

### Winter 2008

Number	Article	Page
1	College to review expectations of physicians performing invasive / non-invasive cosmetic surgery procedures	1
2	Guidelines, policies and positions from the College	2
3	From the Investigations Committees	2
4	CAPP Update	4
5	Professional development resources available online	4
6	Physicians asked to participate in chronic disease self-management survey	4
7	Dr. Kenneth Rockwood to discuss population ageing and health care	5
8	IWK returns to routine newborn screening process	5
9	Change of Name, Address or E-mail?	5
10	How to Contact the College	5

**(1.) College to review expectations of physicians performing invasive / non-invasive cosmetic surgery procedures**

In keeping with its public-protection mandate, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia will soon consider possible policy and/or regulatory changes regarding the provision of invasive and non-invasive cosmetic surgery procedures by its members. This review, like others across the country, has been prompted by several well-publicized events, including a case in Ontario in which a patient died shortly after receiving liposuction treatment from a family physician.

As part of its review, the College will survey other Canadian medical regulatory authorities regarding their existing or planned policies, regulations and initiatives in this area. Other Canadian medical regulatory authorities are considering or have taken steps such as requiring physicians to report any changes to their scope of practice; requiring physicians to demonstrate proficiency in any new or changed competencies to the satisfaction of the regulatory authority; accrediting cosmetic surgery facilities; and undertaking public education campaigns that encourage prospective cosmetic surgery patients to question practitioners about their relevant training, qualifications and experience.

In the meantime, the College encourages all its members to ensure that they are working within their scope of practice and that their facilities meet all appropriate standards.

## **(2.) Guidelines, policies and positions from the College**

The following three documents have recently been added to the College website:

### **Guidelines on the Availability of Physicians After Hours**

[www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/after-hours-guidelines.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/after-hours-guidelines.htm)

Approved by Council on December 7, 2007, this revised document replaces "Guidelines On The Availability Of Physicians After Hours" last approved by Council on December 13, 2002.

### **Joint Position Statement on Patient Safety**

[www.cpsns.ns.ca/2008-joint-patient-safety.pdf](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/2008-joint-patient-safety.pdf)

A joint statement from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia, the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia, the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists and the Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists.

### **Block Billing Policy**

[www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/block-billing-policy.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/publications/block-billing-policy.htm)

As recommended by the Executive of the Provincial Medical Board (predecessor of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia) on December 22, 1995.

These documents are available on the College website at the addresses above or by contacting the College.

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

The following summaries describe cases examined by the College's Investigations Committees. This information is provided for educational purposes. All names and certain details have been changed to preserve confidentiality.

### **Importance of clear and defined professional boundaries**

Dr. White is a 39-year-old female physician in practice for eight years. Dr. White started seeing the Brown family in May 2006. On several occasions, Dr. White saw Mr. Brown and Mrs. Brown separately or together with their 10-year-old son. In March 2007, Dr. White saw Mr. Brown for problems related to his mood and marital problems. Between March and September 2007, Dr. White saw Mr. Brown five times for marital problems.

Dr. White and the Brown family lived in the same neighborhood. Both families had a son on the same soccer team. Often Dr. White and Mrs. Brown would take turns taking the children to soccer practice and participated together in team fund raisers. The two families had traveled together to an out-of-town soccer tournament in August 2007.

On September 6, 2007, Mr. Brown moved out of the family residence into his own apartment. On September 27, 2007, Mrs. Brown filed a complaint with the College alleging that Dr. White was having an affair with her husband at the same time that she was seeing the family as a physician and involved in their son's soccer team.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Dr. White denied having an intimate relationship with Mr. Brown. Dr. White admitted to seeing Mr. Brown during the summer of 2007 for marital counseling. She did not feel that there was a conflict between seeing Mr. Brown as a patient for counseling and her relationship with the family outside the office. Dr. White stated she thought very highly of the family and really wanted to help Mr. Brown with his problems.

The Investigation Committee reviewing the complaint found no evidence to support the allegation that Dr. White and Mrs. Brown had an intimate relationship. The Committee was concerned by the lack of professional boundaries that Dr. White had with the Brown family. The Committee was of the opinion that Dr. White had both a real and perceived conflict by providing counseling to Mr. Brown, while at the same time she had a personal relationship with the Brown family. The Committee believed it would have been prudent for Dr. White to have referred Mr. Brown to another professional for marital counseling.

The Committee therefore issued a **Counsel\*** to Dr. White to maintain clear and defined professional boundaries at all times in a doctor-patient relationship.

\* A Counsel is advice as to how to improve the physician's conduct or practice. A Counsel is kept in the physician's file but is not disclosed to the public, on Certificates of Standing or to other licensing authorities without the physician's consent.

### **Complaint alleges benefits denied due to physician's comments**

Mr. Brown is a 48-year-old man who has worked in fishing industry since age 16. He has been a patient of Dr. White for 15 years. Dr. White is a 55-year-old physician in practice for 26 years. Dr. White saw Mr. Brown for back injuries on several occasions in 2005 and 2006. Throughout this time, the injuries had resolved and Mr. Brown was able to continue his employment. On June 3, 2007, Mr. Brown saw Dr. White after he fell at home on a wet garage floor. Dr. White diagnosed Mr. Brown with low back pain and recommend anti-inflammatory medication and physiotherapy. Mr. Brown attended physiotherapy on June 7, 2007 and began treatment on June 16, 2007.

