

## **Guidelines for Mentoring Physicians with a Defined License**

Please refer to Appendix A which contains an excerpt from the Registration Regulations pertaining to mentorship.

### **Before Beginning to Mentor:**

Before beginning to serve as a mentor a physician must:

- be approved by the defined licensee's sponsor
- be approved by the College
- review the defined licensee's background information (past training and practice experience) and pre-licensure assessments where applicable to ascertain the licensee's strengths and weaknesses
- meet with the defined licensee prior to agreeing to mentor, to better understand their preferred scope of practice, areas of special interest, strengths and weaknesses, and other matters relevant to their intended practice of medicine
- be aware of any conditions prescribed by the College that may apply to a defined license (e.g. emergency medicine, obstetrics, LMCC, RCPSC or CFPC certification)
- be aware of any needs or requirements to participate in continuing medical education/professional development
- be aware of the expectations and time commitments involved with the mentoring process
- notify the College in writing of their agreement to mentor the defined licensee and provide information to the College and to the sponsor about the proposed practice arrangement and initial plans for availability and guidance. The sponsor must endorse the proposed arrangement.

## **The College Has the Following Expectations of Mentors:**

### **Time Commitment**

The mentor must:

- understand that initially, depending on the strengths and weaknesses, training and experience of the defined licensee, direct involvement with the mentored physician may involve as much as 4 – 5 hours per week. This time requirement will diminish as the mentored physician gains experience in the context of their new practice.

### **Guidance and Coaching Provided by the Mentor**

- The mentor and the defined licensee should develop a plan for mentorship guidance.
- The degree of guidance required will depend on the strengths and weaknesses of the defined licensee.
- In some instances, especially early on in the mentorship, close guidance may be necessary. This may include “shadowing”, daily meetings, daily or weekly review of records, checks with colleagues, staff or patients.
- The College may require the mentor to provide more direct supervision in some circumstances.
- The mentor should monitor the practice of the defined licensee with respect to both clinical competence and professional behaviour.
- The mentor should play an active role in guiding the defined licensee with respect to relevant CME activity.
- The mentor is expected to use a variety of strategies to monitor the defined licensee’s clinical practice including direct observation, case discussion and chart review and to provide relevant feedback in a timely and supportive manner.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

- The mentor should complete the periodic evaluations in a timely manner and, after discussing the report with the defined licensee, forward the evaluation to the College and to the sponsor. Normally, the evaluations are to be completed after 1, 3, 6 and 12 months during the first year of practice and then on a yearly basis if necessary. This requirement for periodic evaluations may be altered as required by the College based on the circumstances.

- The mentor must forward these completed evaluations to the College and the sponsor in a timely manner
- The mentor should assist the defined licensee with orientation and integration into the local medical/health care system.
- One of the purposes of mentorship is to enhance patient safety. The mentor has an obligation to report any concerns within the mentored practice regarding patient safety to the College.

### **Replacement Arrangements**

- It is not anticipated that the mentor will be available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. When a situation requires guidance from an alternate mentor, the mentor must arrange with a fully licensed physician in the same scope of practice to be available, within a reasonable period of time and to ensure that the replacement mentor is aware of any conditions/restrictions that apply to the defined licensee. The requirement for alternate guidance would normally be required if the mentor is to be unavailable for a period exceeding 72 hours. Under no circumstances should the defined licensee be left without an available mentor within the first month of their mentorship. The mentor must notify the defined licensee and the College of the particulars of such an arrangement.

### **When the Formal Mentorship Ends**

- It is anticipated that the duration of the mentorship will be a minimum of one year. Following completion of this period the College will decide whether a further period of mentorship is necessary.
- Following completion of the mentorship, the defined licensee must still continue to have an approved sponsor for the duration of the defined license.

### **If Mentorship Ends**

- The mentor may withdraw from mentorship at any time. This is a serious decision because upon withdrawal of mentorship the defined license is no longer valid. It is advisable that the mentor discuss significant concerns early on with the College and with the sponsor so that appropriate help and support may be provided to address or resolve serious concerns. The concerns must also be discussed with the defined licensee.
- The mentor must notify the sponsor, the College and the defined licensee in a timely fashion of their intention to withdraw mentorship.
- If the defined licensee leaves the practice, the mentor must notify in writing the sponsor and the College.

The College recognizes the dedication demonstrated by mentors and the time commitment required to maintain the mentorship relationship. Due to this level of responsibility, as a general rule, mentors should only mentor one defined licensee at a time. The mentor can expect on-going support for their role as a mentor. Mentors are encouraged to contact the College for direction or advice regarding their role as a mentor.

*Approved by Credentials: November 9, 2007*

*Approved by Council: December 7, 2007*

## Appendix A

The following excerpt from the Registration Regulations under the *Medical Act* of Nova Scotia pertains to sponsorship and mentorship for defined licensees.

**14** An applicant for registration in the Defined Register under Section 25 of the Act who is not eligible for full registration, registration in the Temporary Register or registration in the Medical Education Register must

- (a) be a graduate in medicine from a university or school of medicine approved by the Council;
- (b) have post graduate training appropriate for the practice and approved by the Council;
- (c) have a sponsor who is approved in writing by the Council;
- (d) for the initial year as a registrant on the Defined Register, have a mentor who is approved in writing by the Council;
- (e) pass examinations acceptable to the Council;
- (f) have appropriate malpractice insurance or membership in a protective association and provide proof of this as required by the Registrar; and
- (g) comply with any requirements considered necessary by Council.

**14A** Following the initial year as a registrant on the Defined Register, the Council may require the registrant to have a mentor approved in writing by the Council for a further period of time as determined by the Registrar.

**15** A **sponsor** of a registrant in the Defined Register must

- (a) have full registration with the College;
- (b) reside in the Province;
- (c) be nominated by the district health authority in which the registrant will be practicing and approved by the Council;
- (d) arrange for and approve in writing the registrant's mentor required by clause 14 (d) and, if applicable, by Section 14A;
- (e) report in writing on a yearly basis, or as considered necessary by the Council, on the performance of the registrant;
- (f) notify the College promptly if they have concerns about the practice of the registrant; and
- (g) comply with any other requirements considered necessary by the Council.

**15A** A **mentor** of a registrant in the Defined Register must

- (a) have full registration with the College;
- (b) reside in the Province;
- (c) be engaged in a scope of practice comparable to the registrant;
- (d) practice medicine in the same district health authority as the registrant's sponsor and the registrant;

- (e) be approved in writing as a mentor by the registrant's sponsor and the Council;
- (f) report regularly to the registrant's sponsor on the performance of the registrant and report to the Council as required by the Council on the performance of the registrant;
- (g) notify the Council promptly if they are concerned about the practice of the registrant; and
- (h) comply with any requirements considered necessary by the Council.