



College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

Practice Standard

Laser Safety for Physician Practice

Effective:	July 1, 2008
Last revised:	September 1, 2017
Version:	3.0
Next review:	September 2020
Related topic(s):	Complementary and Alternative Therapies

A **practice standard** reflects the minimum standard of professional behaviour and ethical conduct on a specific topic or issue expected by the College of all physicians in British Columbia. Standards also reflect relevant legal requirements and are enforceable under the [Health Professions Act](#), RSBC 1996, c.183 (*HPA*) and College [Bylaws](#) under the *HPA*.

Registrants may seek advice on these issues by contacting the College and asking to speak with a member of the registrar staff, or by seeking medical legal advice from the CMPA.

PREAMBLE

This document is a practice standard of the Board of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia.

COLLEGE'S POSITION

Physicians who use a laser device for patient care and/or treatment must have completed relevant medical education and training in advance.

Physicians must either apply the laser device themselves, or following assessment of the patient, they may order a registered nurse to perform the laser procedure, or they may employ an unlicensed person to perform the laser procedure (e.g. a medical office assistant or technician).

Physicians must ensure that the registered nurses in their offices who perform laser procedures do so in accordance with their regulated scope of practice and possess the competencies required to carry out this activity. Physicians who employ unlicensed persons to perform laser procedures must ensure that the unlicensed person has documented relevant training and possesses the requisite knowledge, skill and competence to safely perform the laser procedure. Physicians must define the degree of medical supervision required, and must perform annual competency assessments of each individual performing laser treatments and must maintain a record of those assessments.

Physicians must use lasers in compliance with existing standards and occupational health and safety regulations, and must keep current with the standards as they are updated from time to time. Physicians must refer to [CSA Z386-2014 Safe use of lasers in health care](#), and [ANSI Z136.3-2011 Safe use of lasers in health care](#), since both the CSA Z386-2014 and the ANSI Z136.3-2011 are referenced in the [WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) Regulation – Part 7 Division 3 Radiation Exposure](#) and are current at the time of this standard.

In addition to the above-mentioned standards, physicians may find the [Laser Safety for Physician Practice Summary](#) helpful as a resource.