



# PERSPECTIVE

PROFESSIONAL • ETHICAL • QUALIFIED • ACCOUNTABLE

## Celebrating 15 Years of Social Work and Social Service Work Regulation



Twenty five is an important milestone for the College, as it marks our fifteenth year in operation. When we look back on our achievements over this period, we feel a great sense of accomplishment and pride. So much has been done and yet there are many opportunities and adventures ahead.

Since the College opened its doors in 2000, we have seen: the appointment of the Registrar; the election and appointment of the first members of the College Council; the proclamation of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*; the development of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*; the launch of the *Perspective* newsletter, the website, and the Annual Meeting and Education Day; the development of the Continuing Competence Program and later an in-depth evaluation of the program; the building of relationships with social work and social service work educators, employers and other stakeholders; and so much more. We continue to reflect on and improve our current policies, processes and resources.

College membership continues to flourish. In 2000, the College had approximately 5,700 members. Our membership has since grown to over 17,550. The steady increase in membership has shaped our priorities and we continue to work hard on fulfilling our mandate.

None of the accomplishments made in the past 15 years would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our Registrar Glenda McDonald, MSW, RSW, who left on medical leave in November 2014. Glenda's unwavering commitment to professional regulation continues to guide colleagues and members alike. Her regular presence at the College is greatly missed.

Our successes over the past 15 years would not have been possible without the hard work and support of Council, staff, educators, employers and, of course, our members. We are privileged to regulate the professions of social work and social service work. We look forward to addressing the many goals and challenges in the years to come.

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In early March 2015, the College was happy to announce the launch of its new—more accessible—website, [www.ocsussw.org](http://www.ocsussw.org).

Accessibility and user experience were important considerations during the design of the new College website. The bilingual and more inclusive website is in compliance with Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). To enhance access for members and the public, the website features more intuitive navigation as well as larger text options and more white space for improved viewing.

The new College website is also mobile-friendly, enabling an optimal reading experience when viewing on small handheld devices. (According to the College's "2014 Member Communications Survey", approximately 20% of members reported receiving their news and information on mobile communications. Read the survey analysis on page 7.)

The new [www.ocsussw.org](http://www.ocsussw.org) includes enhanced social sharing functionality to help members and the public better communicate, and to foster the knowledge transfer of important information. For example, most webpages can be shared on social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

The College encourages members to explore and make use of the new website.

*Should you have any questions or concerns about the new website, including its design and functionality, please feel free to contact Jolinne Kearns, Communications Manager, at [jkearns@ocsussw.org](mailto:jkearns@ocsussw.org) or by telephone at 1-877-828-9380 ext. 415.*

## STAYING CONNECTED WITH THE COLLEGE



In the fall of 2014, the College successfully ran its fifth 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; and
- increase the College’s visibility with, and connection to, its membership.

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.

Hosted in Timmins and London, Ontario, 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.

### TIMMINS

Members from across Northern Ontario came to participate in the Timmins Educational Forum, which was held on October 21, 2014 at the Days Inn. Approximately 40 members and students participated. Keynote speaker Steven Solomon, MSW, RSW, presented on LGBTQ youth/gender independent (GI) children and their families. Members found the presentation to be especially relevant as The City of Timmins had recently hosted their first ever Pride Parade. The evaluation results for the event were outstandingly positive, with members highlighting Steven’s dynamic and excellent presentation as both valuable and timely.

### LONDON

The London Forum was held on October 23, 2014 at the Four Points by Sheraton. The event was very popular for both members and students, with a total of 127 attendees. Dr. Marilyn Herie, RSW, provided the keynote address, focusing on social media and its impact on the social work and social service work professions. Members found Marilyn’s presentation, entitled *Lessons from the River: Social Work, Social Service Work, and Social Media*, to be very engaging.

“Not only was she informative, she was easy to listen to. I enjoyed every minute,” commented one member.

