whom she provided counselling services.

PENALTY ORDER

The panel of the Discipline Committee accepted the Joint Submission as to Penalty submitted by the College and the Member and made an order in accordance with the terms of the Joint Submission as to Penalty. The Discipline Committee ordered that:

1. The Member shall be reprimanded by teleconference by the Discipline Committee and the fact and nature of the reprimand shall be recorded on the College's Register.
2. The Registrar shall be directed to suspend the Member's Certificate of Registration for a period of 24 months, the first two months of which shall be served commencing on the date of the Discipline Committee's Order herein. Upon completion of those first two months of the suspension, the remaining 22 months of the suspension shall be suspended for a period of two years, commencing on the date of the Discipline Committee's Order herein. The remaining 22 months of the suspension shall be remitted on the expiry of that two-year period if (on or before the second anniversary of the Discipline Committee's Order herein) the Member provides evidence, satisfactory to the Registrar of the College, of compliance with the terms and conditions imposed under paragraph 3 below. If the Member fails to comply with those terms and conditions, the Member shall serve the remaining 22 months of the suspension, commencing two years from the date of the Discipline Committee's Order. For greater clarity, the terms and conditions imposed under paragraph 3 below will be binding on the Member regardless of the length of suspension served and the Member may not elect to serve the full suspension in place of performing those terms and conditions. If the Member fails to comply with the terms and conditions, the Registrar may refer the matter to the Executive Committee of the College. The Executive Committee, pursuant to its authority, may take such action as it deems appropriate, which may include referring to the Discipline Committee allegations of professional misconduct arising from any failure to comply with the terms and conditions.
3. The Registrar shall be directed to impose a term, condition and limitation on the Member's Certificate of Registration, to be recorded on the Register, requiring the Member to:
 - a. At her own expense, participate in and successfully complete a boundaries and ethics training course, as prescribed by and acceptable to the College, and provide proof of such completion to the Registrar within six months from the date of the Order.
 - b. At her own expense, engage in insight oriented psychotherapy as directed by a therapist, approved by the Registrar of the College, for a period of two years from the date of the Discipline Committee's Order, with semi-annual written reports as to the substance of the psychotherapy and the progress of the Member to be provided to the College by the therapist. The Member must additionally provide to the approved therapist the Notice of Hearing as well as the final decision of the Discipline Committee and must provide written confirmation, signed by the therapist, of receipt of the documents to the Registrar within 15 days of the rendering of the final decision. The Registrar may, if satisfied that the purpose of the therapy has been accomplished, at any time before the expiry of the two-year period, direct that the psychotherapy be discontinued.
 - c. At her own expense, receive supervision of her private social work practice with an approved

Discipline Decision Summary

member of a regulated health profession for a period of two years from the date of the Discipline Committee Order. The Member must additionally provide to the approved therapist (and any other approved supervisor pursuant to section (c) or (d) of this Joint Submission as to Penalty) the Notice of Hearing as well as the final decision of the Discipline Committee and must provide written confirmation, signed by the supervisor, of receipt of the documents to the Registrar within 15 days of the rendering of the final decision (and within 15 days of the approval of any subsequent supervisor). The Member must seek consent from prospective clients to share personal health information with her supervisor in order to allow the supervisor to review client files and engage in review.

- d. In the event that the Member obtains future employment engaging in activities that fall within the social work scope of practice during the two years following the date of the Discipline Committee Order:
 - i. The Member shall forthwith advise the Registrar of the name and address of her employer, the position in which she will be working and the start date.
 - ii. The Member shall forthwith advise the Registrar of the name of the person who will be providing supervision of her social work practice within her place of employment.
 - iii. The Member shall receive supervision of her social work practice within her place of employment, from the supervisor identified to the Registrar, for a period of two years from the date of the Discipline Committee Order.
 - iv. If the Member's employment ends, or the Member changes employers and/or supervisors, she shall forthwith advise the Registrar of the termination of or change in her employment and/or the name of her new supervisor.
 - v. Forthwith upon completion of the supervision referred to above, in subparagraphs 3(d)(i)-(iv), the Member shall provide to the Registrar written confirmation from her supervisor(s) of such completion.

4. The Discipline Committee's finding and Order (or a summary thereof) shall be published, with identifying information concerning the Member included, in the College's official publication and on the College's website, and the results of the hearing shall be recorded on the Register.
5. The Member shall pay costs to the College in the amount of \$1,500 to be paid in increments of \$300 every three months, beginning three months from the date of the Discipline Committee hearing provided that this joint submission as to penalty is accepted by the Discipline Committee in its entirety.

THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT:

- The joint penalty proposed was reasonable, maintains high professional standards, and serves and protects the public interest.
- The panel considered the aggravating and mitigating circumstances submitted by both counsel. In addition, the panel considered the fact that the member has cooperated with the College, has agreed to the facts and a proposed penalty, has accepted responsibility for her actions and has already begun rehabilitative measures by seeking counselling and support.
- The penalty provides both specific deterrence and general deterrence to deter members of the profession from engaging in similar misconduct.

