



# PERSPECTIVE

PROFESSIONAL • ETHICAL • QUALIFIED • ACCOUNTABLE



## Changes to the Registration Regulation: What You Need to Know

**A**s announced in an August [eBulletin](#), the long-awaited amendments to the [Registration Regulation, O. Reg. 383/00](#) were approved by the government and will come into effect on **January 1, 2018**.

### HOW THESE CHANGES MAY AFFECT YOU

The amendments to the Registration Regulation include the following:

#### ■ Eliminating the provisional class of certificate of registration

- If you currently hold a provisional certificate of registration (and continue to hold it on December 31, 2017), you will automatically move into the general class of certificate of registration. **No further action will be required on your part.** You will receive additional communication later in the fall, and a new wall certificate after the changes to the regulation come into effect.

#### ■ Creating a *new* retired class of certificate of registration

- If you are no longer practising social work or social service work and do not intend to return to practice in Ontario or any other jurisdiction, you will have the option to apply for a retired class of certificate of registration.
- Members in the retired class will pay a \$50 annual fee and will not be required to participate in the Continuing Competence Program (CCP).
- Members in the retired class will not be able to move back into the general class unless they re-apply to the College and meet all of the registration requirements. Prior to moving into the retired class, members will be required to complete an application form, and indicate that they will comply with the requirements set out in the regulation and do not intend to return to practice in Ontario.

**NOTE:** If you are not currently practising but intend to return to practice in the future, you may wish to apply for a certificate of registration in the inactive class.

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# Message from the Registrar – The Role of the College

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For my inaugural “Message from the Registrar”, I would like to take this opportunity to address some of the misconceptions about the College that arise from time to time - most recently at this year’s Annual Meeting and Education Day. Namely, what is the role of the College?

### THE ROLE OF THE COLLEGE

The College’s ongoing mandate is to serve and protect the public interest through self-regulation of the professions of social work and social service work. The provincial government, through the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*, has given the social work and social service work professions the **privilege and responsibility** of regulating themselves.

The College fulfills its public protection mandate by:

- Regulating the practice of social work and social service work and governing its members.
- Setting entry-to-practice requirements to ensure that only those with specialized educational qualifications are eligible for registration.
- Setting, maintaining and ensuring that all members follow the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.
- Requiring members to engage in ongoing learning through the Continuing Competence Program (CCP).
- Maintaining rigorous complaints and discipline processes.

Professional self-regulation not only protects the public from unqualified, incompetent and unfit practitioners, but also brings credibility to the professions. Registration with the College demonstrates your commitment to professional, ethical, qualified and accountable practice. Only registered College members are allowed to use the titles “social worker,” “registered social worker,” “social service worker” or “registered social service worker” or to hold themselves out as a social worker or social service worker in Ontario.

### THE REGULATORY COLLEGE AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ARE DISTINCT ENTITIES

If you find yourself confused about the role of the College as opposed to that of the association, remember this: the College protects the public through the regulation of social work and social service work, **whereas** professional associations work on behalf of their respective professions and their members.

*Continued on next page*

# Message from the Registrar – The Role of the College

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You can learn more about the roles of professional associations such as the Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW) and the Ontario Social Service Worker Association (OSSWA) by clicking on the links below:

- [Ontario Association of Social Workers](#)
- [Ontario Social Service Worker Association](#)

To learn more about the College's public protection mandate and accomplishments, I encourage you to visit our [website](#) and most recent [Annual Report](#).

If you have any questions regarding the role of the College, or if you have any suggestions as to topics for my next message, please contact [communications@ocswssw.org](mailto:communications@ocswssw.org). Your feedback is always welcome!



Lise Betteridge, MSW, RSW  
Registrar

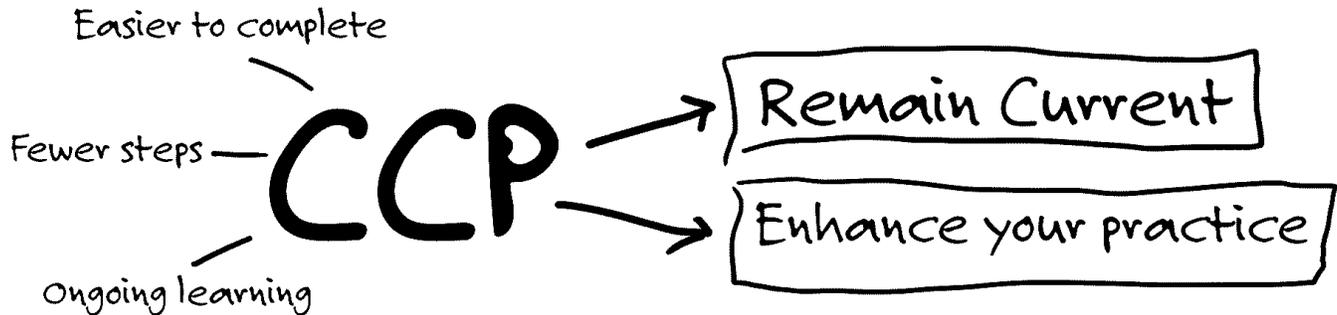
## Changes to the Registration Regulation: What You Need to Know

*Continued from page 1*

- **Changing the process for inactive members**
  - The College currently has inactive members. Inactive members as of December 31, 2017 will automatically move into the inactive class of certificate of registration.
  - There will be a new process for members who hold an inactive certificate of registration and who wish to start practising, to apply for a general certificate of registration. Inactive members will receive additional communication later in the fall.
- **Providing the College with the authority to request information and documents related to the CCP at any time**
  - Members are already required to make a declaration of participation in the CCP as part of their annual renewal of registration.
  - This addition to the Registration Regulation allows the College to request information and documents related to a member's CCP *at any time*. NOTE: changes to the CCP were launched in January 2017 and no further revisions to the program are planned at this time.
- **Improving language in the current regulation so all applicants will be required to indicate whether or not they suffer from any physical or mental condition or disorder that could affect their ability to practise social work or social service work in a safe manner**
  - The improved wording furthers the College's public protection mandate by ensuring that members are fit to practise in a safe manner. It is also consistent with the registration regulations of other regulatory bodies in Ontario.
  - Since it began operations in 2000, the College has had the authority to request information from applicants in order to ensure they were "mentally competent to practise social work or social service work". This particular amendment to the Registration Regulation now puts the emphasis on "the ability to practise social work or social service work, as the case may be, in a safe manner". Once the amendments come into effect, an applicant will only be required to disclose information about a physical or mental condition or disorder *that affects her or his ability to practise in a safe manner*.

*Please visit the College website [ocswssw.org](http://ocswssw.org) for further details as they become available.*

# The Importance of Remaining Competent in Your Practice: The CCP



**A**s social workers and social service workers, you are required to complete the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) on an annual basis in order to remain current in your practice.

Your completion of the CCP is one of the ways you demonstrate to the public your commitment to professional, ethical, qualified and accountable practice.

## CCP NOW MORE USER-FRIENDLY

The revised CCP is now easier to complete, requires fewer steps and helps you manage your ongoing learning throughout the year.

The CCP continues to take a self-directed, adult-learning approach which allows for flexibility in completion of professional development activities. You will still have time to complete your 2017 CCP to ensure you continue to meet these important professional obligations.