The feedback the College received will be very helpful when planning the next series of Educational Forums in 2015.

The College would like to thank all those who participated in the London and Timmins events, and to extend a special thank you to our keynote speakers Steven Solomon and Marilyn Herie. We look forward to connecting with members in new locations in the coming year.

### MEMBERS, TAKE NOTE:

If you live in the Barrie and St. Catherine’s regions, the College plans to host the fall 2015 Educational Forums near you! In mid-summer, you will receive an eBulletin with more information about these upcoming events.

# Election to Council in District 4 – Don't Forget to Vote!



**WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE 2015 ELECTION PACKAGE IS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE. READ ON FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

**T**he election for Electoral District 4 will be held on **Thursday, May 28, 2015**. All College members who practise in District 4 are eligible to stand for election. Members in District 4 are encouraged to participate in this important process by casting a vote in the election.

### **MEMBERS WILL BE ABLE TO VOTE ONLINE**

The voting system is designed to be secure and to protect the confidentiality of members' votes. An online election process improves efficiency and reduces paper, printing and mailing costs associated with the election.

### **POSITIONS IN THIS YEAR'S ELECTION**

Electoral District 4 elects two social work councillors and two social service work councillors.

### **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; and
- 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@ocsussw.org](mailto:elections@ocsussw.org)*

## FAQ: Inactive Membership

**W**hat is an “inactive member”? And what does it mean to be an inactive member of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers?

The College defines inactive members as members who have chosen to permanently or temporarily withdraw from the practice of social work or social service work. Reasons for professional withdrawal may include:

- Retirement
- Maternity and parental leave
- Long-term illness and/or disability
- Leave of absence
- Relocation outside of the Province of Ontario

A member must notify the College of his or her intention to become an inactive member at least 60 days prior to application.

### **INACTIVE MEMBERS ARE—FIRST AND FOREMOST—MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE**

Inactive members, like all members, are subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the College. This responsibility includes:

- Completing the annual membership renewal process
- Paying the annual fee (though inactive members pay a reduced fee of \$137.50 for the full 2015 calendar year)
- Participation in the annual Continuing Competence Program (CCP)

### **WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INACTIVE AND ACTIVE MEMBERS?**

Though inactive and active members follow many of the same guidelines and regulations, there are some major differences. For example, inactive members cannot engage in social work or social service work in Ontario. They also cannot use titles and designations reserved for active College members – like “RSW” or “RSSW” – unless that title or designation is immediately followed by “inactive” in English or “inactif” in French.

### **LEARN MORE**

For more detailed information on inactive membership, including how to become an inactive member and/or regain active status, please visit our website at [http://www.ocswssw.org/members/member\\_inactive/](http://www.ocswssw.org/members/member_inactive/) or contact Paul Cucci at [pcucci@ocswssw.org](mailto:pcucci@ocswssw.org) or by telephone at 1-877-828-9380 ext. 202



# Council Highlights

## December 4, 2014

- Council welcomed Brian “Darren” Madahbee, newly elected RSSW from electoral district 1
- Council received the President, Registrar and Deputy Registrar’s reports
- The Financial Statements as of September 30, 2014, as well as the Statement of Operations for September 2014 were approved by Council
- Council approved amendments to the Conflict of Interest policy, the Code of Conduct, and By-Law #92
- Council reviewed a discussion paper regarding an entry to practice exam. After careful consideration, Council decided to take no further action at this time, and to review the matter in 2016
- Council discussed the Strategic Plan
- Council approved the Procurement policy
- Council approved the 2015 Budget and Workplan
- Council discussed and approved Policy B-010 - Description of Committee Chair
- Darren Madahbee, RSSW, was nominated to the Discipline Committee, the Fitness to Practise Committee, the Standards of Practice Committee and the Governance Committee for the remainder of the term
- Reports were received from the following statutory and non-statutory committees: Complaints, Discipline, Fitness to Practise, Registration Appeals, Standards of Practice, Election, Nominating, Finance, Governance, Corporations, and Titles and Designations
- Professional development reports were shared by Thomas Horn, RSW, David Hodgson, Public Member and Gary Cockman, RSSW

