



## POLICY

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### The Practice of Telemedicine

<b>STATUS:</b>	APPROVED
<b>Approved by Council:</b>	September 2010
<b>Reviewed &amp; confirmed:</b>	November 2016
<b>To be reviewed:</b>	November 2018

#### 1. Definition of Telemedicine:

Based upon the interpretation by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan of **The Medical Profession Act, 1981**, the College adopts the following definition for telemedicine:

*The provision of a medical opinion concerning diagnosis or treatment of a patient in Saskatchewan by a physician located outside of Saskatchewan as a result of transmission of individual patient information by electronic or other means from within Saskatchewan to such physician or his or her agent; or*

*The provision of treatment to a patient in Saskatchewan by a physician located outside of Saskatchewan as a result of transmission of individual patient information by electronic or other means from within Saskatchewan to such physician or his or her agent.*

Based upon the College's interpretation of **The Medical Profession Act, 1981**, the College accepts that the practice of telemedicine is the practice of medicine in Saskatchewan.

Based upon the College's interpretation of **The Medical Profession Act, 1981**, the College accepts that a physician who is physically located in Saskatchewan, but who provides telemedicine services to patients located outside of Saskatchewan is practicing medicine in Saskatchewan.

Based upon the interpretation by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan of **The Medical Profession Act, 1981**, the College accepts that the following is not the practise of medicine in Saskatchewan:

- a) the provision of telemedicine services in an emergency;
- b) treatment provided in consultation with a Saskatchewan physician who has an ongoing relationship with the patient and who has agreed to supervise the patient's treatment, including use of any prescribed medication; and,
- c) services provided without any form of compensation.

## 2. Licensure to practise medicine in Saskatchewan:

The College accepts that a physician who practises telemedicine as defined above is practicing medicine in Saskatchewan and is required by **The Medical Profession Act, 1981** to be licensed with the College of Physicians and Surgeons to do so.

Based upon the College's interpretation of **The Medical Profession Act, 1981**, the College accepts that a physician who is physically located in Saskatchewan, but who provides telemedicine services to patients located outside of Saskatchewan is required by **The Medical Profession Act, 1981** to be licensed with the College of Physicians and Surgeons to do so.

The College accepts that an expedited form of licensure should be available to physicians who are fully-qualified physicians, who meet the criteria for full registration in Saskatchewan, who are licensed without restrictions in another province and who only practise telemedicine in Saskatchewan on an occasional basis.

Such physicians will be required to meet the same requirements for CMPA membership or other insurance coverage as apply to other physicians licensed to practise in Saskatchewan.

## 3. Standards of practice of telemedicine

The College expects physicians who practise telemedicine in Saskatchewan to meet the same standards of practice, whether the physician is located within or without Saskatchewan.

The College expects that physicians who provide telemedicine services should, wherever possible, ensure that the care provided to the patient through telemedicine will provide the same level of care to the patient as would be provided if the physician was physically present.

The College expects that physicians who provide telemedicine services should provide all relevant information to the patient about the nature of the telemedicine services that are provided, including the nature of the limitations on those services, if any, and any extra risks that may be inherent in the provision of those services.

## 4. Participation in Quality Assurance Mechanisms of the College

The College expects physicians who practise telemedicine in Saskatchewan, other than physicians who are licensed on an alternative form of licensure to provide telemedicine services to a limited number of patients, to participate in all quality assurance activities established by the College in the physicians' area of practice.

## **5. Saskatchewan-licensed physicians who practise telemedicine outside Saskatchewan**

The College recognizes that a Canadian regulatory authority may, or may not, require physicians to become licensed in their provinces or territories in order to practise telemedicine with patients located in that province.

The College expects physicians that it licenses to meet the licensing requirements of another province or territory, if any, in order to practise telemedicine with patients in that province or territory.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons considers it unprofessional conduct for a physician whom it licenses to practise telemedicine in another province or territory unless the physician meets the licensing requirements of that province or territory.

## **6. Complaint investigation**

The College accepts the responsibility to investigate complaints about the conduct of physicians that it licenses who practise telemedicine in another Canadian province or territory.

If a complaint is received about a physician who is registered in Saskatchewan, and in another province or territory, the College will discuss the investigation with the regulatory authority in the other province or territory where the physician is registered, and will attempt to co-operate to allow the investigation to be primarily conducted by the most appropriate regulatory authority. The Saskatchewan College will co-operate with the other regulatory body, including sharing the information from the investigation to the extent it is legally permissible to do so;