

LICENSING POLICY

BC Physician Integration Program

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirement for internationally trained physicians (ITPs) to complete the BC Physician Integration Program (BC-PIP) to practise medicine in British Columbia. The purpose for completion of this program is to support physicians trained outside of Canada to safely and effectively navigate the unique administrative, cultural, and legal complexities of the British Columbian health-care landscape.

Definitions

Internationally trained physician (ITP)

A physician who completed their postgraduate training outside of Canada and is new to independent practice in BC and Canada.

BC Physician Integration Program (BC-PIP)

A program offered through the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Medicine, Division of Continuing Professional Development (UBC CPD).

Background

Section 38 of the *Health Professions and Occupations Act (HPOA)* states:

- 38 A person is not eligible to be issued a licence, or to have a licence varied, renewed or reinstated, unless the person
- (a) is fit to practise, having regard to the person's
 - (i) education, training, experience and other qualifications, and
 - (ii) competence, capacity and other relevant factors, and
 - (b) will practise the designated health profession in an ethical manner, having regard to the person's entire disciplinary record, character, past conduct and other relevant factors.

Section 43(3) of the *HPOA* states:

- (3) A registrar may issue, with or without limits or conditions, a licence or health profession corporation permit to an applicant who meets the applicable eligibility standards and the conditions, if any, set under the bylaws.

Section 52(2) of the *HPOA* states:

- (2) A licence committee may attach limits or conditions to a licence, including as follows:
- (a) for the purposes of being satisfied of the matters referred to in section 38;
 - (b) in the case of a provisional licence,
 - (i) despite a designation regulation that would permit otherwise, restricting the title that may be used by the licensee, restricting the health services that may be provided by the licensee or requiring the licensee to be supervised or under the direction of another licensee when practising the designated health profession,
 - (ii) imposing requirements that must be met for the licensee to become eligible for a licence that is not a provisional licence, and
 - (iii) providing that the provisional licence expires at the end of a period that is shorter than a general period provided for under the bylaws.

Section 6-70(f) of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC (CPSBC) Bylaws (the Bylaws) states:

6-70 Subject to these Bylaws and the terms of a disciplinary order, if any, the registrar or Licence Committee may impose limits or conditions on a licence for any reason, including lack of currency in practice, when issuing, varying, renewing, or reinstating a licence, including but not limited to one or more of the following:

[...]

- (f) a requirement to successfully complete examinations, assessments, education and/or training or such other measures satisfactory to CPSBC.

BC Physician Integration Program

BC-PIP was launched in 2008 and supports the successful integration and transition of ITPs licensed in the full and provisional classes to practise medicine in BC.

BC-PIP's programming and implementation is provided through UBC CPD. UBC CPD works with a variety of key partners to co-design the program. The BC-PIP is made up of six online modules and a one-day virtual conference session. These sessions include topics such as:

- the landscape of health care in BC and Canada
- introduction to Indigenous health
- ethics, liability, communication and professionalism
- transition to Canadian practice
- physician health
- billing in BC
- opioid prescribing in the context of toxic drug supply
- continuous learning and practice improvements

- practice management

The BC-PIP provides essential training in areas that are not typically covered in medical school but are vital for practice in BC:

- **Medical Services Plan (MSP) billing:** learning how to navigate the complex MSP fee-for-service or alternative payment models to ensure practitioners are paid correctly and legally.
- **Third-party organizations:** understanding how to interact with WorkSafeBC (workplace injuries) and ICBC (motor vehicle accidents), which involve specific reporting and legal requirements.
- **Practice management:** guidance on setting up an office, managing staff, and maintaining medical records according to BC standards.

BC has a diverse population with specific historical and social contexts. The program emphasizes:

- **Indigenous cultural safety:** a core requirement focusing on the commitment to truth, reconciliation, and providing anti-racist, culturally safe care to Indigenous, First Nations, and Métis people.
- **Canadian social norms:** helping physicians adjust to the nuances of Canadian patient-doctor relationships, which may be more collaborative or less hierarchical than in other global regions.

Policy

An ITP with less than 12 months of full time (or equivalent) independent practice in Canada who is granted a full or provisional licence in BC will be required to successfully complete the BC-PIP within one year of obtaining licensure in BC, or as determined by the registrar.

Effective July 6, 2026