

College of Hearing Aid Practitioner's

Of Alberta

Annual Report

2013-2014

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Going into the 2103 – 2014 year CHAPA has seen a lot of changes. The first being the appointment of the president due to the sudden stepping down of the previous president. Due to timing of this there was no time for an election to take place. As the Vice-President was appointed into this position, there were a few other positions within council that also required members to be appointed into to ensure that council could function in an appropriate manner.

This has been a year of change in a variety of areas. Council positions changing, changes to public members and changes to all of our governing documents. We started off by addressing our Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics, which with the assistance of a consultant affiliated with the College through the Continuing Competence Program has made these changes a reality. Policies have been updated, bylaws are under review and potential rewrite, and regulations are also being addressed as to what changes if any will need to occur to ensure that we have consistency throughout all documents.

I am pleased to have been a part of this very busy and productive year, and moving forward hope to continue in the position of President in an elected capacity.

PUBLIC MEMBERS REPORT

College of Hearing Aid Practitioners of Alberta

Public Members Report -

At the end of June 2014 we said goodbye to our Public member Marilyn Thornton as her term of service had concluded and she did not wish to continue as a public member.

About the same time we received approval from the Minister of Health for the appointment of a new public member with experience in governance. We are very excited for this appointment and to date have had her present at a meeting, but has been providing input in relation to the running of the College.

We are currently still awaiting appointment of a second public member. CHAPA did agree to the suggestion put forth from the Ministry of Health for the second public member but at this time have not received official notification of their appointment to our college.

It is due to the changes that have occurred throughout the course of this year that we have no official report from a public member at this time to include in the report.

College of Hearing Aid Practitioners of Alberta

Background information on the College

The College of Hearing Aid Practitioners of Alberta was declared to have College Status by the Government of Alberta in April 2002. Prior to its declaration as a College, the Hearing Aid Practitioner Profession in Alberta was governed by the Alberta Hearing Aid Practitioners Association. (AHAPA). A need was seen by the Council of the AHAPA to ensure that those individuals practicing as Hearing Aid Practitioners in Alberta were licensed and regulated in a capacity that would ensure a high level of educational background, proof of competency, and means for ensuring that there would be remedy against individuals who chose to practice outside of a regulatory body. The safety of the public, it was felt, could best be protected if that regulatory body fell under the legislation of the Health Professions Act. It was also felt by the AHAPA that regulation of its members under the HPA would bring an increased understanding and recognition of the Profession to the public.

Activities that the The College engages in presently include but are not limited to:

- 1) Testing and assessment of human hearing, compilation of the testing data to determine type of loss and/or whether further medical investigation of hearing loss is required.
- 2) Prescribing and fitting/dispensing of hearing aids including ongoing service, adjustment and maintenance of the hearing aids dispensed
- 3) Recommendation of assistive listening devices.
- 4) Counseling and working with Hard of Hearing clients and family members to ensure that they may derive the best benefit possible from the amplification dispensed. Counseling may also include assistance in teaching clients alternative methods used to enhance communication and referral to sources such as Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services which may be of benefit to the client.

Governance

A. Regulations

In the 2013-2014 year, there were no formalized changes submitted for consideration of revisions to the Regulations.

The College did engage in discussion with Alberta Health and Wellness with respect to setting a date to discuss possible changes in regulations which have been identified through our process of updating our governing documents. At this time it has been determined that the meeting with Alberta Health and Wellness to discuss these changes be put on hold until we have completed our revision process.

B. Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics:

In June of 2014 CHAPA hired the services of a consultant to assist in the development of the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics based on the feedback received from Alberta Health and Wellness on our last submission of these documents. Since their finalization and approval of council in July 2014 the new Standards of Practice have been submitted to the Minister and Stakeholders for consideration and feedback.

The Code of Ethics also went through a revision and has also been submitted to the Minister and Stakeholders for consideration and feedback.

C. Bylaws

No changes were made to the By-laws of the College in the 2013/2014 year. There is likely to be changes coming forward due to the review of all governing documents of CHAPA. Once this review has been completed the appropriate bylaw changes will be brought forward to CHAPA council and membership. This is anticipated to have had full review and approval by April of 2015.

D. Other Initiatives

New initiatives are coming forward from the Continuing Compence Program, and are described in further detail within that area of the report.

INFORMATION ON REGULATED MEMBERS

A) Applications for Registration:

**The total number of new registrants in the 2013/2014 registration year: 16
Breakdown of routing of applicants as follows:**

Number of Graduates who became licensed as regulated members from Nov 1, 2013
– October 31, 2014: 12

- From Grant MacEwan University Hearing Aid Practitioner Program: 12
- Licensing of individuals transferring licenses interprovincially: 2
- Licensing of individuals applying from out of country: 2

Applications for Renewal of Practice Permits/Registration:

Total number of renewal for application forms sent out: 209

This registration year for the College of Hearing Aid Practitioners of Alberta commenced upon March 1/2013 and ended February 29/2014. Therefore Renewal of Registration forms for the 2013/2014 year were sent out as of Dec 31/2013. 209 total membership renewals were sent out. This total includes both regulated and non-regulated members.