## WHAT IF I'M NOT PRACTISING?

Whether you're a new graduate and not currently practising or off on leave, you **are still required** to participate in the CCP on an annual basis. You must complete the Declaration of Participation in the CCP when you renew your membership.

**Note:** Members who plan to apply for the new retired class of certificate of registration in 2018 are still required to complete their CCP for 2017.

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE 2017 CCP

Completing your CCP on an annual basis also includes reviewing other required documents posted for that CCP year. As part of the 2017 CCP, you are required to review the article "[Medical Assistance in Dying: What are My Professional Obligations?](#)" along with your annual review of the [Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook](#).

Click [here](#) to access the CCP documents.

**Please note:** Recent amendments to the Registration Regulation allow the College to request information and documents related to a member's CCP at any time.

## COMING SOON! CCP VIDEO

The College is in the process of developing an educational video to assist members in understanding and completing the CCP. Students, employers and other stakeholders may also use this video to better understand how members of the College ensure they remain professional, ethical, qualified and accountable.

*For more information about the Continuing Competence Program, call 416-972-9882 ext. 419 or email [ccp@ocswssw.org](mailto:ccp@ocswssw.org).*

## 3 Ways to Connect with the College on Social Media



Over the last couple of years the College has worked hard to enhance its social media presence. As of October 1st, the College had 779 followers on Twitter and 2,110 followers on LinkedIn. The College's YouTube videos have been viewed more than 35,000 times. In August, the College was pleased to publish its Facebook page.

The College's social media goals are directly tied to its [2016-19 Strategic Plan](#). Specifically, social media helps the College:

- Raise awareness of the College and its public protection mandate.
- Better engage and inform stakeholders, which includes members and the general public.

Want to connect with the College on social media? Try the following:

### 1. JOIN THE OCSWSSW FACEBOOK COMMUNITY

The College recently invited members and stakeholders to visit its new Facebook page. Already, the College's Facebook page had TBD followers as of TBD.

By joining the College's Facebook page, members can expect to receive:

- Important regulatory updates.
- Membership renewal and CCP reminders.
- Links to practice-related resources.
- Posts and photos from College events.

[Follow and like the College on Facebook](#)

### 2. PARTICIPATE IN COLLEGE LIVE-TWEETS – LIVE FROM #AMED2017!

The College live-tweets major events such as the Annual Meeting and Education Day (AMED) on Twitter.

The College's live-tweeting of AMED 2017 added an enriching dimension to the event. The #AMED2017 Twitter event received nearly three times as many engagements over the previous year's event, and we look forward to interacting with even more people at #AMED2018.

[View the #AMED2017 Twitter feed](#)

Are you at @OCSWSSW #AMED2017 today? Kindly send out the occasional tweet for those of us unable to attend. have a great Day! #socialwork

"Progress is impossible without change." #AMED2017 #socialwork #ocswssw

@OCSWSSW getting started for the final breakout sessions of the day 'Engaging men and boys in preventing Gender Based Violence' #amed2017

Already feeling so inspired and we still have half a day left! #amed2017

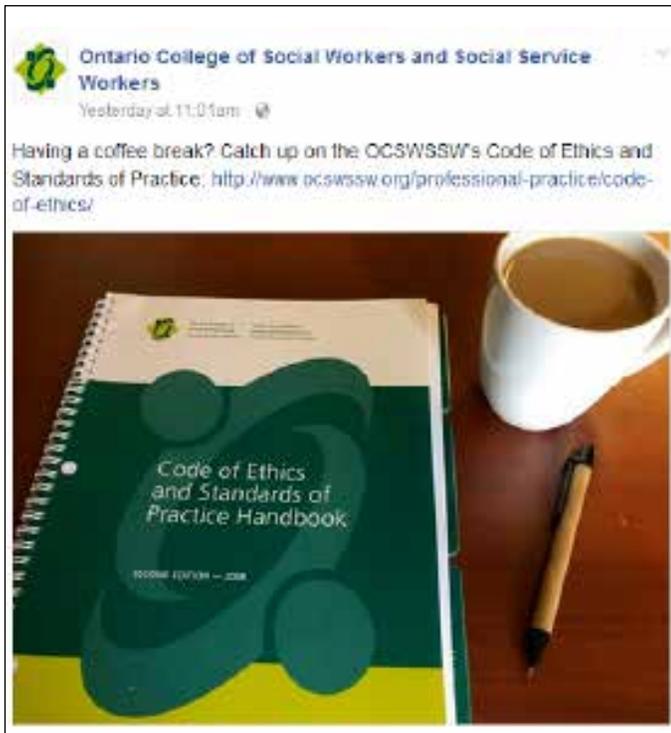
I really enjoyed Peter Menzies key note address this morning @OCSWSSW #amed2017

Lunch was amazing no one looked at their phone and we had some insightful discussions #AMED2017 @OCSWSSW

## 3 Ways to Connect with the College on Social Media

### 3. CONTINUE TO SHARE THE COLLEGE'S HELPFUL SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn and share OCSWSSW resources and posts!



### MORE TO COME

The College looks forward to adding to its social media repertoire in the near future. For more information about the College's social media initiatives, contact [communications@ocswww.org](mailto:communications@ocswww.org).

Members and stakeholders should also review the [OCSWSSW Social Media Terms of Use](#), which outline the College's social media guidelines in order to ensure that users engage in a professional and respectful manner.

Should you have any practice-related inquiries concerning social media, contact [practice@ocswww.org](mailto:practice@ocswww.org) and/or read the following College Practice Notes:

- [Social Media and Practice: Protecting Privacy and Professionalism in a Virtual World](#)
- [Communication Technology & Ethical Practice: Evolving Issues in a Changing Landscape](#)

Stay informed with the  
**NEW OCSWSSW**  
**Employer Communiqué**

**SIGN UP TODAY!**

# Membership Renewal: An Important Reminder

Keeping your membership current is important. College membership demonstrates your commitment to professional, ethical, qualified and accountable practice. Your membership says something important about the professions of social work and social service work as a whole, and also about you as an individual practitioner.

The deadline to complete your membership renewal is **December 31, 2017**. Members can renew their membership and pay their annual fee through the College's online member services at [ocswssw.org/members/members\\_info/](http://ocswssw.org/members/members_info/). A late-fee penalty of \$50 will be applied if the College does not receive payment of your 2018 fees by January 31, 2018.

## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE

To renew your membership online, follow these easy steps:

- Login using your User ID (your OCSWSSW registration number) and your password.
- Go to "My Profile" to confirm that your personal information is accurate and up to date.
- Click on the "Renewals" link on the top left-hand side of your screen and select "2018 renewal" to complete the annual renewal of registration form and payment.

For more information regarding your membership renewal, please refer to the [Guide for Online Services](#).

## TAX RECEIPTS AND MEMBER CARDS AVAILABLE ONLINE

The College would like to remind members that tax receipts and member cards are available online following payment of the annual renewal fee.

To access your tax receipt and member card, please follow the steps below:

1. Login to your Online Member Services.
2. Click the "Renewals" menu, "History" section.
3. From the Membership Renewal History grid, click on

the "Membership card and tax receipt" of the selected Membership Year to open a PDF file that you can print, save or send by email.

