

# Becoming a CPSA Councillor



College of  
Physicians  
& Surgeons  
of Alberta

## About the College of Physicians & Surgeons

The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) is responsible for:

- ✦ licensing physicians;
- ✦ establishing and monitoring standards of practice and conduct;
- ✦ resolving complaints against physicians; and
- ✦ providing leadership and direction on issues of importance to the health care system such as access to services, quality improvement, patient safety and privacy of health information.

Our programs and services support our mission “to serve the public and guide the medical profession”. We are funded primarily through physician licensing and other fees; regional health authorities and government grants also pay for specific programs and services.

The Council is the governing body of the College. Councillors, therefore, set the broad strategic direction of the College, identifying specific outcomes that allow the organization to meet its mission and goals.

### Who is on the CPSA Council?

CPSA Council consists of physician and public members, and representatives from Alberta’s medical schools. Physician members of Council are elected by their medical colleagues while public members and medical school representatives are appointed. Each Council member is elected to a three-year term and a President is selected from amongst Council members for a one-year term.



# The Role of the CPSA Councillor

The overall responsibility of Council members is to provide governance to the organization and to fulfill the mandate set out by legislation. The primary function under that governance umbrella is to make policy decisions that help the College to meet its moral and fiduciary obligations to the public.



Council members also engage in the following:

- ✦ review, approve, and monitor the College's corporate objectives;
- ✦ ensure that these objectives are consistent with the strategic direction of the organization, and reflect the beliefs and values of the College and its members; and
- ✦ appoint the College Registrar (the CEO) who is responsible for the implementation of the strategic plan and the overall administration of the organization. Council members are not involved in program implementation or day-to-day operations of the College.

Being a member of the CPSA Council comes with certain responsibilities. Council members are expected to bring both knowledge about the health care system and an understanding of the organization's mission when deliberating policy.

Those who are elected to Council must:

- ✦ be prepared to read and understand all material provided prior to Council meetings so they can knowledgeably participate in the discussion;
- ✦ be thoughtful, objective and focused;
- ✦ maintain confidentiality regarding Council materials;
- ✦ be responsible stewards of the medical profession;
- ✦ act as an ambassador for the College;
- ✦ be focused on quality improvement; and
- ✦ be a role model for other physicians.

## Time Commitment

Council meetings are held over a two-day period four times a year at the CPSA offices in Edmonton. The first day is a closed-door meeting while the second day is open to the public and media. Meetings are held in March, June, September and December and generally run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Additional preparation time is required to review all agenda material prior to the meetings.

## Committee Work

Council members may also be required to sit on Council committees. These committees meet anywhere from four to 12 times per year and the time and expertise required for membership varies. Council committees include (but are not limited to):

- ✦ **Executive Committee** – Evaluates issues and prepares agendas for Council meetings.
- ✦ **Finance and Audit Committee** – Monitors and makes recommendations to Council on matters related to the College's operating budget, including revenue, expenditures and investments.

Councillors may also be asked to sit on subcommittees related to facility accreditation, physician performance, or physician related complaints.

## Remuneration

When participating in Council-approved meetings, Council members are paid a per diem rate plus travel, accommodation and meal expenses. The per diem rate is not meant to be an exact compensation for lost earnings, but rather reflects a reasonable payment to Council members for their time and expertise.

## Council Election Process

- ✦ **September** - Nomination package sent to Alberta physicians.
- ✦ **October** – Nominations close.
- ✦ **October** – Ballots distributed to all physicians.
- ✦ **November** – Voting closes; ballots are counted.
- ✦ **December** – Results ratified at CPSA Council meeting. All candidates are notified.
- ✦ **January** – New Councillors join CPSA Council.

### *What's in it for me?*

Medicine is a self-regulated profession in Alberta and physicians can only administer their own licensing and standards as long as public trust is maintained. If the public doubts our professionalism, public confidence will be eroded and the future of medicine's privilege to self-regulate will be in jeopardy.

We believe that by having public, physician and University representatives on our Council, we can continue to provide a well-balanced and thoughtful approach to the business of medical regulation.

By representing the interests of the public and physicians, you can bring a valuable perspective to the Council table and have an important impact on the future of medicine in Alberta.