



**JAN. 15  
RENEWAL  
DEADLINE**

For penalty-free joint renewals of your Annual Medical Licence and Professional Medical Corporation registration.

**FEB. 6**

After this date, barring an extension by the Supreme Court of Canada, it will no longer be illegal for a physician to assist a patient to die, in Canada.

## HIGHLIGHTS: Q4 Council Meeting

As members are aware, as of February 6, 2016, it will no longer be illegal for a physician to assist a patient to die, providing specific conditions are met. The December 12 fourth-quarter College Council meeting focussed on the College's draft guidelines for Physician-Assisted Dying in this province. See box below for details.

Highlights of the meeting also included:

1. Introduction of the new Council members (see p. 2).
2. Discussion and acceptance of the 2016 College Operational Plan and Budget.
3. Reports from College Committees: Licensing and Registration, Complaints, Quality Assurance.

### IN THE COMMUNITY

The 2015 Council quarterly meetings were held in these St. John's venues:

St. John's Long-Term Care Facility  
Medical Education Centre  
NL Housing & Homelessness Network  
Apothecary Hall

## NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: MARCH 12

### URGENT ISSUE

#### PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED DYING: THE NL SITUATION

The Supreme Court of Canada's decision (*Carter v. Canada*) set the February 6 deadline now looming for legalization of Physician-Assisted Dying (PAD). The decision answered some questions but also left ambiguities, which regulatory bodies have been grappling with since.

If the February 6 date is not extended—which the federal government has requested—then these are some of the steps that may occur next:

- amendment of the federal Criminal Code
- new provincial legislation
- amendment of existing legislation connected to insurance, vital statistics, other regulatory bodies (pharmacists, for example)

The College is aware that physicians must be prepared for patients' requests for assisted-dying services, that the new situation has implications for all physicians, and that the public also has many questions. The College's policy on PAD will provide guidance about qualifications, skills and training, process and procedure, objection and referral, communication, and documentation. After Council approves the College's PAD policy, it will review it in six months and then annually for several years. College members will be encouraged to provide practical and practise-related comments about the application of the policy.

Look for additional information in the New Year.

## IN OUR NEWS

### “PHYSICIANSAPPLY.CA” UP & RUNNING

Physicians interested in obtaining a licence to practise in this province can now apply online. The College launched its new application process on December 9. Paper forms will be accepted until March 31—then all applications will be processed through [physiciansapply.ca](http://physiciansapply.ca).

### IMPROVING TURNAROUND TIME: CERTIFICATES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Since setting new standards for processing Certificates of Professional Conduct this year—to between 10 and 15 business days—the College has charted marked improvements in turnaround times. Of the 95 requests for these Certificates received since mid-August, only 7 took longer than 15 days, and the quickest was turned around in 1 business day.

### NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

The new Council members Elected on December 4, 2015, are:

Dr. Elizabeth Bannister

Dr. Jim Hickey

Dr. Peter Seviour

(for the cities of St. John’s and Mount Pearl)

Dr. Robert Forsey

(for the remainder of the province)

### RETIRING MEMBERS

The College extends sincere appreciation to Drs. Vinod Patel and Bill Moulton, who retired from the College Council following the recent elections.

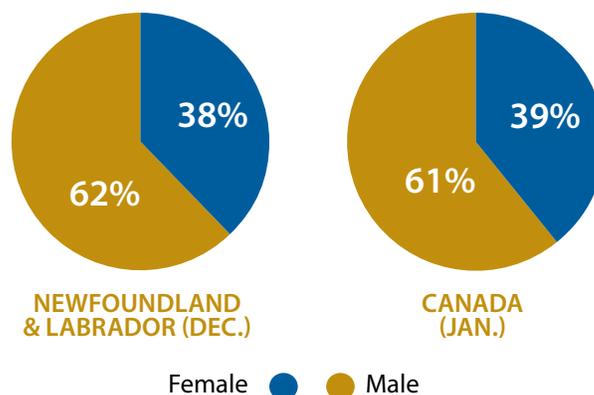
### Mandate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador

“The college is authorized to regulate the practice of medicine and the medical profession in the public interest.”

As established by the *Medical Act*, 2011

### 2015 SNAPSHOT:

#### LICENSED PHYSICIANS BY GENDER, NL & CANADA



## ON OUR RADAR

### HOW TO REGULATE PHYSICIANS IN A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT?

**A NEW REALITY:** Physicians trained in foreign countries and within other cultures are increasingly moving to, and applying to practise in, different jurisdictions during their careers—jurisdictions that may have distinctly different medical standards and practices.

**A RELATED CHALLENGE:** As the UK’s Niall Dickson has put it, the challenge for regulatory bodies is to create a model “in which regulators are committed to preventing harm, promoting and defending standards of good practice, and seeking ongoing assurance that every physician is competent to practise safely and effectively.”<sup>1</sup>

**FINDING A WAY FORWARD:** The main arenas for addressing the challenges of this situation are at the national and international levels. In this country, a key player is the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC). FMRAC held a symposium on the topic at the end of October. Speakers discussed what is known about where physician revalidation is working and not working, looked at the effectiveness of tools now used to assess skills and some approaches to ongoing professional development, ongoing challenges and question, and next steps to be undertaken.

<sup>1</sup> “The Challenges Facing Medical Regulation Across the Globe” by Niall Dickson, 2015, *Journal of Medical Regulation*, 101, p. 7. Copyright 2015 by the Federation of State Medical Boards.