## 2018 COLLEGE FEES

The 2018 fees are as follows:

Annual renewal fee for College members	<b>\$310.00</b>
Registration fee for new members	<b>\$310.00 + \$100.00 application fee</b>
New graduate registration fee <i>* You are eligible for this reduced fee, provided you apply for registration no later than December 31 of the year in which you graduate. You are then eligible for the reduced fee for the two subsequent years.</i>	<b>\$210.00 + \$100.00 application fee</b>
Inactive category of membership fee	<b>\$155.00</b>
Annual fee for retired class (January 1, 2018 start date)	<b>\$50.00</b>

For more information on the fee increase, please read the College's recent [eBulletin](#).

**Remember:** Only professionals registered with the College are allowed to use the titles "social worker," "registered social worker," "social service worker" or "registered social service worker."

Don't delay. [Renew](#) your membership now!

Questions about the annual fees can be directed to [renewals@ocswssw.org](mailto:renewals@ocswssw.org) or call 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380 (toll free):

- Paul Cucci, Membership Manager, ext. 202.
- Anne Vézina, Membership Administrator (bilingual), ext. 211.

## Employer Roundtable Brings College to Thunder Bay



*Registrar Lise Betteridge, RSW and Deputy Registrar Laura Sheehan at the Thunder Bay employer roundtable*

On June 27, the College successfully hosted its first employer roundtable in Thunder Bay.

The employer roundtable is part of the College's [2016-2019 Strategic Plan](#) to strengthen stakeholder and public awareness. The employer roundtable provides an opportunity for employers to:

- Learn about the College and its public protection mandate.
- Understand the importance and value of College registration.
- Discuss the challenges and barriers of hiring social workers and social service workers.
- Share ideas and feedback about how the College can better support employers.

This interactive event, facilitated by College Registrar Lise Betteridge, RSW and Deputy Registrar Laura Sheehan, attracted employers from various organizations in the Thunder Bay region. The College was pleased to also have Council members Lisa Seburn, RSW, and Lisa Foster, Public Member, attend.

The post-event survey results showed that 86% of participants agreed that the roundtable discussion gave them a better understanding of the role of the College and were now better informed as to where to look to find further information about the College.

One participant stated: "I feel both facilitators listened to the ideas presented and were respectful of each and every person during the discussion."

The feedback gathered at the event and in the post-event survey has given the College important information about the challenges encountered by current and future employers of social service workers. This feedback will be used to look at some of the ways the College can further enhance its relationship with employers and provide new outreach opportunities going forward.

Stay tuned for details regarding next year's employer roundtables as we continue our outreach initiative to employers across Ontario.

# Council Highlights for May 9-10, 2017

## MAY 9, 2017

- Beatrice Traub-Werner, RSW, President, presented her report to Council including the resignation (due to relocation outside of the province) of public Council member Sharmaarke Abdullahi.
- Lise Betteridge, RSW, Registrar, and Laura Sheehan, Deputy Registrar, presented their report to Council. The report provided updates on communications and social media; the 2017 Annual Meeting and Education Day (AMED); media relations; stakeholder outreach; upcoming Council elections in District No. 3; the database upgrade; registration and membership; the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee report and College operations.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Financial Position as of March 2017.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Operations as of March 2017.
- Council reviewed the 2016 audited financial statements approved by the Executive Committee.
- Council reviewed recommendations from the Finance Committee regarding membership fees for 2018; these recommendations were approved by Council.
- Council reviewed and approved the “Pathway” tool for members of Discipline panels who are elected to the Executive Committee.
- The Registrar reported on the College’s social service work recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Council reviewed and approved an application from the Addiction and Mental Health Worker Program at Centennial College to be approved as equivalent to a social service work program offered in Ontario at a college of applied arts and technology.
- The Registrar provided an update regarding the College’s submissions on Bill 89, *Supporting Children, Youth and Families Act*.
- Reports were received from the following statutory committees: Executive; Complaints; Discipline; Registration Appeals; and Fitness to Practise.
- Council reviewed and approved revisions made to Policy B-005, Policy B-012, Policy B-020, Policy B-022, Policy B-025, Policy B-029, proposed by the Governance Committee.

- Council reviewed and approved draft Bylaw No. 101, which amends Bylaw No. 21 (“Chair for Election of Executive Committee”).
- Council reviewed and approved a risk management strategy

## MAY 10, 2017

- Council participated in an educational session presented by Dwight Hymans from the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) which provided information about the ASWB’s Entry to Practice Exam.
- Council discussed the issue of an entry to practice exam and approved a motion to remove this objective from Priority #2 of the College’s Strategic Plan.
- Debbie Tarshis from WeirFoulds provided an overview of the amendments to the Registration Regulation.
- Council approved the draft amendments to the Registration Regulation which will be moving forward subject to approval of the government.
- Council approved the draft French translation of the Professional Misconduct Regulation.
- Reports were received from the following non-statutory committees: Standards of Practice; Election; Nominating; Finance; Governance; Corporations; and Titles and Designations.

# Council Highlights for September 7-8, 2017

## SEPTEMBER 7, 2017

- The following Council members were elected by Council to the Executive Committee:  
**Shelley Hale, RSSW** – President  
**Thomas Horn, RSW** – Vice-President  
**Déirdre Smith, Public Member** – Vice-President  
**Judy Gardner, RSSW** – Executive Member  
**David Hodgson, Public Member** – Executive Member  
**Lisa Seburn, RSW** – Executive Member
- Council reviewed a report from past President Beatrice Traub-Werner, RSW.
- Reports were received from the following statutory committees: Executive; Complaints; Discipline; Registration Appeals; and Fitness to Practise.
- Reports were received from the following non-statutory committees: Standards of Practice; Election; Nominating; Finance; Governance; Corporations; and Titles and Designations.
- Council received training from Crowe Soberman LLP regarding financial reports and Council responsibilities.

## SEPTEMBER 8, 2017

- Council approved the recommendations of the Nominating Committee respecting the composition and chairmanship of statutory and non-statutory committees.
- Lise Betteridge, RSW, Registrar, and Laura Sheehan, Deputy Registrar, presented their report to Council. The report provided updates on communications and social media; the upcoming Educational Forums; the extension of the funding for the Social Workers and Social Service Workers Professional Development Fund; stakeholder outreach; ongoing developments with respect to the controlled act of psychotherapy; registration and membership statistics; employer roundtables; the database upgrade; and an overview of the College's ongoing strategic priorities.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Financial Position as of June 2017.
- Council reviewed the Statement of Operations for June 2017.
- Council reviewed and approved in principle the 2018 Budget and Workplan.
- Jim Dunsdon presented his Council Evaluation Report to Council.
- Council reviewed and approved Bylaw 102, amending Bylaw 2.
- Council reviewed and approved Bylaw 103.
- Council reviewed the report from the 2017 Annual Meeting and Education Day.

WANT TO JOIN THE  
**OCSWSSW**  
COUNCIL?

**Call for Nominations  
in Electoral District No. 4**

For more information, contact Pat Lieberman  
at [plieberman@ocswssw.org](mailto:plieberman@ocswssw.org)

## New Council Roster for 2017/18

### **AMANDA BETTENCOURT** – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER

Amanda Bettencourt is a social service worker graduate from Mohawk College, mom to a beautiful little girl, and a current full-time advance standing BSW student at Ryerson University. She works part-time as a family access worker with YWCA Hamilton. Prior to this, Amanda was working as a peer tutor while she attended Mohawk College, and went on to cover a medical leave at her last placement: The Hamilton Community Legal Clinic. Amanda seized the opportunity to become an OCSWSSW Council member as she believes in promoting registration with the College to fellow social service workers and hopes to advocate for policy-level change which will be seen not only in the field, but by the public as well.

