

### Autumn 2007

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#### **(1.) 2008 license renewals due by January 7, fees unchanged**

Annual licensing renewal forms will be mailed to College members in mid-November. Physicians who have not received their renewal packages by December 10 are asked to contact the registration department (see below). Please notify the College of any recent address changes or if you will be out of the province in December 2007.

College members with internet access have the option of renewing and paying for their 2008 license using a simple online renewal form. Information on using the online option will be distributed with the license renewal forms. Online license renewal can be paid with VISA, MasterCard or American Express and involves no additional charge. Annual license fees remain unchanged from 2007.

If you do not wish to renew your Nova Scotia license for 2008 please be sure to notify the College in writing prior to January 7, 2008.

#### **2008 License Renewal Deadlines (All times AST)**

##### **2008 Fee**

License renewal form and fee processed online or received by the College before 4 pm, January 7, 2008. (Payment and form must be received before this date for the fee to apply).

##### **2008 Late Fee**

License renewal form and fee processed online or received by the College from 4 pm, January 7, 2008 until 4 pm, January 31, 2008.

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### **2008 Reinstatement Fee**

License renewal form and fee received after 4 pm, January 31, 2008. (Immediate Suspension – Requires Reinstatement).

For further information, or if you have not received your license renewal form in the mail by December 10, 2007, please contact the registration department by phone at (902) 482-2920, toll-free in Nova Scotia at 1 (877) 282-7767, or by e-mail at [registration@cpsns.ns.ca](mailto:registration@cpsns.ns.ca).

### **(2.) 2008 incorporation renewals due by December 3, 2007**

Incorporation renewal forms for 2008 were mailed in late September and are due by December 3, 2007. If you have not received your forms, please contact the College (see below).

Please note, for your convenience, renewal fees are now payable by Visa, MasterCard and American Express Cards. Please complete the credit card information box on page two of Form “B” if you choose to use this method of payment.

If the College has not received the payment and renewal form on or before Friday, January 4, 2008, the permit to practice medicine under that corporation will be suspended and subject to a reinstatement fee of \$100, in addition to the annual renewal fee.

For further information, please contact Anastasia Young by phone at (902) 482-2925, toll-free in Nova Scotia at 1 (877) 282-7767, or by e-mail at [ayoung@cpsns.ns.ca](mailto:ayoung@cpsns.ns.ca).

### **(3.) College guidelines and policies approved in October 2007**

Council approved the following guidelines at its October 12 meeting:

#### **Conflict of Interest Guidelines**

([www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/conflict-of-interest.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/conflict-of-interest.htm))

Last approved by Council in May 2002, this document was re-approved with significant revisions on October 12, 2007.

#### **Policy on Withdrawal of Physician Services During Job Actions**

([www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/withdrawal-service.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/withdrawal-service.htm))

Last approved by Council in December 2000, this document was re-approved with significant revisions on October 12, 2007.

#### **Physicians and the Pharmaceutical Industry**

([www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/physicians-pharma.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/physicians-pharma.htm))

A policy of the Canadian Medical Association (dated 2001) that was endorsed by Council on October 12.

#### **(4.) Doctors Nova Scotia pilot project gives financial assistance to NSPAR participants**

*Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the October 2007 issue of DoctorsNS, the official magazine of Doctors Nova Scotia.*

By Samantha Holmes

Financial assistance is now available to physicians taking CME courses recommended by the Nova Scotia Physician Achievement Review (NSPAR) program.

A total of \$10,000 is being made available through a Doctors Nova Scotia pilot program in collaboration with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia which oversees NSPAR.

NSPAR randomly and confidentially reviews physicians through surveys with colleagues, staff and patients. The outcomes are reported to the physician to highlight areas of excellence, identify minor opportunities for improvement or, in some cases, recommend continuing medical education to upgrade on identified deficiencies.

The pilot project funding will reimburse a physician up to \$500 toward the cost of a CME program. Doctors Nova Scotia will uphold the College's commitment to protect the privacy of any physician involved in the NSPAR program.

Doctors Nova Scotia President Dr. Don Pugsley said the association's interest in the pilot project is two-fold. "Firstly, we recognize this as an opportunity to individually support our members who participate in the program," he said.

"Just as importantly, it speaks to our support for and belief in continuing medical education. We should never stop wanting to learn. If this financial assistance supports a member who has decided to take additional training, to be an even better physician, then we all win," he added.

The pilot project will run until funding earmarked to the program is depleted. After that, the College may submit a formal proposal to Doctors Nova Scotia's Member Services Committee to request the program be a long-term benefit to members. For more information on the Nova Scotia Physician Achievement Review program visit [www.nspar.ca](http://www.nspar.ca).

#### **(5.) From the Investigations Committees**

The following summary describes a case examined by one of the College's Investigations Committees. This information is provided for educational purposes. All names and certain details have been changed to preserve confidentiality.