## March 6, 2015

- Council reviewed and discussed the Deputy Registrar’s report
- Council reviewed the Statement of Financial Position as of December 2014, as well as the Statement of Operations as of December 2014
- Council discussed and approved the Proposed Amendment to the Standards or Practice – Record Storage and Transfer
- Council discussed the ASWB Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work Practice
- Council approved the Reserve Funds Projections
- Council reviewed changes to the Investment Policies
- Council discussed and approved the Fee Increase memo
- Council discussed committee vacancies created by Council member, Carole Levéillé, RSSW’s, resignation in February 2015
- Harry Cummings presented to Council on the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) evaluation
- Council approved recommendations from the Governance Committee regarding retiring items 1.6 and 1.7 in Strategic Priority #3 in the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan, and item 4C in the Good Governance Recommendations as no further action is required
- Reports were received from the following statutory and non-statutory committees: Complaints, Discipline, Fitness to Practise, Registration Appeals, Standards of Practice, Election, Nominating, Finance, Corporations, Titles and Designations, and Governance

# The College Welcomes New Director of Professional Practice

It is with great pleasure that the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers welcomes Kathleen Lanoue, MSW, RSW, as its new Director of Professional Practice.

Kathleen, who received her Master of Social Work degree from Carleton University, has extensive and varied experience working in the human services field. Prior to joining the staff of the College, Kathleen was living and practising in a remote community north of the Arctic Circle in Nunavut.

Kathleen's combination of frontline experience and leadership skills make her a great addition to the College.

"I have been fortunate in that I have had a range of experiences in management and policy, and on the frontline," she said. "I believe this experience has prepared me well for my new role with the College."

As the College's Director of Professional Practice, Kathleen will play a key leadership role in interpreting, evaluating and developing the standards of practice, practice guidelines, and other policy and resources that support practice. She will also oversee the administration and ongoing development of the Continuing Competence Program (CCP). These activities help the College fulfill its mandate of protecting the public. Kathleen will also assist members and other stakeholders by responding to practice inquiries and presenting to members, educators, and social work and social service work students on a range of issues impacting practice. She is a firm believer in the importance of professional self-regulation, as she believes it to be essential in building and codifying professionalism, accountability, quality and ethics.

"I welcome self-regulation," she says. "I am someone who takes being a social worker very seriously and I am very proud of my profession. Working in a regulatory setting enables me to contribute to the profession in a different way, while promoting the College's important mandate."

Please join us in welcoming Kathleen Lanoue to the College.

## OCSWSSW Member Communications Survey

Launched last spring, the College's Communications Survey was designed to gain a better understanding of member demographics and members' communication habits and preferences. A total of 1,325 social workers and 205 social service workers participated in the survey. The College intends to use the survey's findings to better serve its members.

The results of the 2014 Member Communications Survey were largely positive. A very high percentage of participants (76%), for example, believe the College is doing an effective job in communicating with its members. More than 60% of participants agreed that the College is effective in fulfilling its mandate of protecting the public. A majority of social workers and social service workers agreed that their employers understand and appreciate the benefits of College membership.

The survey revealed other interesting results. A sure sign of the times was the fact that a growing number of members are actively using online resources for information consumption and communication. For example, 64% of participants reported receiving their news and information from online sources, which was appreciably higher than the figures for television (52%), radio (48%) and print (55%). The majority of respondents also reported regularly using social media (64%), an area into which the College plans to expand. In fact, more than 80% of respondents indicated they would like to receive social media alerts from the College regarding new learning tools, materials and content.