### **CHARLENE CREWS** – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER

Charlene Crews is a mental health clinician with over 25 years of experience working with marginalized and homeless populations. She brings a diversity of experience and transferable skills developed through direct service and program development work across sectors of child and adult mental health and addictions, hospital and community health care, patient advocacy, corrections, homelessness and housing. Charlene is currently a transitional case manager with the CATCH Program at St Michael's Hospital and a Rights Adviser with the MOHLTC – Psychiatric Patient Advocates Office. She sits on multiple community advocacy boards in the homeless and mental health sectors. Charlene holds a strong interest in health law, privacy and ethics and is currently pursuing a degree in health administration at Ryerson University.

### **LINDA DANSON** – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER

Linda Danson holds a master's of social work from McGill University, and has been a social worker for over 30 years. In Montreal she worked in family services, child protection and supervised social work students from McGill. Linda also taught courses at Concordia and McGill Universities, and has had a private practice. Linda currently works for The Ottawa/ Pembroke Champlain LHIN as a staff therapist. She has been a guest lecturer at Algonquin College. She is the Vice-President of the Renfrew and District Food Bank.

### **ANGÈLE DESORMEAU** – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER

Angèle Desormeau graduated with a BA in psychology from the University of Ottawa in 1985 and received a diploma in addictions studies from McMaster University in 1993. From 1986 to 1990 she worked in child welfare and with youth. She has worked at South Cochrane Addictions Services since 1990: first, as an Addictions Counsellor, then as a Clinical Supervisor and now as Executive Director. Angèle is an active member with many community/ district/regional working groups and committees including, but not limited to: Cochrane District Addiction and Mental Health Systems Group, Cochrane District Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee, Timmins Health Link, Community Mobilization Timmins, and the North East LHIN Mental Health and Addiction Advisory Council.

### **LISA FOSTER** – PUBLIC MEMBER

Lisa Foster is the Executive Director of Community Living, Thunder Bay. Ms. Foster was the former Director of Organizational Development and Innovation with Community Living Algoma in Sault Ste. Marie. She holds a developmental services worker diploma from Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology as well as a bachelor of arts degree in English from Algoma University.

### **JUDY GARDNER** – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER

Judy holds a bachelor of arts and also received a social service work diploma with honours in 2013. Her diverse educational background also includes administration, criminology, early childhood and women's studies. She is currently a college instructor specializing in addictions and community service work. Judy has over 10 years of frontline professional experience supporting adults with developmental disabilities and has a passion to advocate for the marginalized. Judy was elected to Council in May 2014.

## New Council Roster for 2017/18

### **SHELLEY HALE** – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER

Shelley is a registered social service worker and registered social worker with over 20 years of experience in the field of mental health. She graduated from Algonquin College's Intensive Social Service Worker Diploma Program and has been registered with the College since its inception. Shelley previously served on the OCSWSSW Council for the first 10 years and was re-elected to Council in 2016. She is currently the Director of Patient Care Services for the Royal Ottawa Operational Stress Injury Clinic at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre. Shelley's previous clinical work experiences were all community based and her administrative career at The Royal has led her to complete a certificate in program management through the University of British Columbia. She is currently pursuing her masters in leadership at Royal Roads University.

### **DAVID HODGSON** – PUBLIC MEMBER

David Hodgson is President of Regulation Dynamics. He specializes in regulatory affairs and has provided consulting services to several regulatory bodies in Ontario and other provinces in the areas of strategic planning, governance, organization restructuring and government relations. Prior to his consulting career, he was the Registrar and CEO of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) for 10 years. During this time he served a term as President of the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario and the Canadian Alliance of Regulators of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology. Also, David was Registrar and CEO of the Ontario Architects Association, the regulatory body for architects. He came to the regulatory field after holding several senior positions in the Ontario Ministry of Housing, including Executive Director of Building Programs.

### **THOMAS HORN** – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER

Thomas has been an elected professional member on the Council of OCSWSSW since 2012 and an RSW member of the College since its inception in 2000. For the past ten years he has worked full-time as a social worker in the Forensic Psychiatry Program at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and has maintained a part-time private practice since 2003. Additionally, Thomas is a member of the

Ontario Association of Social Workers (OASW), the American National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and the American National Organization of Forensic Social Work (NOFSW). He was admitted to the Academy of Certified Social Workers through NASW in 2013 and later passed the U.S. Board examinations to become a Certified Master Forensic Social Worker. Since 2011, Tom has held the rank of assistant professor (p/t) in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University, and over the past six years he has taught more than 16 graduate courses in social work through the University of Windsor. Thomas earned a bachelor of arts degree in honours psychology and honours sociology, a clinical master of social work degree, a master of science degree in criminology and criminal justice. He is currently a PhD student in social work at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador.

### **FRANCES KEOGH** – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER

Frances Keogh is currently employed on a part-time basis as a counsellor with Family Service Thames Valley Employee Assistance Program, in London. She has worked in employment assistance programs for the past 16 years. Her previous clinical experience has been in child welfare, in/outpatient mental health services and community work and outreach. She has been employed by not-for-profit organizations, health and welfare departments, and community agencies. She has worked in Ireland, Britain and Canada during the past 30 years.

### **TOULA KOURGIANTAKIS** – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER

Toula Kourgiantakis is an Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream and Coordinator of the Simulation Program at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work (FIFSW). Her research focuses on social work education and family involvement in addictions and mental health. Toula is a registered couple and family therapist and a clinical fellow of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Her research and teaching is informed by 25 years of clinical practice across different settings such as child welfare, schools, as well as mental health and addiction treatment centres. She continues to work with families in private practice and she also offers consultation and supervision to professionals and agencies.

## New Council Roster for 2017/18

### **MUKESH KOWLESSAR – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER**

Mukesh Kowlessar previously served on the OCSWSSW Council from its inception until 2013. During this time he served on the Executive Committee and as College President for four years. Mr. Kowlessar recently retired as a program manager for the City of London. He has over 30 years of leadership experience in the municipal and provincial sectors in social services. Mr. Kowlessar was formerly an adjudicator with the Landlord and Tenant Board and is currently a consultant in strategic planning. Prior to his retirement, Mr. Kowlessar worked within the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) on the Social Services Solution Modernization Project in leading change management to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program offices. He holds certificates in mediation – alternate dispute resolution and executive management from Western University; certification in crisis and critical incident stress management and a social service worker diploma from Fanshawe College.

### **RICHARD (RICK) LAMB – PUBLIC MEMBER**

Rick Lamb is a “semi-retired” principal with the Thames Valley District School Board, where he has been employed for the past 30 years as an administrator and teacher in a variety of assignments. Prior to his career in education, he worked as a child and youth worker at Madame Vanier Children’s Services in London, providing support and counselling to children and their families. Rick attended the University of Western Ontario and holds a BA in administrative and commercial studies (public administration and public policy) and a BEd from Althouse College. He is also a graduate of the Child and Youth Worker Program at Fanshawe College.