##### **Timely transfer of medical records**

Ms. White changed physicians on May 1, 2007 after moving for work reasons. She met with her new physician, Dr. Black, on June 10, 2007. At that visit, she signed a consent to copy and transfer her medical records from her previous physician, Dr. Green. Dr. Black's office faxed the consent to Dr. Green's office on June 11, 2007. When Ms. White returned to Dr. Black on July 10, 2007 she was informed that her previous records had not yet been received. Ms. White contacted Dr. Green's office by phone on July 10, 2007 and was told that her records would not be transferred until she paid a \$30.00 copying fee. Ms. White mailed a cheque the following day. The cheque was cashed on July 14, 2007.

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On August 14, 2007 Ms. White went to see Dr. Black and was informed that Dr. Black had still not received her records. Ms. White called Dr. Green's office and was told by Dr Green's secretary that Dr. Green was very busy and would get to her records when she had time. Ms. White was also told that Dr. Green was taking a vacation soon and that the records would probably not be ready until September. Ms. White told Dr. Green's secretary that she had seen a specialist in May to be assessed for Lupus, and that that her new doctor needed to see her records, particularly the specialist's note. Ms. White was told that Dr. Green would get to her records when she had time.

On August 16, 2007, Ms. White informed the College that she wanted to file a complaint against Dr. Green. The College informed Dr. Green that Ms. White was considering filing a complaint unless her records were transferred promptly. Dr. Green informed the College that she was going on vacation and that Ms. White would have to wait until she returned in September. She further stated that "the College should find better things to do than harass me."

On August 24, 2007 Ms. White filed a complaint with the College. Dr. Black received Ms. White's records from Dr. Green on September 5, 2007.

In reviewing the complaint, the Investigation Committee expressed concerns about the time it took Dr. Green to transfer copies of the records to Dr. Black. The Committee was also concerned about Dr. Green's response to the phone call she had received from the College. The Committee met with Dr. Green, who explained that she was a busy solo physician, that Ms. White had few medical problems, and that there was no harm done by the delay.

The Committee issued a **Counsel** to Dr. Green that she was expected to respond to inquires from the College in a professional manner. The Committee also issued a **Caution** that such a delay in transferring the care of a patient was unacceptable and that if it occurred again, further actions might be necessary.

#### (6.) June CAPP assessment results announced

Four of the 20 candidates in the June 2007 Clinician Assessment for Practice Program (CAPP) cohort were deemed eligible for licensure. Orientation for the successful candidates took place on October 15-19, followed by practice site visits.

The next CAPP assessment is scheduled for June 2008.

#### **Maudsley "superb leader and visionary"**

Dr. Robert Maudsley, who has been Executive Director of CAPP since its inception, stepped down in late October to become the program's Director of Assessment, Research and Program Evaluation. "Dr. Maudsley has been a superb leader and visionary," said Dr. Cameron Little, Registrar. "The success of CAPP is a testament to his vast expertise and profound commitment to medical education and professionalism."

Dr. William Lowe, the College's Deputy Registrar, Registration, will also now assume the role of Executive Director of CAPP.

## **(7.) College approves undergraduate medical student observership policy**

Responding to requests from Doctors Nova Scotia, district health authorities and undergraduate medical students, the College has approved a policy that will permit second-year and higher undergraduate students attending any of the 17 Canadian medical schools to undertake clinical observerships in Nova Scotia medical practices. Before this policy, clinical observerships were limited to international medical graduates wishing to obtain North American experience by observing a medical practice.

Particularly in rural areas of the province, there is a recognition that many local students attending Dalhousie or other Canadian medical schools are interested in observing a medical practice in their early undergraduate years. It is believed that this could be useful for rural communities seeking to encourage local students to return home to practice after graduation.

The policy (below) was approved by Council on October 12, 2007. For further information and applications, please contact Susan Williams, Registration Manager, at (902) 421-2203, toll-free in Nova Scotia at 1 (877) 282-7767, or by e-mail at [swilliams@cpsns.ns.ca](mailto:swilliams@cpsns.ns.ca).

### **Policy Regarding Observerships for Canadian Medical Students**

As an observer Canadian medical students will interact with patients and will have access to private personal patient information. For these reasons observers require supervision by a fully licensed physician. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia needs to ensure that a student observer is a legitimate Canadian medical student and is undertaking this observership to further their knowledge of medical practice in Nova Scotia.

Therefore, if a Canadian medical student wishes to act as an observer in Nova Scotia he/she must:

- be a second, third or fourth year student enrolled in a medical school in Canada
- have the approval of the undergraduate medical education office of their medical school
- have a licensed physician supervisor in good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia
- have the approval of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia
- submit an application form to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia for an observership permit

The permit will remain valid at the discretion of the College but will usually be time limited and location specific.

