



## [Health Monitoring \[1\]](#)

College registrants (physicians, postgraduates and medical students) have both ethical and legal responsibilities under the Canadian Medical Association's *Code of Ethics and Professionalism* and the *Health Professions Act (HPA)* to notify the College when they, or their colleagues, have health conditions that might impact the quality of medical care provided to patients.

**Note:** The legal duty to report also applies to registrants of other Colleges governed under the *HPA*, e.g. BC College of Nursing Professionals, College of Pharmacists of BC, and College of Dental Surgeons of BC. Section 32.3 of the *HPA* specifically requires registrants to notify the College if a registrant is hospitalized for a psychiatric or addiction disorder. This legal obligation requires that the admission must be promptly reported and also that a second, more detailed report must be provided to the College upon discharge.

If the College's health monitoring department is made aware that a registrant has a mental or physical health condition which may impair their ability to safely practise medicine, the health monitoring department may advise the registrant to temporarily withdraw from practice while receiving treatment and change their licensure status to temporarily inactive - health leave.

Registrants who change their status to temporarily inactive - health leave will be identified as temporarily inactive under their registration status in the physician directory on the College website. The reasons for the change in status will not be identified to the public.

Registrants who are temporarily inactive - health leave are not licensed to practise medicine, including the practice of non-clinical medicine, providing medical advice and prescribing medications.

Upon return to active licensure, registrants may be required to consent to health monitoring for a period of time. This occupational health monitoring is similar to the model of care physicians provide for other patients with safety-sensitive occupations, such as airline pilots.

Health monitoring reports must confirm that the registrant

- continues to be a patient of the treating physician,
- is compliant with treatment advice, and
- continues to be medically fit to practise medicine.

Health monitoring is intended to be non-intrusive. Occasionally, and in specific situations, more detailed health reports may be requested. The duration of health monitoring depends on the advice of the treating physician(s), but is also at the discretion of the College.

The College's approach to health issues is a collegial one, recognizing that some physicians find it difficult to be patients or to recognize that personal illness may necessitate a reduction in workload or a withdrawal from practice. These situations can be complicated by negative financial or insurance issues.

Registrants can be assured that employees in the health monitoring department will be compassionate and sensitive when discussing confidential health issues. To speak confidentially with a College health monitor or the deputy registrar, registrants can call 604-733-7758 extension 2630. Some registrants find it useful to have legal advice too, and may consider contacting the Canadian Medical Protective Association at 1-800 267-6522.

### **Where to go for support in dealing with health issues?**

Registrants may wish to contact the Physician Health Program (PHP) under the administration of Doctors of BC who can provide additional support and resources to registrants and their families facing health challenges. The PHP holds information in confidence, except as required by law, and will assist anonymous callers.

24-Hour Helpline: 1-800-663-6729 or 604-398-4300

<http://www.physicianhealth.com> [2]

**For more information on changing a registration status to temporarily inactive, click [here](#) [3].**

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**Links**

[1] <https://www.cpsbc.ca/for-physicians/health-monitoring>

[2] <http://www.physicianhealth.com>

[3] <https://www.cpsbc.ca/files/pdf/PSG-Changing-Status-to-TI.pdf>