### **SUE-ELLEN MERRITT – ELECTED SOCIAL SERVICE WORKER**

Sue-Ellen Merritt graduated with honours from Niagara College’s Social Service Worker Program in 1996. She has served on the Niagara College Social Service Worker Advisory Board for 15 years, and was Chair of the Board’s Legislation Sub-Committee. Currently retired, Sue-Ellen was employed for 20 years by Niagara Health System, Mental Health and Addictions, where she provided direct

client support and held the positions of Smoking Cessation Coordinator and Gambling Coordinator. Sue-Ellen was also a small business manager for 15 years for a privately owned natural gas company, and served as an elected official for Township West Lincoln from 2003-14. Prior to 2003, she served as Chair of the Township’s Committee of Adjustment for 10 years. Sue-Ellen was an OCSWSSW Council member from 2000-2010, during which she was elected to the Executive Committee for those same years and held a Vice-President position from 2001-2010.

### **LILY ODDIE – PUBLIC MEMBER**

Prior to becoming a member of the Canada Immigration and Refugee Board, Dr. Lily Oddie was Coordinator of Employee Services at Orlick Industries, Hamilton, an elected member of the Ontario Provincial Legislature, Executive Director with YWCA of St. Catharines, Manager of Direct Services with the Hamilton-Wentworth John Howard Society, Director of McMaster University’s Centre for Continuing Education, and Coordinator, Institutional Research and Evaluation, Athabasca University. She earned her honours bachelor of arts in psychology from Dalhousie University and her master’s and doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Alberta. Lily was appointed to Council in September 2008.

### **DONALD PANTON – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER**

Donald Panton, RSW, obtained a combined bachelor in gerontology and religious studies, and a bachelor of social work from McMaster University. He has certificates in palliative care, disaster chaplaincy and spiritual care, and recently completed field instructor training at McMaster University. Donald has been working at Hamilton Health Sciences since 1994, most recently in medicine social work. Prior to this position, he worked as a health care aide at Brantwood Life Care and was a part-time lecturer (fashion/clothing and textiles) at the University of West Indies in Jamaica. Donald currently volunteers as a church elder, adult Sabbath School teacher and treasurer at Hamilton East SDA Church, and as a disaster preparedness chaplain for Ontario Conference SDA Church. Donald has also served in various positions on the Unit Council of the Oncology unit, Grandview Adventist Academy school board, to name a few.

## New Council Roster for 2017/18

### **VINITA PURI** – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER

Vinita Puri has worked as a professional social worker and family mediator since 2009. Vinita possesses a specialized honours B.A. in sociology from York University; a masters in social work from Wilfrid Laurier University and a masters in criminological research from the University of Cambridge (U.K.). In addition, she has acquired certifications in alternative dispute resolution; family mediation; solution focused therapy; cognitive behavioural therapy; mental health first aid; and crisis intervention stress management (CISM). At the present time, Vinita is a Clinical Director with Relationship Boutique. Relationship Boutique provides unique, professional and specialized services to support individuals, couples and families experiencing relational difficulties and life transitions. Vinita is passionate and committed to utilizing a strengths-based, anti-oppressive approach to working with all her clients. In 2017, Vinita was appointed to serve as an ambassador/advocate for the CNIB. She also participates as a board member of the Health Providers Against Poverty in Toronto. Vinita has been a member of the Standards of Practice Committee with the OCSWSSW and is looking forward to actively participating as a Council member.

### **SOPHIA RUDDOCK** – PUBLIC MEMBER

Sophia Ruddock was called to the Ontario bar in 1995 and has over 18 years of experience appearing before various administrative tribunals and agencies. She has practised in the areas of human rights, administrative law, health law and labour law. Currently, she acts as in-house counsel for an association, focusing on professional regulation.

### **LISA SEBURN** – ELECTED SOCIAL WORKER

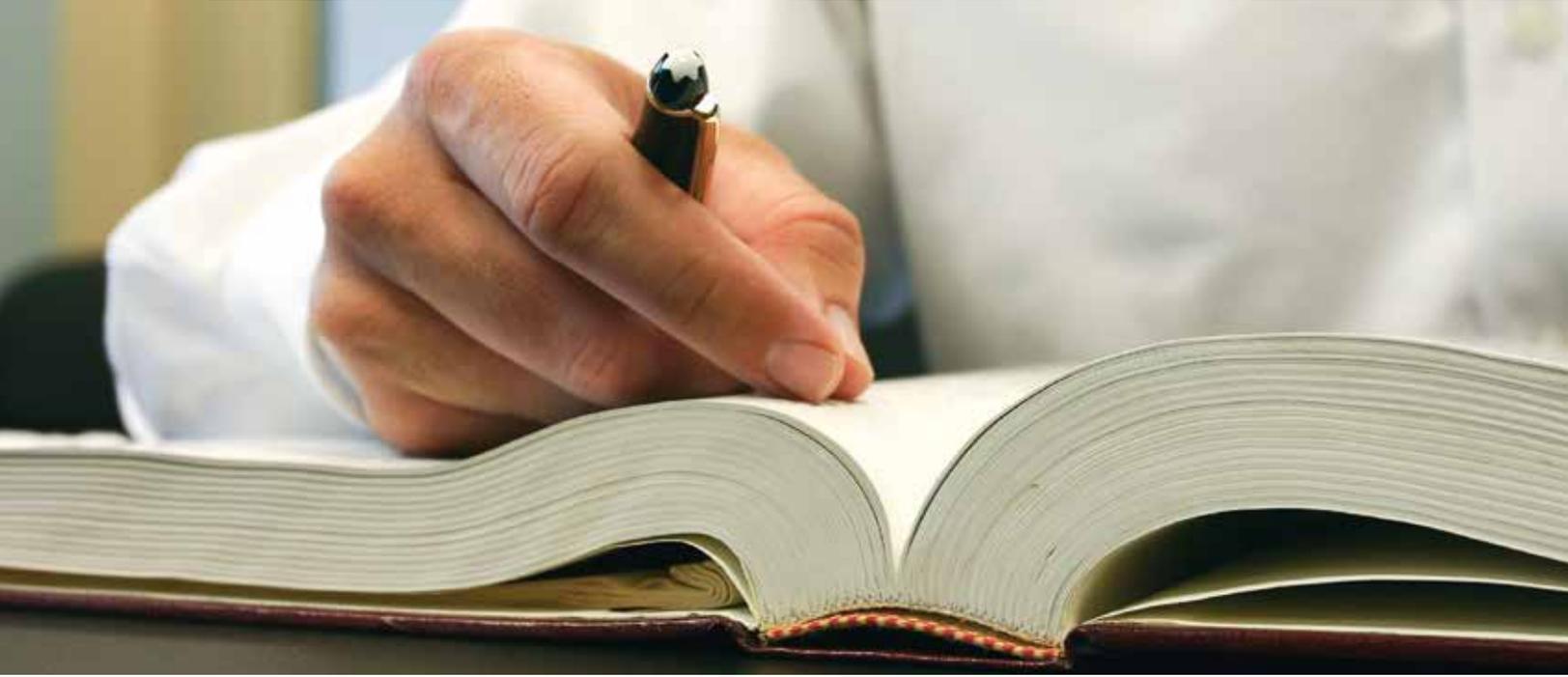
Lisa Seburn was first elected to the OCSWSSW Council in 2016. She is a graduate of the Honours Bachelor of Social Work Program at the University of Western Ontario, as well as the Master of Social Work Program from Lakehead University. She is employed as a Social Worker and Team Leader at St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay, working with adults in a community-based mental health program.

