

Registrar's message: navigating the ongoing journey towards cultural safety and humility



In February 2022, the College Board endorsed a new practice standard: *Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility, and Anti-racism* in collaboration with the BC College of Nurses and Midwives. This was just one step in an ongoing journey to end Indigenous-specific racism in health care, where patient experiences continue to demonstrate its prevalence.

One case was recently shared in a [report](#) dedicated to the memory of Heather Winterstein, an Indigenous woman who died in an Ontario hospital. The report asserts that the circumstances of Heather's health issues and lifestyle factors were the lens through which staff assessed and judged her, missing the symptoms and signs of critical illness. Like so many similar reports, a number of useful and actionable recommendations were gifted to Niagara Health, including that they allocate time, resources and energy to instill cultural safety throughout the organization's staff, physicians and volunteers.

In BC, health authorities, health regulators and Doctors of BC all signed the Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility with First Nations Health Authority. As part of our

commitment to continue this work, the College is assessing registrants' awareness of the *Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility and Anti-racism* practice standard and seeking to understand how they are applying the core principles in practice. Several research methods have been used.

Registrant survey

- 532 registrant responses

When asked about the awareness of the practice standard, 57% of respondents indicated that they were aware of the practice standard. Of those, only 48% had read or referenced it.

When asked about applying the standard in practice, 35% of respondents indicated that the standard aided them in providing culturally safe and humble care for Indigenous patients.

When asked which principles in the standard were helpful, the most common response was that the standard prompted deeper self-reflection on current practices.

When asked which barriers get in the way of applying the principles in the standard, the most common responses were limited time and resources, systemic issues, and difficult team dynamics.

Registrant interviews

Six registrants who expressed an interest in this process agreed to participate in a one-on-one interview with an external consultant to discuss in more detail how they are applying the principles in their practice.

Focus groups

Two focus groups were held: one with non-Indigenous registrants and one with Indigenous registrants, aided by an Indigenous physician and knowledge keeper.

Topics discussed included:

- barriers in the system that may prevent registrants from applying the principles in practice
- opportunities to further promote awareness of the standard
- ideas for additional supports and resources for registrants

Next steps

The College is expecting a final report from the consultant shortly that will summarize the findings from the interviews and focus groups and offer recommendations for increasing awareness about the College's expectations related to cultural safety and humility.

As the new registrar and CEO, I am committed to this journey and look forward to meeting with health leaders at FNHA, and the VPs of Indigenous Health in all health authorities to collaborate on initiatives that promote culturally safe care for Indigenous patients across the province.

The practice standard and learning resources

Providing anti-racist, culturally safe and humble care requires continuous work. As a reminder, the College has resources available to enhance learning.

- [Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility and Anti-racism practice standard](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Learning resources](#)
- [Educational videos](#)

Patrick Rowe, MD, CCFP (EM), FCFP

Registrar and CEO

Comments on this or any other article published in the College Connector can be submitted to the communications and public affairs department at communications@cpsbc.ca.

Introducing the College's new deputy registrar, Dr. Chris Hall



In March, Dr. Michael Murray retired from his position as deputy registrar after almost ten years leading the accreditation programs and Physician Practice Enhancement Program. We are grateful for his leadership and wish him much enjoyment as he embraces new adventures in retirement.

The College is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Christine (Chris) Hall, MD, MSc, FRCPC, to the position of deputy registrar, accreditation programs and quality assurance.

Dr. Hall has more than 20 years of medical leadership experience. After initiating her career as a nurse in Calgary, Dr. Hall attended and completed medical school graduating with her MD in 1996, and was accepted into the emergency medicine program at the University of Calgary. She attained her FRCPC in emergency medicine in 2001 and completed an MSc in clinical epidemiology in 2002.

While living in Calgary, she held several medical leadership positions while also working in emergency medicine before moving to Victoria in 2006. Since then, she has practised as an emergency department physician and served as a department head, chief of staff, medical director in medical affairs, and most recently as executive medical director, quality, patient safety

improvement and experience, and acting vice president, medicine for Island Health. In addition to her nursing and medical experience, Dr. Hall is also a certified board director.

Community-based office sign requirement



Per section 7-5 of the College Bylaws, registrants practising in a private office, clinic, or facility are required to post a sign or provide written notice to patients that the physicians and surgeons practising in that location are licensed and regulated by the College.

As the College launched a new logo in April 2023, registrants who have posted an office sign with the now-retired crest are required to replace it with an office sign with the new College logo. Registrants can download an updated sign by logging in to the [College website](#).

Note: In multi-registrant clinics, the medical director is responsible for ensuring the sign is posted in a clinic or facility setting.

For more information, please see the [frequently asked questions](#).

Compliance with section 7-5 of the College Bylaws is confirmed by the Physician Practice Enhancement Program (PPEP) during an office assessment.