The majority of survey participants also found value in many of the College's communication materials and tools, including the College's *Perspective* newsletter, website and member resource USB. Seventy-two percent of participants found the College's regular eBulletin emails to be of value.

The College would like to thank all of the members who participated in the survey.

# Congratulations from the Ministry of Community and Social Services

**Ministry of Community  
and Social Services**

Minister's Office  
Hepburn Block  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1E9  
Tel.: (416) 325-5225

**Ministère des Services  
sociaux et communautaires**

Bureau du Ministre  
Édifce Hepburn  
Queen's Park  
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1E9  
Tél.: (416) 325-5225



Ms. Glenda McDonald  
Registrar  
Ontario College of Social Workers and  
Social Service Workers  
1000–250 Bloor Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M4W 1E6

Dear Ms. McDonald:

Please accept my congratulations for the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers 15th Anniversary.

Over the past 15 years, the College has enhanced the quality of social work and social service work through its commitment to regulating, governing and providing opportunities for continuing education. Through its strong commitment to promoting diversity and accessibility, it is obvious that the College's values are synonymous with Ontario values.

Your commitment and dedication to your profession is admirable and I would like to personally thank you for your 15 years of service.

Please accept my best wishes, and I look forward to our continued relationship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helena Jaczek".

Dr. Helena Jaczek  
Minister

# 2015 Annual Meeting and Education Day: Building Capacity across the Spectrum



AMED JUNE 9, 2015  
Annual Meeting & Education Day

The College invites you to participate in the 2015 Annual Meeting and Education Day (AMED), the College's annual networking and educational event for members.

The 2015 AMED will take place on **Tuesday, June 9, 2015** at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, North building, with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m. The theme for this year's event is *Building Capacity across the Spectrum*.

If you plan on attending the 2015 AMED, please do not forget to bring the confirmation number you will receive upon registering. The Annual Meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and will be followed by the keynote address. Lunch will be served at noon followed by seven breakout sessions. Session topics will include ethics and practice, housing and homelessness, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, and counselling persons impacted by autism... to name a few.

The College is very pleased to have Laura Tamblyn Watts as this year's keynote speaker. A lawyer who specializes in elder law issues, Laura will be presenting on issues of consent and capacity throughout the life course, focusing on social trends as well as relevant legislation in Ontario. Laura is a Senior Fellow—and long-time National Director—of the Canadian Centre for Elder Law. She is currently pursuing her doctorate and teaching at the University of Toronto on law and aging issues, and is also a course instructor at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

To enhance networking opportunities over lunch, we are providing attendees with the option of sitting at a

table designated for specific interests or practice areas. If you would like to participate, please be sure to indicate your preference on the registration form. The networking lunch was launched at the 2012 AMED and received an overwhelmingly positive response. We encourage you to participate!

AMED increases in popularity every year. Spaces fill up quickly, so be sure to sign up as soon as possible. You will find the detailed brochure and registration form on the College website, [www.ocswww.org](http://www.ocswww.org)