### **DÉIRDRE SMITH** – PUBLIC MEMBER

Déirdre Smith is the Manager of the Standards of Practice and Education unit of the Ontario College of Teachers where she has led the collaborative development of the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession. Smith has also coordinated the policy development of over 350 Additional Qualification (AQ) course guidelines and programs for teacher and leadership education. Smith has presented nationally and internationally on many topics including educational leadership, ethical practice, ethical standards and standards of practice. She has been published in the areas of cases, teacher education, leadership, inclusive education and ethics. Her experience as a professional facilitator, school principal, education consultant, special education administrator, teacher educator, youth counselor and classroom teacher inform her work in policy development, teacher education, leadership formation, professional learning and organizational development.

# Practice Notes: Professional and Ethical: Communication Technology Practices and Policies for a Digital World

CHRISTINA VAN SICKLE, BSW, 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 College members with specific practice inquiries should consult the College, since the relevant standards and appropriate course of action will vary depending on the situation.**

Communication technology has become an integral part of everyday life. It follows that many social workers and social service workers use communication technologies regularly, as part of their practice. This might include using email, social media platforms or texting to share information, schedule appointments, maintain documentation and/or invoice clients – either in the context of a private practice or within an organization. While communication technology may make some aspects of practice easier, it also requires members to remain vigilant in order to ensure that they maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries and other ethical practices.

This article addresses a number of themes raised regularly by members in calls to the College’s Professional Practice Department, including: confidentiality, the need for members to be continually aware of the professional

information posted about them online, various considerations with respect to client service agreements and policies, and remote practice. In this article, “communication technology” refers to texting, email, video chat platforms, social media platforms, websites, or other types of online communication. The discussion is limited to services provided by members in Ontario, to clients within Ontario. It is intended to assist members in understanding how the Standards of Practice apply to these aspects of their practice.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

Previous Practice Notes have addressed a number of issues for members to consider when using social media<sup>1</sup> and communication technology<sup>2</sup>. As these technologies quickly evolve and embed themselves in our everyday lives, these topics are worthy of further exploration. Increasingly, members are communicating with their clients through

1. Betteridge, Lise, “Practice Notes: Social Media and Practice: Protecting Privacy and Professionalism in a Virtual World”, *Perspective*, Fall 2011. <http://ocswssw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/PN-Social-Media-and-Practice.pdf>

2. Betteridge, Lise, “Practice Notes: Communication Technology & Ethical Practice: Evolving Issues in a Changing Landscape”, *Perspective*, Fall 2012. <http://ocswssw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/PN-Communication-and-Technology.pdf>

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email or text messaging, and many clients now expect to communicate with them via these media. The Standards of Practice, which set out the minimum standards for all members of the College, require members to “inform clients of foreseeable risks as well as rights, opportunities, and obligations associated with the provision of professional services.”<sup>3</sup> The Standards of Practice also require members to “comply with any applicable privacy and other legislation.”<sup>4</sup>

One risk associated with communication technology is the fact that it is not a secure form of communication.<sup>5</sup> Members cannot guarantee that client information will be kept confidential when they communicate with clients online or texting. Members must consider a number of issues with regard to communicating with clients online or texting (e.g. protection of client privacy through passwords, encryption or other means, risk of loss or theft of a mobile device).<sup>6</sup> Members are strongly advised to review and follow any recommendations/advisories from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) which may be applicable to their practices. In particular, the IPC has published a fact sheet titled “Communicating Personal Health Information by Email,”<sup>7</sup> which considers, among other things, email communication between health information custodians and their patients of personal health information.

The Standards of Practice also require College members to “inform clients early in their relationship of the limits of confidentiality of information.”<sup>8</sup> In view of this requirement, members may wish to consider developing a communication technology policy that outlines potential risks to clients as well as their professional obligations as regulated professionals.<sup>9</sup> Clients should be provided with this information in order to make informed decisions with

respect to the benefits and limitations of the services being provided.

## DEVELOPING A SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The Standards of Practice require members to “establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in professional relationships for the protection of clients.”<sup>10</sup> In terms of communication technology, this means that members should be transparent about the purposes for which they will communicate using communication technology. For example, members may wish to be explicit with their clients about whether they can share clinical reflections via text message or email, or instead reserve these platforms for administrative purposes, such as scheduling appointments. Members would also be well advised to reflect upon how often and when they will check emails and other correspondence from their clients, and when or under what circumstances they will respond. This information should be clearly communicated to clients at the beginning of the professional relationship as well as later, if necessary.

## CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO:

A client tells a member in an initial session that he has a blog where he shares reflections about his personal life. After the session, the member goes online to review the client’s blog. She informs the client that she has done so at their next session. The client feels that this is an invasion of his privacy, but does not feel comfortable communicating this fact in the session. After the session, the client writes an angry email to the member. The member does not respond to the client email, which upsets the client further. At the next session, the member discusses the email with the client, explaining that the email is part of the client’s clinical record. The

3 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, interpretation 3.6.

4 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle V: Confidentiality, interpretation 5.1.

5 Reamer, Frederic G., “Eye on Ethics: Developing a Social Media Ethics Policy”, *Social Work Today*, July 1, 2011 retrieved July 27, 2017 from [http://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe\\_070111.shtml](http://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe_070111.shtml)

6 Betteridge, Lise, “Practice Notes: Communication Technology & Ethical Practice: Evolving Issues in a Changing Landscape”, *Perspective*, Fall 2012. <http://ocswssw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/PN-Communication-and-Technology.pdf>

7 Fact Sheet: Communicating Personal Health Information by Email, Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC), <https://www.ipc.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Health-Fact-Sheet-Communicating-PHI-by-Email-FINAL.pdf>

8 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle V: Confidentiality, interpretation 5.4.

9 Reamer, Frederic G., “Eye on Ethics: Developing a Social Media Ethics Policy”, *Social Work Today*, July 1, 2011 retrieved July 27, 2017 from [http://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe\\_070111.shtml](http://www.socialworktoday.com/news/eoe_070111.shtml)

10 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle II: Competence and Integrity, interpretation 2.2.

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client becomes even more upset, stating that he would not have written the email if it was going to become part of his “permanent record”. The client terminates the session at this point. Upon further consideration, the member decides that the therapeutic relationship cannot be repaired; in order to avoid a confrontation, she terminates the professional relationship with the client via email.

In this scenario, it may have been helpful for the member to consider the following prior to deciding to use communication technology in her work with her client:

- What is their policy on searching information about their client online?
- What information will be shared using electronic communication outside of clinical sessions?
- How often will they read messages sent to them by clients?
- Will they respond to messages sent via electronic communication?
- What will be documented or included in the client record?
- What other Standards of Practice are applicable to this situation?

In the example above, the client was unaware of the member’s practice of going online to find out information about her clients. Members should consider whether it is appropriate to search for information about their clients online, or in which circumstances this might be appropriate or necessary. The most cautious course of action for members may be to “[d]evelop and disclose to clients policies on the use of Internet-based search engines to gather information about clients.”<sup>11</sup> Members might also wish to consider how this activity will be reflected in the client record, particularly if relevant information about a client is collected from online sources.

With respect to documentation, the Standards of Practice state that members must “ensure that records are current, accurate, contain relevant information about clients,”<sup>12</sup> and that “records include any or all of the following: reports (handwritten, typed, or electronic); progress notes; checklists; correspondence; minutes; process logs; journals or appointment records; films and audio or video tapes.”<sup>13</sup> It follows that members should consider how they will document information about clients found online and through client correspondence. Members should always have clear conversations with clients regarding documentation practises, including recording information obtained in their use of communication technology.