The Canadian medical student must submit a written application to the College for approval of their proposed observership. This must be accompanied by a sponsorship agreement from the supervising physician describing the proposed activities for the observership. If approval is granted by the College the observer and supervisor will be notified in writing outlining their duties/responsibilities/restrictions/limitations.

Observers may:

- observe
- conduct supervised (direct and indirect) interviews
- conduct examinations under direct supervision

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Observers are **not** allowed to do the following:

- make entries on the patient's medical record unless cosigned
- give medical advice to a patient or make a medical diagnosis
- prescribe treatment
- take a telephone call regarding clinical matters on behalf of their supervisor or other physicians
- perform medical procedures
- discharge a patient from care.

*Approved by Credentials: August 29, 2007*

*Approved by Council: October 12, 2007*

#### **(8.) College produces “Advice for Retiring Physicians about Licensing and Notification”**

“Advice for Retiring Physicians about Licensing and Notification” contains straightforward information designed to facilitate physicians' retirement from practice. Included is information on notification, medical records management, license retention after retirement and re-licensure after retirement.

The document is available on the College website at [www.cpsns.ns.ca/advice-retiring.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/advice-retiring.htm), or by contacting the Registration Department by phone at (902) 482-2920.

#### **(9.) Prescription drug abuse FAQs available**

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse has prepared a frequently asked question (FAQ) document on prescription drug abuse. Some of the topics include:

- What kinds of drugs are used for non-medical purposes?
- How and why does diversion of prescription drugs occur?
- What is being done to monitor, minimize and prevent prescription drug abuse?
- How effective are measures aimed at reducing prescription drug abuse?
- What are some of the treatment strategies used with those who abuse prescription drugs?
- What is the bottom line when it comes to diversion and abuse of prescription drugs in Canada?

This document is available on the College website at: [www.cpsns.ns.ca/prescription-drug-abuse.pdf](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/prescription-drug-abuse.pdf)

#### **(10.) Evidence-based information on natural health products and CAM available**

Health Canada estimates that upwards of 71% of Canadians use some form of natural health products including herbs and homeopathic medicines. The increased popularity of these products has led to questions about their safety, efficacy, dosage and interactions with other agents. Below is a sample of evidence-based information on natural health products and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) that may be of use to physicians.

##### **CAMline**

[www.camline.ca](http://www.camline.ca)

Free website for healthcare professionals and the public that presents peer-reviewed, objective information on the safety and efficacy of complementary and alternative medicine from a Canadian perspective.

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**Medeffect Canada**

[www.healthcanada.gc.ca/medeffect](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/medeffect)

Health Canada website that supplies information about suspected adverse reactions to Canadian marketed health products, including natural health products.

**Alternative Medicine Alert**

[www.ahcpub.com](http://www.ahcpub.com)

Subscription-based monthly newsletter that takes a critical look at popular therapies and outlines the clinical data that either support or refute the use of each therapy. Describes how therapies are supposed to work, potential beneficial uses, and the dangers of some popular therapies that have no available clinical proof of efficacy.

**MedlinePlus Herbs and Supplements**

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/herb\\_All.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/herb_All.html)

Website of the U.S. National Institutes of Health that contains detailed information on safety, efficacy and interactions for a number of common herbs and supplements.

**(11.) Université de Montréal offers unique medico-legal program**

*Editor's Note: The following information was provided by the Université de Montréal.*

In January 2008, the University de Montreal will launch an English-language web-based program in insurance medicine and medico-legal expertise that is the first of its kind in North America. The program provides formal and comprehensive training for health professionals practicing or interested in medico-legal assessment and insurance medicine. The deadline for registration is December 1, 2007. For more information visit [www.mae.umontreal.ca](http://www.mae.umontreal.ca).

**(12.) Change of Name, Address or E-mail?**

The College depends solely on submissions from members to keep its address information up to date. For members' protection, the College requires that change requests be submitted in writing. Address changes submitted by e-mail are acceptable if the e-mail is sent from the e-mail address the College has on record for the member.

Third-party change requests are not accepted. Name changes must be accompanied by the appropriate legal documentation. Address or name changes can also be submitted on an Address or Name Change Notification Form, which is available on the website at [www.cpsns.ns.ca/address-name-change-form.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/address-name-change-form.htm) or by contacting the College by phone at (902) 422-5823 or toll-free in Nova Scotia 1-877-282-7767, by fax at (902) 422-5035, or by e-mail at [registration@cpsns.ns.ca](mailto:registration@cpsns.ns.ca).

**(13.) How to Contact the College**

General Inquiries: (902) 422-5823  
Toll-free in Nova Scotia: 1 (877) 282-7767  
Main Fax: (902) 422 5035

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