Discipline Decision Summary



This summary of the Discipline Committee's Decision and Reason for Decisions is published pursuant to the Discipline Committee's written reasons dated August 21, 2015.

BY PUBLISHING THIS SUMMARY, THE COLLEGE ENDEAVOURS TO:

- Illustrate for social workers, social service workers and members of the public what does or does not constitute professional misconduct.
- Provide social workers and social service workers with direction about the College's standards of practice and professional behaviour, to be applied in future, should they find themselves in similar circumstances.
- Implement the Discipline Committee's decision.
- Provide social workers, social service workers and members of the public with an understanding of the College's discipline process.

PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

GRANT FAIR, RSW

FORMER MEMBER #325122

AGREED STATEMENT OF FACT

The College and the Member submitted a written statement to the Discipline Committee in which the following facts were agreed:

1. Now, and at all times relevant to the allegations, Grant Fair (the "Member") was a registered social work

member of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the "College").

2. Since 2003, the Member has indicated that his primary practice field is "Sexual Abuse" on his Annual Renewal of Registration to the College ("Annual Renewal"). In some years between 2003 and 2014, including on the 2014 Annual Renewal, the Member indicated a secondary practice field of "Mental Health – Adult."
3. Prior to the issuance of the Notice of Hearing, the Member was retained as a social worker by the [place of employment] in the [name of department]. In that capacity, he provided counselling services to sexual offenders, many of whom have been released into the community. The Member additionally provided expert opinions and/or assessments and pre-sentence reports in court proceedings relating to sexual offenders.
4. Prior to the issuance of the Notice of Hearing, the Member additionally carried on a private practice wherein he provided counselling and psychotherapy services to clients.
5. Between 2002 and 2007, the Member inappropriately touched the genitals of two girls who were minors at the time on about three occasions each. The touching was sexual in nature and afterwards he masturbated, though not in the presence of the girls.

DECISION

The Discipline Committee accepted the Member's Plea and the Agreed Statement of Fact and found that the agreed facts support a finding that the Member committed acts of professional misconduct, and in particular, that the Member's conduct:

1. Violated Section 2.36 of the Professional Misconduct Regulation by engaging in conduct or performing an act relevant to the practice of the profession that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.

PENALTY ORDER

The parties were mostly in agreement on the issue of penalty and made a joint proposal for the panel's

Discipline Decision Summary

consideration. The point on which the parties differed was with respect to publication. Both parties agreed that the panel's finding and order (or a summary thereof) should be published in the College's official publication, on the College's website and on any other outlet for publication that the College deems appropriate. However, College Counsel requested that publication should include reference to the Member's name. Counsel for the Member submitted that publication should not include reference to the Member's name.

Having considered the findings of professional misconduct, the relevant evidence and the submissions of the parties, the panel orders as follows:

1. The Member shall be reprimanded and the fact and nature of the reprimand shall be recorded on the College's Register.
2. The Registrar shall be directed to revoke the Member's Certificate of Registration and to fix a period of five years during which the Member may not reapply to the College.
3. The Discipline Committee's finding and Order (or a summary thereof) shall be published in the College's official publication, on the College's website and in any other manner other outlet for publication that the College deems appropriate. Publication shall be with reference to the Member's name, and without reference to any information that could identify the minor children involved.
4. The results of the hearing shall be recorded on the Register.
5. The Member shall pay costs to the College in the amount of \$2,500.

THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT:

- With respect to the joint penalty proposed by the parties, the penalty was reasonable in light of the goals and principles of maintaining high professional standards, preserving public confidence in the College's ability to regulate members and, most importantly, protecting the public.
- With respect to the issue of publication, the publication of the finding and order of this panel with Mr. Fair's name serves an important notification purpose for public protection and acts as a form of general and specific deterrence. While prejudice to clients may be a factor to consider in deciding whether or not to publish a member's name, there was no evidence of prejudice in this case. The argument was speculative.
- Membership in the College is not a requirement for setting up a private practice providing counselling or therapy, nor is it a requirement for accepting employment providing these services to vulnerable clients. As such there is no assurance that prospective clients or employers would contact the College to inquire about an individual's membership status. Publishing the Member's name in the Committee's decision may be the only effective way of ensuring that the public or future employers are aware of Mr. Fair's past conduct. Publication of his name maintains public confidence in the integrity of the College's discipline process.
- Publishing Mr. Fair's name will also serve as an important general deterrent to other members of the College, notifying them of the consequences of acting in a similar manner.

2016 College Council Elections



On Thursday, May 26, 2016, the College will hold an election for social work members and social service work members in Electoral District Nos. 1, 2 and 5. The College invites all members eligible to vote in Electoral District Nos. 1, 2 and 5 to stand for election to the College Council.

ONLINE VOTING

This year members will be able to vote online. The voting system is designed to be secure and to protect the confidentiality of members' votes. It is one that has been used successfully by other Ontario regulatory colleges. An online election process will improve efficiency and reduce the paper, printing and mailing costs associated with the election.