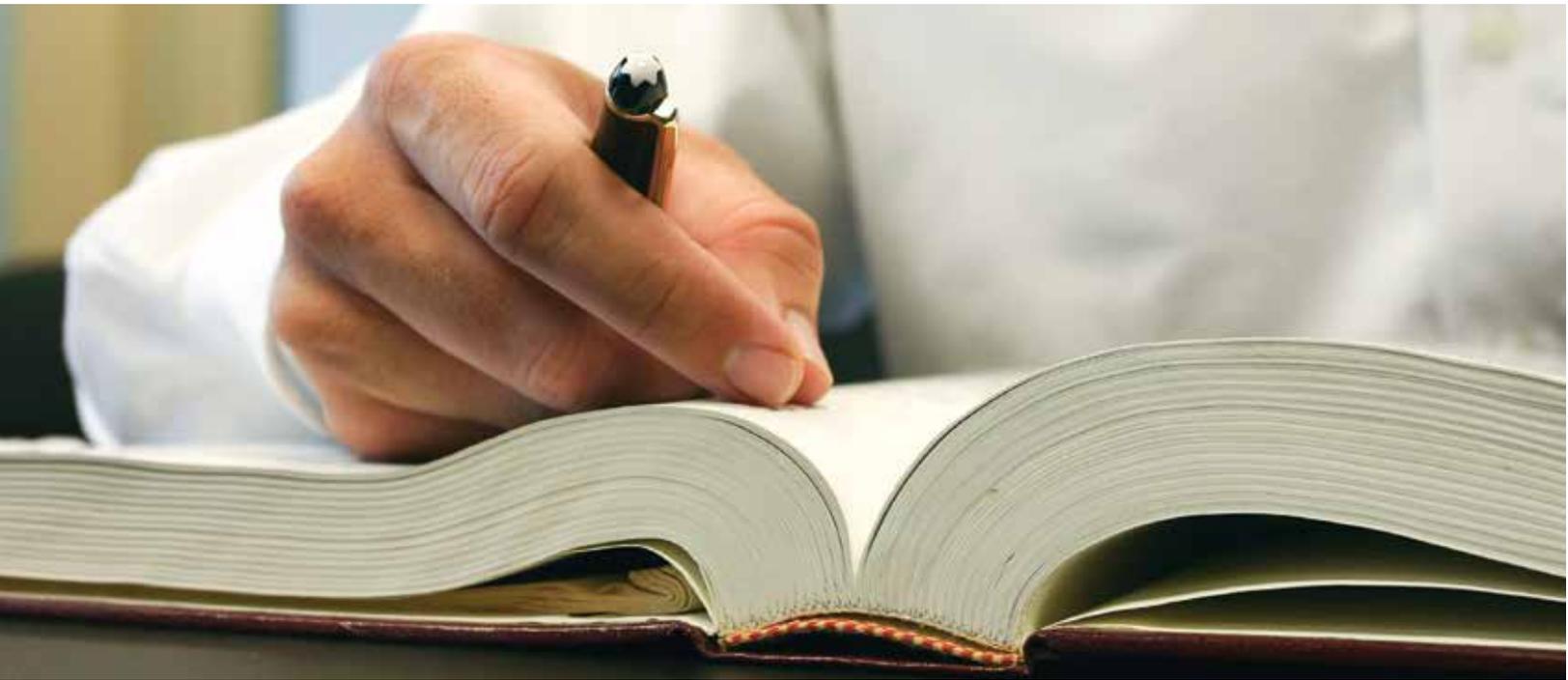
Unable to attend AMED? The Annual Meeting and keynote address will be made available via webcast. The webcast is interactive: members can view the PowerPoint slides and ask questions. One-hundred percent of last year's webcast participants gave a resounding "Yes" when asked whether or not they would participate in AMED by webcast again. One member stated, "The webcast worked so well. Easy to access and I felt like I was there. Thank you for making it available". Additionally, the keynote address will be available on the College website and YouTube channel following the event. Details and instructions will be sent to members by eBulletin in the coming weeks.

We look forward to connecting with you on June 9, 2015! We hope you will take away valuable information and tools to help you in your practice.

*If you have any questions regarding the event, please contact Jolinne Kearns, Communications Manager, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380 ext 415 or email [jkearns@ocswww.org](mailto:jkearns@ocswww.org)*

# Practice Notes: The Question of Third-Party Billing

LISE BETTERIDGE, MSW, RSW, DEPUTY REGISTRAR



**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 various ethical responsibilities and obligations associated with private practice have been discussed in detail in previous Practice Notes,<sup>1</sup> as have various aspects of supervision.<sup>2</sup> Yet billing for services provided to clients by members under the supervision of another regulated professional or members' supervision of other professionals whose services are not covered by benefits providers are two areas in which members continue to seek clarification and direction. These Practice Notes address questions related to: obtaining or providing supervision; consent and confidentiality; documentation; and invoicing and receipts - all in the context of third-party billing.