The Standards of Practice require that “College members provide clients with accurate and complete information regarding the extent, nature, and limitations of any services available to them.”<sup>14</sup> It is apparent in this scenario that the member did not clearly communicate to the client her practices in terms of responding to clients using electronic communication. Some members may choose to use electronic communication only for administrative purposes; others may choose not to respond to members using these platforms. Regardless of their decision in this regard, it is advisable for members to consider how often they will view and respond to their professional emails, text messages and other forms of communication technology and ensure that they inform clients of these practices early in the therapeutic relationship.

Finally, the scenario above raises issues with respect to termination of the professional relationship. The Standards of Practice state that members “terminate professional services to clients when such services are no longer required or requested.”<sup>15</sup> They also describe the circumstances in which a member may terminate the client relationship. When doing so, the member must make “reasonable efforts to hold a termination session with the client.”<sup>16</sup> In the scenario above, it does not appear that

11 Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Draft Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work, Section II: Informed Consent, interpretation 2.05.

12 The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008, Principle IV: The Social Work and Social Service Work Record.

13 The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008, Principle IV: The Social Work and Social Service Work Record, footnote 1.

14 The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, interpretation 3.1.

15 The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008, Principle III: Responsibility to Clients, interpretation 3.9.

16 Ibid.

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the member made reasonable efforts to offer the client a termination session, nor did she “distinguish (her) ... needs and interests from those of their clients to ensure that, within professional relationships, clients’ needs and interests remain paramount.”<sup>17</sup>

## DEVELOPING WEBSITES AND ONLINE PROFESSIONAL PROFILES

Members may also use communication technology by having professional websites to advertise their services, share resources and connect with clients. Similarly, different social media platforms enable members to create professional profiles and network with other colleagues. Members may create these websites or profiles at one point in their career, and then leave these resources online unedited or unaltered as their career progresses. It is important for members to consider the fact that information that is posted online remains there indefinitely. The following scenario illustrates some of the risks associated with this practice:

A member established a private practice several years ago and created a professional website. Over time, the member received further training and shifted the focus of her practice, at which point she developed a new website. The member’s first website remained online, which the member realized when she began to receive calls from potential clients who were seeking the services she described on that website. The member was able to refer the clients to another clinician, but was concerned to find that the disappointed clients had left negative comments about her under the “comments” tab of her website. This member called the Professional Practice Department to determine what her professional obligations were with respect to her first website, and how she might best address the negative comments.

In this scenario, the member may wish to consider the following questions:

- Is information about her professional services that is posted online current and accurate?
- Is it appropriate to include a “comment” tab on a professional website?

The content on members’ professional websites and their professional profiles on social media platforms must adhere to the Standards of Practice, which require that their “education, training, and experience, as well as areas of competence, professional affiliations and services are described in an honest and accurate manner.”<sup>18</sup> This means that members should maintain the currency of information about their practice that is online. It is also important for members to “review professional information about themselves that appears on websites and in other publically available resources to ensure accuracy.”<sup>19</sup>

In the course of her call to the Professional Practice Department, the member in this scenario was able to identify some of the issues to consider when posting professional content online. She was made aware that the Standards of Practice require members to “correct, whenever possible, false, misleading or inaccurate information and representations made by others concerning College members’ qualifications or services”<sup>20</sup> and the fact that this requirement also applies to information that is online. Additionally, the member reflected on how remarks left on a comments page could be a form of endorsement or testimonial, neither of which are permitted in the Standards of Practice.<sup>21</sup> The member recognized that she had overlooked her earlier website and the implications of it remaining online. As a result of her discussion with Professional Practice staff, she noted that she had not considered that a “comments” page may solicit testimonials. After the call, the member decided that she would take steps to correct inaccurate information that

17 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle I: Relationship with Clients, interpretation 1.6.

18 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle VII: Advertising, interpretation 7.3.

19 *ASWB Draft Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work*, Section I: Practitioner Competence and Compliance with Ethical Standards, interpretation 1.10

20 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle VII: Advertising, interpretation 7.3.3.

21 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle VII: Advertising, interpretation 7.1.4.

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was posted about her services online, and take down her out-of-date website.

## REMOTE/ONLINE COUNSELLING

Some members engage in sessions with their clients via email, Skype or other video chat platforms. Indeed this can be an effective way to communicate for clients who live in remote parts of the province, are very busy or have difficulty attending an in-person session for a variety of other reasons. As discussed previously, members must engage in transparent conversations about confidentiality early in the relationship with their clients, regardless of whether they are providing services online or in person.<sup>22</sup> There are additional factors to consider, however.

## CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

A member called the Professional Practice Department because he had been approached by a client seeking remote social work services. The client said she hoped to use a social media platform's video chat function to communicate with the member, and that she might like to have sessions over email as well. The member realized that he would have to "friend" the client in order to use the social media platform the client had referred to. The member realized that it was inappropriate to "friend" the client, and decided that he should consult with the College regarding other factors that he should consider before agreeing to provide remote services to this client.

## IN THIS SCENARIO THE MEMBER MAY WISH TO CONSIDER:

- Whether he had the required knowledge and skills to provide remote services.
- What appropriate boundaries might be in terms of requests from clients to "friend" them online, for the purpose of providing professional services.
- Whether an in-person initial assessment is appropriate or feasible.

- How a technological malfunction will be managed.
- Whether there needs to be a process to verify the identity of the client.
- Whether it is advisable to develop a crisis plan for a client in a remote location.

Competence is required if using communication technology in practice. Professional Practice staff discussed with the member that he was "responsible for being aware of the extent and parameters of [his] competence and [his] professional scope of practice and limit [his] practice accordingly."<sup>23</sup> It was further discussed that the member could enhance his knowledge and skills "by seeking additional supervision, consultation and/or education."<sup>24</sup> The member applied his professional judgment and determined that due to the training he has received, he was competent to practise using communication technology.

The member was clear about his decision not to "friend" his client on social media. He recognized that even if the purpose of the client's request was to access professional services, accepting such a request could blur boundaries and imply a personal relationship. Professional Practice staff reminded the member that he was "responsible for ensuring that appropriate boundaries are maintained in all aspects of professional relationships."<sup>25</sup> The member decided that he would explore other options for video chatting with his client, and would discuss with his client the limits of confidentiality when communicating in this way.<sup>26</sup>

Professional Practice staff also discussed with the member the feasibility of conducting an in-person consultation or assessment. The member wasn't sure if this was going to be a viable option, given the client's circumstances. Regardless of whether or not an in-person assessment were possible, the member should in the course of his initial assessment use his professional judgment to determine if remote

22 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle VI: The Social Work and Social Service Work Record, interpretation 4.4.1.

23 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle II: Competence and Integrity, interpretation 2.1.1.

24 *Ibid.*

25 *The Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook, Second Edition, 2008*, Principle II: Competence and Integrity, interpretation 2.2.