B) Number and types of regulated members in the Registration category

For historical reference purposes, as of March 31, 2013 the regulated membership consisted of:

172 Members on the General Register (Category RHAP), 5 of which registered as Inactive
13 Members on the Temporary Register (Category HAP)
18 Student Interns (SI's)

Pre-renewal membership data: As of Jan 21, 2014 (which represents a snapshot of the membership closer to the time of sending out the upcoming year annual registration renewal forms) there were:

167 Members on the General Register, membership category RHAP

5 Members on the General Register (Inactive),

14 Members registered on the Temporary Register, membership category HAP

19 Student Interns (membership category SI)

Post renewal membership data: As of March 31, 2014 the regulated membership consisted of: 203 members (Total membership including non-regulated members: 207)

167 Members on the Active General Register (RHAP)

5 members on the General Register (Inactive)

13 Members on the Temporary Register, membership category (HAP)

18 Student Interns (SI)

Number of Practice Permits restricted, denied or not renewed in each registration category:

Practice Permits Denied: 0

Practice Permits Restricted: 0

Practice Permits not renewed: 6, (4 on the General Register, 0 on the Temporary register, 2 on the Student/Intern Register)

Reasons for non- renewal:

Retired: 1

Moved to another Province: 2

Licensed in Alberta and another Province who chose not to renew Alberta licenses: 0

Renewed as an Associate Member: 1

Reason for non- renewal of practice permit; unemployed: 1

Reason for non-renewal of practice permit; unknown: 1

Historical information indicating trends in past number of years:

The trend indicates a slow increase in the number of regulated members per year over the past 8 years. The majority of regulated members are those who have graduated from the Grant MacEwan University Hearing Aid Practitioner program. There has been a history of an average of 1.5 regulated members who become licensed using out of country credentials annually. The largest reason for non-renewal of regulated member registration is attributable to members leaving is to register in another province, most notably to British Columbia.

Number of retirees, inactive members and other types of *unregulated members*: As of October 31, 2014: (pertaining to the 2013/2014 year)

Retirees: 4

Inactive members: 6

Student members: 2

Interim members (members who have graduated from a program of study but are not yet licensed): 10

Associate members: 3

Honorary members: 2

Public members: 1 (The College is awaiting the appointment of a new Public member)

Reviews by Council

Total number of reviews requested: 0

C) REGISTRATIONS ON THE COURTESY REGISTER

To date, the College of Hearing Aid Practitioners has not made use of a Courtesy Register. Thus:

Total number of members on the Courtesy Register over the year: 0

Number of days/months (amount of time) that the members were registered on the Courtesy Register: 0

Reasons for registration on the Courtesy Register: None

APPROVAL OF TRAINING PROGRAMS AND EXAMINATIONS

A. Identification of training programs and/or examinations to be approved:

No new training programs or examinations have been approved.

B. Initiative for reviewing training programs and/or examinations:

The College continues to have concerns regarding the only approved Hearing Aid Practitioner program of study in Alberta. Currently the only approved program of study for the Hearing Aid Practitioner profession is the 2 year diploma course offered at Grant MacEwan University. There have been no changes in this area from previous reports.

C. Major consultations with stakeholders:

Major consultations with stakeholders have not been undertaken.

C) Training programs and or examinations that have been approved or have had their approval removed.

As outlined above.

CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAMS

A. The Status of the Continuing Competence Program

No significant changes have been made to the Continuing Competence Program. Participation in the Program is entering into the sixth year with regulated members now familiar with the requirements. The program is set up in a manner wherein opportunities to advance continuing education via the Continuing Competence website may be developed and offered to members. This is a consideration that may be explored and implemented in order to use the Continuing Competence resources in an enhanced manner.

B. The Continuing Competence Program's Description and Outcome:

1) The CC Profile was compiled to address competencies applicable to the Hearing Aid Practitioner Profession. Specifically the competencies identified, categorized and organized into competency bands. These bands are:

- a) Hearing Health Knowledge
- b) Safety
- c) Clinical Practice and Procedures
- d) Hearing Systems
- e) Communications and Interpersonal skills
- f) Office and Practice Management
- g) Professionalism

Each of these bands, is further broken down into a series of competency "cluster" containing elements and sub-elements.

The Continuing Competence Program is a system of assessing, maintaining, enhancing and monitoring ongoing knowledge, skills, attitude and judgment of hearing aid practitioners in the province of Alberta. The CCP is a way of ensuring a high-level of expertise, competence and ethical behaviour in performing the job. The CCP is mandated by Alberta's *Health Professions Act*.

Every year, members of the college are required to reflect on their skills and knowledge and complete a self-assessment of practice. Members use this information to analyse their needs and develop learning objectives. They then carry out learning activities throughout the year to meet the objectives. Members share their completed Learning Plans with the Continuing Competence Coordinator through the dedicated and secure Continuing Competence website. Practitioners are also asked to share their thoughts on

their completed learning activities anonymously with other members; this has helped create a useful tool for future learning opportunities and resources. New members, and members who have been absent from the profession for an extended period of time, are also required to complete two mandatory quizzes to confirm they are familiar with college bylaws, policies and procedures.