## THE AUTHORITY OF THE INSURER AND THE ROLE OF THE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Individual benefits providers/insurers determine which services they will cover, and by which professional, under the terms of the applicable benefits plans and insurance policies. They can determine, among other things, whether they will reimburse for services provided by other professionals under the supervision of a social worker or by social workers working under the supervision of a psychologist.<sup>3</sup> This determination is not within the College's authority. Instead, the College sets minimum standards of practice for all members which address the manner in which services are provided. These standards

1 Practice Notes called "Self-Employment: Look Before You Leap" and "Private Practice: The Cost of Doing Business" can be found in the Resource Room, under College Publications, on the College website at [www.ocswssw.org](http://www.ocswssw.org).

2 "Supervision: At the Core of Competent and Ethical Practice" can also be found in the Resource Room on the College website at [www.ocswssw.org](http://www.ocswssw.org).

3 We are not currently aware of insurers who cover the services of social service workers under the supervision of psychologists. To date, this issue has not been raised by members in their contacts with the College.

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are designed to govern the practice of the profession in a sound and ethical manner and assist the College in fulfilling its mandate of public protection.

While some extended health benefits plans cover the services of registered social workers, many more cover those of registered psychologists as well as various other professionals. These limitations in coverage may lead members to look for alternate ways to provide services for which clients can be reimbursed. The two scenarios below illustrate some common dilemmas:

1. Staff in the Professional Practice Department received a call from a social worker who had been approached by a social service worker and a child and youth worker, both of whom were seeking supervision. The member wondered whether the College would permit him to supervise these practitioners, and whether the services offered by the supervisees would be covered under clients' benefits plans.
2. A member in private practice contacted the College to find out what should be included on the invoices and receipts that she provided to clients whom she saw under the supervision of a registered psychologist. The member said she had contracted for supervision with the psychologist so that her social work services would be covered under clients' extended health benefits and also because she believed that the supervision assisted her in providing better care. She noted that she sought supervision in relation to her entire practice, and not only for those clients who had benefits.

Both scenarios raise the common question of whether services would be covered by clients' extended health benefits. The answer to this question is that coverage may vary, depending on the benefits provider. Members should advise their clients that it is their responsibility to find out which services are covered under their plan. The scenarios

also raise issues that extend well beyond the question of coverage, however; these are addressed below.

## THE NEED FOR SUPERVISION

In the first scenario, the member would be well-advised to consider factors beyond coverage by an insurer. When deciding whether to supervise the counsellors in question, the member should first consider his competence. Clinical supervision requires specialized skills which members in direct practice do not automatically possess. Although the College does not define the specific qualifications or experience required for members who provide clinical supervision, the standards of practice require members to practise within their competence and their professional scope of practice.<sup>4</sup> Supervisors share responsibility for the services provided and could be held accountable for inadequate supervision should a supervisee's conduct be called into question.<sup>5</sup> As well, the *Professional Misconduct Regulation, O. Reg. 384/00* made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act* defines as an act of professional misconduct "failing to supervise adequately a person who is under the professional responsibility of the member and who is providing a social work service or a social service work service."<sup>6</sup>

It would therefore be incumbent upon the member to ensure that he makes sound decisions about the amount of time and the structure required to provide adequate supervision to the counsellors in question.<sup>7</sup> He would also be well-advised to assess the level of competence and training of the supervisees and the nature of their practices and caseload before embarking on the supervisory relationship.

Members in both scenarios may wish to reflect on interpretations in the standards of practice which provide guidance in the area of supervision. It is up to each member of the College to ensure that "(as) part of maintaining competence and acquiring skills in social

4 *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition, 2008, Principle II, Competence and Integrity, interpretation 2.1.1

5 National Association of Social Workers "Supervision and the Clinical Social Worker", Practice Update, Volume 3, Number 2, June 2003

6 S. 2.4, O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)

7 The member should also obtain suitable professional liability insurance, should he or she consider such an arrangement.