Mr. Brown attended physiotherapy for three sessions between June 21 and July 15, 2007. During this time he was unable to work due to back pain. On July 18, he saw Dr. White and stated that his back was not getting better. Dr. White examined Mr. Brown and recommend that he continue with physiotherapy for a further month. Mr. Brown attended physiotherapy on one more occasion, then failed to attend two more appointments and was discharged by the physiotherapy office. Physiotherapy assessment notes for all of Mr. Brown's appointments were sent to Dr. White.

On September 4, 2007, Mr. Brown visited Dr. White and stated that he wanted to apply for the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), as he was still in pain and had no further disability insurance with his employer. At this point, Mr. Brown was on medical employment insurance that was about to end. Dr. White examined Mr. Brown and told him that it was his opinion that Mr. Brown would get better with more physiotherapy. Mr. Brown stated that physiotherapy did not help him and that he wanted to apply for CPP. Dr. White said it was his experience that people with problems similar to Mr. Brown's were often denied CPP. Mr. Brown indicated that he wanted to apply for CPP nevertheless and left the application for Dr. White to complete. Dr. White completed the forms and included a copy of the physiotherapy assessments and the dates in which Mr. Brown attended his office with his diagnosis. Mr. Brown picked up the forms on September 8, 2007.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

On November, 1, 2007, Mr. Brown filed a complaint with the College, alleging that because of Dr. White's comments on the CPP application, he was denied benefits. Mr. Brown alleged that Dr. White did not believe that he was in pain and that Dr. White had lied on the application. In his response, Dr. White stated that he believed Mr. Brown was in pain and had hoped that physiotherapy would relieve the pain and help Mr. Brown return to work. Dr. White stated that he did not make any judgmental comments regarding Mr. Brown's eligibility for CPP and had only supplied the information requested, including the physiotherapy notes.

The Investigation Committee reviewing the complaint received and reviewed Dr. White's medical record of Mr. Brown and a photocopy of the CPP application that Dr. White had retained on the record. Based on the documentation reviewed, the Committee was in agreement that Dr. White had provided the necessary information requested on the CPP application and did not make any comments regarding Mr. Brown's eligibility. The Committee found Dr. White's notes to be thorough and very neatly written. For these reasons, the Committee was of the opinion there were no grounds to take any further action regarding the complaint. The complaint file was closed.

#### **(4.) CAPP Update**

The deadline for applications to sit the next iteration of the Clinician Assessment for Practice Program (CAPP) examinations is **March 31, 2008**. Anyone interested in sitting the exams is reminded that they first must receive a referral to the CAPP Program via the College or another medical regulatory body. An on-line credentials review is available at [www.cpsns.ns.ca/Registration/credentials-review.htm](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/Registration/credentials-review.htm).

The next CAPP examinations are scheduled to take place Monday, June 9, (Therapeutics), and Tuesday, June 10 (OSCE), 2008.

Further information and contacts are available on the CAPP website at [www.capprogram.ca](http://www.capprogram.ca).

#### **(5.) Professional development resources available online**

The Department of Continuing Medical Education at the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine publishes extensive lists of educational and professional development resources that are available to family physicians and specialists.

Included are programs addressing clinical competency, psychosocial management of patients, stress management, practice management and communications.

For more information, visit "Educational and Professional Development Resources" at <http://cme.medicine.dal.ca/resources.htm>.

#### **(6.) Physicians asked to participate in chronic disease self-management survey**

Are you a physician concerned with the number of patients you have on your caseload with chronic medical conditions? Are you concerned about helping them improve their quality of life, along with reducing health care costs?

If so, the Rehabilitation Psychology Research Lab at the University of New Brunswick would like you to participate in a 10-15 minute online survey to assist in understanding the patient and practitioner factors that contribute to the successful promotion and use of chronic disease self-management. A link to the survey and further information are available at: [www.cpsns.ns.ca/UNB-physician-survey.pdf](http://www.cpsns.ns.ca/UNB-physician-survey.pdf).

### **(7.) Dr. Kenneth Rockwood to discuss population ageing and health care**

As part of its Excellence in Health Series, the School of Health Administration at Dalhousie University will present "Population Ageing and Health Care: Do We Have Enough Older People to go Around?" by Dr. Kenneth Rockwood.

This presentation will take place on Tuesday, February 19, 2008 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Admiral Room at the Lord Nelson Hotel in Halifax.

For more information, visit <http://schoolofhealthservicesadministration.dal.ca>.

### **(8.) IWK returns to routine newborn screening process**

Since late December 2007, the IWK Health Centre has resumed performing newborn screening analysis. As a result, the IWK has returned to collecting specimens as early as 16 hours of age. Physicians with questions about IWK newborn screening analysis should contact Pam Gregory, Newborn Screening Coordinator, at (902) 470-7998.

### **(9.) 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).

### **(10.) How to Contact the College**

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

Mailing Address:  
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia  
Suite 200, 1559 Brunswick St.  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2G1