Outcomes of the Continuing Competence Program:

Outcomes are monitored in two ways: on or before the deadline, the Continuing Competence Coordinator reviews each member's submission to make sure it complies with the program guidelines, and an annual member audit is also conducted.

Members who do not complete the program requirements by the deadline without an approved request for extension are fined and given 30 days to complete the program. The registrar is provided a list of non-compliant members; the registrar will not issue practice permits until the program requirements are met and the fine has been paid. If 30 days passes and the member is still non-compliant, the employer and AADL will also be notified that the member is not able to practice in the province.

A minimum of ten percent of the membership also undergoes an audit process annually in the spring. Members are randomly selected to provide details about their learning plan activities. Members have 30 days to supply the information to the Continuing Competence Program Coordinator. Again, members who do not comply with the audit process at the end of 30 days face a fine and revocation of practice permit.

19 members did not complete their Continuing Competence requirement by the 2013 deadline of December 31st. Two of those members had requested and were granted an extension to January 15, 2014. Fines were recommended for 11 of the remaining members; members for whom fines were not recommended included those with incorrect contact information and those who experienced confirmed website malfunctions.

In May 2014, 23 members were requested to send 2013 information to be audited. One member did not complete the audit due to incorrect contact information. The remaining 22 were compliant within the allotted time frame.

Initiatives

Council has been working to retool many of the college's governance and policy documents. Once those changes have been implemented the Competency Coordinator will be working closely with stakeholders to develop a jurisprudence exam for all members. This will replace the existing mandatory quizzes and all members will be required to complete it. Rollout of a jurisprudence exam is anticipated in 2015 or 2016. With the assistance of funding from WorkSafe Alberta, an Occupational Health and Safety handbook and four short presentations were created specifically for hearing aid practitioners in Alberta. These are available to members on the Continuing Competence website. Two speakers also presented at the Annual General Meeting in October of 2013 and Western Canadian Symposium in April of 2014 on the topic of Occupational Health and Safety.

Our college is currently partnering with four others in Alberta to create awareness around Bullying in the Workplace for our combined memberships. Rollout of the final product is expected in 2015 with resources for our members expected to be made available on our Continuing Competence website next year.

The college has undertaken to move the completion date of the program to November 30th from December 31st. Members have been informed of the change and the new deadline will be enforced for November 30th, 2015. As well, fines and deadlines for completion of other outcomes have been fleshed out, and books and records retention policies have been delineated.

Outcomes of the practice visits if required by the Program:

Practice visits do not form part of the Continuing Competence Program mandate at this time.

Compliance /non-compliance with the Continuing Competence Program, including the actions taken by the College:

Described in the above paragraph “Outcomes of the Continuing Competence Program”.

COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE

A) Complaints

Number of new complaints received in the year and sources of complaints:

In the October 2013 - October 2014 year, there was one new complaint. Source: an audiologist against an RHAP.

Number of complaints carried over from the previous year.

Two complaints were carried over from the previous year. One file was closed March 20, 2014. One is in the process of going to Alternate Complaints Resolution.

Number of complaints handled during the year:

A total of 3 complaints were handled during the year.

Number of Complaints still open:

Two complaints remain open.

Report if the College is using Section 118 of the HPA to determine regulated members fitness or ability to continue practicing:

Not applicable

B) Disposition of Complaints

Number of complaints dismissed, redirected elsewhere or resolved informally:

One complaint was dismissed.

Number of complaints referred to the Alternative Complaints Process:

One.

Number of complaints referred to an investigation:

The new complaint August 2014 and the carry-over from June 2013 were both investigated by the Complaints Director.

Number of complaints referred to a hearing:

One was referred to a hearing but is now going to Alternative Complaints Resolution.

C) Alternative Complaints Resolution Process (ACR)

Number of complaints addressed through the ACR process and the outcomes:

One - no outcome yet.

Number of complaints ratified by the Complaint Review Committee

None

Number of complaints where the settlement was amended before being ratified by the Complaint Review Committee:

None

Number of complaints the Complaint Review committee refused to ratify:

None

D) Investigations

Number of investigations that were being undertaken:

One new investigation was undertaken.

Number of investigations that were completed and their outcomes:

The one new investigation that was undertaken this year has been completed.

E) Hearings

Number of Hearings held:

No hearings were held.

Number of complaints addressed through a hearing and the outcome:

N/A

Number of open and closed hearing and the reasons why the hearings were closed:

N/A

F) Appeals

Number of appeals by complainants regarding the decision to dismiss a complaint and the outcomes:

None

Number of appeals to the Council by the investigated person or the Registrar and the outcomes:

None

Number of appeals to the court by the investigated person and the outcomes:

None

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Attached.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE COLLEGE

A) Approvals under Section 27 of the HPA

The College does not set professional fees on behalf of its members.

B) Other Activities

There are no other activities of significance to report.