

Standard of Practice for Sexual Boundaries with Patients, Former Patients and Interdependent Persons

Consultation to Members and Stakeholders

INTRODUCTION

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba (CPSM) is launching a consultation process to seek feedback from its members, related stakeholders and the general public, regarding boundary violations – sexual involvement with patients, former patients, and interdependent persons.

As societal values evolve, CPSM must reconsider whether the public interest and patient safety is being served with the appropriate standards of practice and procedures regarding boundary violations – sexual involvement with a patient. CPSM Council created a Working Group to review this issue and provide recommendations. The Working Group provided a report with recommendations, including a recommended new Standard of Practice.

In establishing this as a Strategic Organizational Priority, Council recognized CPSM's mandate to protect patients and ensure that they have access to medical care without encountering inappropriate sexual comments or any type of sexualized physical contact, ranging from an otherwise legitimate examination conducted in an inappropriate manner to abuse or assault.

THE STANDARD

This draft Standard of Practice will set CPSM's minimum compulsory requirements for all CPSM members to follow.

This draft Standard of Practice:

- a) sets out the mandatory requirements of members for establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries with their patients, former patients and persons who are interdependent with their patients;
- b) prohibits sexual contact and sexualized interactions of any kind between members and their patients;
- c) identifies the spectrum of conduct and behaviours which are considered to be sexual contact and sexual interactions;
- d) strictly limits sexual contact and sexualized interactions with former patients and persons who are interdependent with a member's patient;
- e) provides important context for understanding what is required of members to maintain strict sexual boundaries with their patients, former patients and persons who are interdependent with their patients; and
- f) complements all other relevant standards of practice and the CMA Code of Ethics and Professionalism.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

All CPSM Standards of Practice are distributed to the membership for consultation. This draft Standard of Practice is being distributed not only to the members, but also to the public, including key stakeholders, for consultation.

Hearing and receiving diverse input from the CPSM membership, the public, other regulated health professions, and other stakeholders will create a standard that is stronger, comprehensive, and a much better document to ensure patient safety and balance differing societal concerns.

The consultation will be for the period commencing October 16, 2020 to December 16, 2020. The feedback from the consultation will be reviewed, and where appropriate, incorporated into a new Standard of Practice. It is proposed that CPSM Council will then be asked to approve the final version.

It is expected the consultation will elicit significant interest from many patients, members, and stakeholder organizations and diverse opinions will arise. We would like to hear your views during the consultation period to ensure this Standard is the very best to protect the public.

The Report provides context to the draft Standard of Practice and all are encouraged to read the report to understand the draft Standard of Practice.

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE STANDARD OF PRACTICE

To create the strongest, most comprehensive, Standard of Practice all views are welcome. Given the importance of this issue, feedback is requested in writing and can be emailed to: cpsmsopboundaries@cpsm.mb.ca

Every individual's response will be anonymized and included in an appendix to a report that may be accessed on the CPSM website, unless you indicate you do not wish it to be made public even though anonymous. CPSM looks forward to hearing from you.

Deadline for feedback is December 16, 2020

The Report will provide context for the draft Standard of Practice. Both are available at these links.

[Draft Standard of Practice for Sexual Boundaries with Patients, Former Patients and Interdependent Persons](#)

[Working Group Report](#)