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work or social service work practice ... (they) engage in the process of self-review and evaluation of their practice and seek consultation when appropriate.”<sup>8</sup> Members must also be “aware of the extent and parameters of their competence and their professional scope of practice and limit their practice accordingly.”<sup>9</sup> In the second scenario, the member should consider whether her clients’ needs fall outside her usual area of practice. If this is the case, the standards of practice require her to inform the client of this fact, and offer to make an appropriate referral.<sup>10</sup> If the client wishes to continue with the member, the standards require the member to “ensure(s) that the services ... she provides are competently provided by seeking additional supervision, consultation and/or education.”<sup>11</sup>

In her contact with Professional Practice staff, the member in the second scenario revealed that she had contracted for supervision with the psychologist primarily because she realized that she needed to develop her skills in particular areas and required assistance in managing more complex cases. She said that she had always sought supervision in her private practice, though not always from a psychologist. The member felt that her decisions were well-supported by the standards of practice.

In both scenarios, the members indicated that they were partly motivated to consider these supervisory arrangements because they believed that their efforts would increase clients’ access to insured services. They felt that these arrangements were in clients’ best interests. While this motivation is not necessarily problematic, members should be cautious when adopting this approach. The standards require members to ensure that “within professional relationships, clients’ needs and interests remain paramount.”<sup>12</sup> Supervisory arrangements should be undertaken because of a genuine need on the part of supervisees for professional assistance, learning and growth in order to provide services which are in the best

interests of their clients. The ultimate goal of supervision should be to assist supervisees in providing high quality care to their clients. When the primary motivation of such arrangements is to facilitate insurance coverage, there is a risk that members’ conduct could be perceived as self-interested and financially motivated. Since clients may be more likely to access services that are covered by their benefits, there may be a perception that the members have set up the supervisory arrangements simply to market their services. Members are therefore advised to ensure that any decisions they make with respect to supervision are truly reflective of, and ultimately based on, a genuine need and desire to provide better care, and are warranted independent of any impact the arrangements may have on the availability of insurance coverage for the services being provided to clients.

## OBTAINING CONSENT AND DOCUMENTING APPROPRIATELY

Once the members have assessed their motivation for seeking or providing supervision as discussed previously, they must ensure that clients are informed of the arrangement and have consented to it. The standards of practice require members to “provide clients with accurate and complete information regarding the extent, nature, and limitations of any services available to them.”<sup>13</sup> This would likely include some discussion of the fact that the insurer may or may not cover their services, that the insurer may seek information concerning services provided in order to determine whether coverage is available and/or to adjudicate particular claims, and that it is the client’s responsibility to submit their own claims. Members must ensure that they “comply with any applicable privacy and other legislation ... and obtain consent to the collection, use or disclosure of client information.”<sup>14</sup> The nature of the supervision should be discussed early in the relationship, clients should have an opportunity to ask questions or raise any concerns, and the contract

8 *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle II, Competence and Integrity, interpretation 2.1.5

9 *Ibid.*, interpretation 2.1.1

10 *Ibid.*, interpretation 2.1.1

11 *Ibid.*, interpretation 2.1.1

12 *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle I, Relationship with Clients, interpretation 1.6

13 *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, interpretation 3.1

14 *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle V: Confidentiality, interpretation 5.1

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signed by clients should be clear that the member will be sharing information about the client with the supervisor. When members are providing supervision to others, as in the first scenario, they also have a responsibility to discuss the issue of consent with their supervisees to ensure that clients have consented to the sharing of information.

Regardless of the nature of the supervisory relationship, members must ensure that they document the supervision received or provided. Both supervisors and supervisees should “keep systematic, dated, and legible records”.<sup>15</sup> It would be expected that these records would include the dates of each supervisory session, a description of the questions and concerns addressed, any recommendations made, and any plan or follow up.

