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## Physicians' Personal Health Information

The personal health information of a physician may be requested by the College to determine the appropriate steps in the monitoring of a physician with a health concern that could impact practice. This information is generally gathered only with the consent of the physician. There may be occasion when statutory authority to gather such information is used by the College in order to assess and address risk to the public or to determine if formal assessment of capacity under Section 118 of the Health Professions Act is required.

When a physician is a patient, they must have reasonable protection of their health information just as any other patient. This right must be balanced with the need to protect the public and the patients under the care of the physician. A certain amount of personal health information can be required to assess the risk and determine the next steps. This information includes diagnoses, treatment information and recommendations, compliance to treatment, and fitness to practice.

The personal health information of a physician is kept securely in the College's offices. This record is not part of the overall physician file but there is a notification on the physician file that a file exists. Access to this information is limited to the Physician Wellness Department within the College under the direction of the Assistant Registrar.

Access to this information within the College is on a need to know basis and is only provided to the Registrar or Assistant Registrars in other departments when knowledge of the health condition could influence the management of another matter.

### Release outside of the College

The personal health information of physicians received by the Assistant Registrar is never released publicly. It does not appear on practice permits, nor is it available on the College website.

Certificates of Standing or Certificates of Professional Conduct can be requested by other medical regulatory bodies or by hospitals or health regions. If a physician is monitored for a health condition this will be reflected on the Certificate of Standing. Details of the health condition are not provided on the Certificate of Standing. Other bodies may request additional information about the health condition, but this is only released with the consent of the physician.

### Release to Department Heads, Colleagues or Administrators

Personal health information is only released to other third parties with the consent of the physician. Only if patients were seen to be at risk, and the physician was not cooperative in withdrawing from practice, would any information be released without consent. In these circumstances, only minimal information would be released to ensure either the safety of patients or the physician themselves.

There may be provisions in Medical Staff Bylaws which require the physician to provide information to other health authorities, i.e. Alberta Health Services.