26 "Q&A: I have been asked by my employer to provide service to a client in another province, using Skype. Can the College offer any guidance on this issue?", *Perspective*, Fall 2014. <https://ocswsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/QA-On-Skype.pdf>

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social work services were appropriate for the client.<sup>27</sup> In the course of his call, the member also discussed how he might manage if there was a technological malfunction that either prevented or terminated a clinical session. The member was encouraged to make a proactive plan with the client to address how service would be provided in the event of technological failure.<sup>28</sup>

Professional Practice staff also discussed what might be reasonable steps to verify the identity of his clients.<sup>29</sup> It was suggested that this might be a useful practice either during a technological failure when the member wasn't able to visually identify the client, or if switching from video chat to email correspondence with clients. This practice may serve to minimize the risk that someone might impersonate a client, gain access to confidential health information, or influence a member's assessment or opinion of a client.<sup>30</sup>

Lastly, it was suggested that when providing remote services to a client, the development of a crisis plan is an important consideration. The member understood that it would be good practice to be prepared in case a client endorsed thoughts of harm or if another crisis situation emerged for which additional help was required. Such a plan would include an assessment of the extent to which the client had access to family, friends, and social supports as well as the provision of information about community resources and emergency services.<sup>31</sup>

The member decided that he would discuss with his client how to identify a crisis and, in such an event, who would be contacted. The member realized that he would need to ensure that he had gathered contact information for the person the client consented to have contacted in the event of an emergency and with respect to appropriate resources. It was noted that this would be another opportunity for the member to discuss with the client the limits of confidentiality, including a potential duty to warn or protect.<sup>32</sup> The member was advised to be clear about the fact that information obtained via email or video chat would be documented in the client's record, and that this information was subject to the limits of confidentiality.

## CONCLUSION

This article has addressed a number of issues to be considered by members in relation to their use of communication technology in the context of their practice. By ensuring that they are competent and informed, and clear and transparent with clients about the limits of confidentiality as well as their communication technology practices and policies, members can ensure that they are providing professional and ethical service in the age of technology.

27 *ASWB Draft Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work*, Section II: Informed Consent, interpretation 2.08.

28 The College of Psychologists of Ontario, *Standards of Professional Conduct, 2017*, Standard 15: Use of Technology in the Provision of Psychological Services, interpretation 15.8.

29 *ASWB Draft Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work*, Section II: Informed Consent, interpretation 2.04.

30 The College of Psychologists of Ontario, *Standards of Professional Conduct, 2017*, Standard 15: Use of Technology in the Provision of Psychological Services, interpretation 15.7.

31 *ASWB Draft Model Regulatory Standards for Technology and Social Work*, Section II: Informed Consent, interpretation 2.08.

32 Betteridge, Lise, "Practice Notes: Meeting Professional Obligations and Protecting Clients' Privacy: Disclosure of Information Without Consent", *Perspective*, Spring 2013. [https://ocswssw.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/PN-Meeting\\_Professional\\_Obligations.pdf](https://ocswssw.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/PN-Meeting_Professional_Obligations.pdf)

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## CHECKLIST FOR USING COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN PRACTICE

- I have taken steps to ensure that I am current and knowledgeable with respect to communication technologies and digital practice.
- I have reviewed the Standards of Practice and considered how they apply to the use of communication technologies in my practice.
- I have reviewed any applicable privacy and other legislation, considered how they apply to the use of communication technologies in my practice and obtained legal advice, as advisable.
- I have explained to my clients the limits of confidentiality in using communication technologies.
- I have reflected upon and clearly articulated to my clients my policies and practices in relation to seeking information about them online.
- I have been transparent with my clients about what (if any) information will be communicated outside of clinical sessions via communication technology.
- I have clearly articulated to clients how often I check messages received via communication technology.
- I have made it explicit to clients whether or not I will respond to messages from them sent via communication technologies, and indicated if I do reply, the timeframe within which I will respond.
- I have explained what information, including information gained from communication technology, will be documented in the client record.
- I have reviewed online professional information about myself to ensure its accuracy, and I have made reasonable efforts to correct any inaccurate information.
- I have ensured that none of my online platforms solicit testimonials or endorsements.
- I have made clear my policy about accepting clients as “friends” on social media.
- Before providing clinical services via communication technology, I have determined whether or not an in-person initial assessment is required and whether remote services are appropriate.
- I have explored with my client how to manage service provision in the event of a technological malfunction.
- I have explored with my client a process to verify their identity if required.
- I have developed a crisis plan with clients to whom I am providing services via communication technology.



# Discipline Decision Summaries

The Discipline Committee's Decision and Reason for Decision is published pursuant to the Discipline Committee's penalty order. The College publishes summaries of decisions and/or provides links to full-text, neutralized versions of its decisions. Information that is subject to a publication ban or that could reveal the identity of witnesses or clients, including the name of the facility, has been removed or has been anonymized.

## 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.

### SHANA BARNIM

MEMBER # 818607

The Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers found that Shana Barnim is guilty of professional misconduct in that she violated sections 2.2, 2.29 and 2.36 of O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, Principles IV and V of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* (Standards of Practice), and Interpretations 4.2.1, 4.3.1, 5.1 and 5.2 of the College's Standards of Practice.

Read the College Discipline Committee's decision summary at: [ocswssw.org/complaints-discipline/cd-discipline-decisions/](https://ocswssw.org/complaints-discipline/cd-discipline-decisions/)

### NATHALIE BEAUCHAMP-BROWN

MEMBER # 815286

The Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers found that Nathalie Beauchamp-Brown is guilty of professional misconduct in that she violated sections 2.2, 2.5, 2.10, 2.11 and 2.36 of O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, Principles I, II, III, V and VIII of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* (Standards of Practice), and Interpretations 1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1.1, 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.8, 3.7, 5.1, 5.3, 5.3.6, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.6 and 8.7 of the College's Standards of Practice.

Read the College Discipline Committee's decision summary at: [ocswssw.org/complaints-discipline/cd-discipline-decisions/](https://ocswssw.org/complaints-discipline/cd-discipline-decisions/)

### LYNETTE HEYWOOD

MEMBER # 804922

The Discipline Committee of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers found that Lynette Heywood is guilty of professional misconduct in that she violated sections 2.2, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.36 of O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct) to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, Principles I, II and VIII of the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* (Standards of Practice), and Interpretations 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1.5, 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.8 of the College's Standards of Practice.

Read the College Discipline Committee's decision summary at: [ocswssw.org/complaints-discipline/cd-discipline-decisions/](https://ocswssw.org/complaints-discipline/cd-discipline-decisions/)



# 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 [ocswssw.org](http://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 institutor 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 email [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 ethical and professional 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:

The College is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

250 Bloor Street East  
Suite 1000  
Toronto, Ontario M4W 1E6

Telephone: 416-972-9882  
Toll-Free: 1-877-828-9380  
Fax: 416-972-1512  
Email: [info@ocswssw.org](mailto:info@ocswssw.org)  
[ocswssw.org](http://ocswssw.org)

## FOLLOW US ON:

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Ontario College of Social Workers  
and Social Service Workers

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## WHO TO CONTACT AT THE COLLEGE:

### OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

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**Pat Lieberman**  
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**Contact Pat for Council information.**

### MEMBERSHIP/ADMINISTRATION

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**Contact Christina, Jennifer or Aleiya with professional practice questions.**

### COMMUNICATIONS

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**Contact Sarah or John regarding the College's website, newsletter, Annual Report and other publications.**

### REGISTRATION

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**For general registration inquiries, please email:** [registration@ocswssw.org](mailto:registration@ocswssw.org).

### COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE

**For information on complaints, discipline and mandatory reporting, please email:** [investigations@ocswssw.org](mailto:investigations@ocswssw.org).