## ISSUING INVOICES AND RECEIPTS

In addition to ensuring that clients are well-informed about the nature of the services provided, each party’s responsibilities and obligations, and the clients’ need to themselves clarify with their insurers any issues concerning the availability and extent of insurance coverage, members must “not charge or accept any fee which is not fully disclosed.”<sup>16</sup> They must also “explain in advance or at the commencement of a service the basis of all charges, giving a reasonable estimate of projected fees and disbursements, (and) pointing out any uncertainties involved”.<sup>17</sup> When providing invoices and/or receipts, members must ensure that they do not “issue or sign a certificate, report or other

document in the course of practising either profession that the member knows or ought reasonably to know is false, misleading, inaccurate or otherwise improper”.<sup>18</sup> It should therefore be clear from the invoice or receipt who provided the direct service to the client and who provided the supervision. The names, qualifications and professional designations of each, along with the dates of service, should be clearly indicated. Ensuring that invoices or receipts are clear in these respects is critical not only for the client receiving the services, but also to ensure that they are not misleading to insurers to which claims are being made for such services. Complaints from insurers against professionals for false and misleading billing (on the basis of which claims are then made to the insurer) are common in many other regulated professions and have been received by this College in recent years.

## IN CONCLUSION

This article has discussed some of the more frequently raised questions associated with third-party billing. While it is the insurer who decides whether or not a service or a provider is covered under a client’s benefits, members must ensure that their practices are sound, transparent and ethical.

*For more information, contact Lise Betteridge, MSW, RSW, Deputy Registrar, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380, ext. 225 or email: [lbetteridge@ocswssw.org](mailto:lbetteridge@ocswssw.org).*

<sup>15</sup> *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle IV: The Social Work and Social Service Work Record, interpretation 4.1.3

<sup>16</sup> *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle VI: Fees, interpretation 6.1

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, interpretation 6.1.1

<sup>18</sup> *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, Second Edition 2008, Principle IV: The Social Work and Social Service Work Record, interpretation 4.1.2

## 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 Jolinne Kearns, Communications Manager at [jkearns@ocswssw.org](mailto:jkearns@ocswssw.org). Although not all questions will be published in subsequent issues of *Perspective*, all will be answered.

**Q: Last fall, I completed an online survey about the Continuing Competence Program (CCP). What's the College planning to do with the survey results?**

**A:** Please be assured that your feedback has not been ignored. In the spring of 2014, the College engaged Harry Cummings and Associates (HCA) to undertake a review of the Continuing Competence Program (CCP). The program had been in place for five years, and it was agreed that it was time to review the program and to consider modifications based on the results. The comprehensive evaluation included five focus groups conducted across the province, as well as the online member survey to which you're referring. The evaluators also conducted key informant interviews and reviewed all program materials.

The response rate to the survey was extremely high. There was also strong interest in the focus groups. It was clear from these responses that members had strong feelings about the program and were eager to share their opinions and ideas. The College was heartened by the strong response, as members' feedback is critical in terms of understanding the program's strengths as well as areas in which it might be improved.

We are very grateful to all members who took time to participate in the evaluation. The College values your input and ideas and will use the results of the evaluation to guide changes and make improvements to the program. Results of the evaluation were first shared with the Standards of Practice Committee, which had been assigned the task of overseeing the evaluation. The evaluation findings will be considered by the College Council early in 2015. Once developed, Council's response and recommendations, along with the results of the evaluation, will be shared with members via the website. Please visit the CCP pages under the Professional Practice tab at [www.ocswssw.org](http://www.ocswssw.org) for updates about this important project.

# 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](http://www.ocswssw.org), emailed to [info@ocswssw.org](mailto: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](mailto: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 e-mail [mguibert@ocswssw.org](mailto: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

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