DISTRICTS INVOLVED IN THE 2016 COUNCIL ELECTION

- Electoral District 1 elects one social work councillor and one social service work councillor.
- Electoral District 2 elects one social work councillor and one social service work councillor.
- Electoral District 5 elects one social work councillor and one social service work councillor.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT COUNCIL

The Council is the governing body and board of directors

that manages and administers College affairs. The Council is composed of:

- Seven social workers who are members of the College and who are elected by the members of the College in accordance with the bylaws.
- Seven social service workers who are members of the College and who are elected by the members of the College in accordance with the bylaws.
- Seven persons who are appointed by the Ontario Government.

PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC

The College's primary duty is to serve and protect the public interest while promoting high standards of practice for the professions. At the same time, the College encourages a robust interactive relationship with members, stakeholders and the public. To steer and guide these processes, Council's primary governance function is policy development. The policies developed by Council provide direction to the College and to staff.

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Pat Lieberman at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380 ext. 207 or email elections@ocswssw.org.

Q & A



Q & A is a feature appearing in *Perspective* that answers members' questions on various topics relating to the College and the practice of social work and social service work. If you have any questions you would like answered, please send them via email to John Gilson, Communications Coordinator, at jgilson@ocswssw.org. Although not all questions will be published in subsequent issues of *Perspective*, all will be answered.

Q: I read recently that the College is going to begin revoking certificates of registration for members who have been administratively suspended for more than two years. My certificate is currently suspended. How do I avoid revocation?

A: To avoid revocation of your certificate of registration, you should:

1. Complete and sign the Annual Renewal of Registration form annually, and return it with payment of fees.

OR

2. Resign from the College by mailing, emailing or faxing a signed letter of resignation to the College. If a member resigns, a notation is made in the Register, indicating that the certificate is cancelled. This notation is different from a notation that would be made if the certificate has been revoked for non-payment of fees.

The Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998, and the Registration Regulation permit the College Registrar to revoke a certificate of registration if an administrative suspension has been in effect for over two years.

When a certificate of registration is revoked, the College's online Public Register is updated with a notation indicating that the certificate of registration has been revoked.

If your certificate of registration is revoked, you will be required to reapply to the College should you wish to become a member again. This means that you will be required to complete an application form, submit all of the required documentation, pay the prescribed fees, and

meet the requirements for registration prescribed by the regulations, bylaws and policies in existence at the time that you reapply. (Those whose provisional certificate of registration has been suspended should be aware that the options for reapplying for membership after their provisional certificate of registration has been revoked may be limited.)

Keeping your membership current is important. By doing so, you continue to enjoy uninterrupted benefits of membership. If your certificate of membership is suspended or revoked, you are no longer permitted to use any of the protected titles, or to represent or hold out, expressly or by implication, that you are a social worker/social service worker or registered social worker/registered social service worker.

If you have any questions about how to avoid revocation of your certificate of registration, please contact Paul Cucci, Membership Coordinator, at toll free telephone number, 1-877-828-9380, ext. 202, or Anne Vézina, Bilingual Membership Administrator, at ext. 211.

Bulletin Board

CHANGE OF INFORMATION NOTIFICATION

If you **change employers or move**, please advise the College in writing within 30 days. The College is required to have the current business address of its members available to the public. Notification of change of address can be done through the website at www.ocswssw.org, emailed to info@ocswssw.org, faxed to 416-972-1512 or mailed to the College office address. In addition to providing your new address, please also provide your old address and College registration number.

If you **change your name**, you must advise the College of both your former name(s) and your new name(s) in writing and include a copy of the change of name certificate or marriage certificate for our records. The information may be sent by fax to 416-972-1512 or by mail to the College office address.

If you wish to **update your education**, you must ask your academic institution to forward an official transcript with the institution seal and/or stamp directly to the OCSWSSW.

PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE COLLEGE

If you are interested in volunteering for one of the College's committees or task groups, please email Monique Guibert at mguibert@ocswssw.org to receive an application form. The College welcomes all applications, however, the number of available positions for non-Council members is limited by the statutory committee requirements in the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act* as well as the bylaws and policies of the College.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

College Council meetings are open to the public and are held at the College office in Toronto. Visitors attend as observers only. Seating at Council meetings is limited. To reserve a seat, please fax your request to the College at 416-972-1512 or email mguibert@ocswssw.org. Please visit the College's website for the dates and times of upcoming meetings.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers protects the interest of the public by regulating the practice of social workers and social service workers and promoting excellence in practice.

VISION STATEMENT

The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers strives for organizational excellence in its mandate in order to: serve the public interest; regulate its members; and be accountable and accessible to the community.





Ontario College of
Social Workers and
Social Service Workers

HOW TO REACH US:

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Perspective is the official publication of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. It is published twice a year.

Editor:

John Gilson and Jolinne Kearns

Design:

LAM Marketing & Design
www.lam.ca

Publication mail agreement:
40712081
Printed in Canada

If you require this publication in an alternate format, contact the College at 1-877-828-9380 or info@ocswssw.org.

FSC LOGO

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Frances Ma
Registration Assistant

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Contact Edwina for information and inquiries about professional incorporation.

For general registration inquiries, please email:
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