

College of Hearing Aid Practitioner's

Of Alberta

Annual Report

2014-2015

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2014/2015:

- Updates completed to Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, Bylaws, and Policies
- Meeting to start the process of updating CHAPA Regulations
- Meeting with AIT representatives from Alberta and Saskatchewan to address some labour/mobility concerns
- Meeting with AADL to open doors for further discussion relating to contract
- Governance training for all Council and Committee Chairpersons
- Review of current entrance Competency Exam, theory part, performed by an outside psychometrics company. Changes suggested being acted upon and moving forward.
- Initiating process of development of a jurisprudence program and exam for members
- Change in policy to better accommodate foreign applicants ability to enter into the profession
- Joint cooperative with 4 other Colleges for the development of an OHS based program on Workplace Bullying, that will be available in the form of vignettes on the website
- Upgrade of the CHAPA website to be more administrative and user friendly
- Acceptance of 2nd Public Member, still waiting official appointment

As is evident in the list of highlights above CHAPA Council, Committees and Members have been working hard over the past year to ensure that CHAPA is moving forward as a College to achieve and maintain mandates that are set out by the HPA.

We are always looking at and for new initiatives that will ensure that our members are acting in compliance and have the public's best interest, and safety in mind. We will continue to set our sights high to challenge our members to be the best they can in our field of expertise.

I enjoy the challenges that the position of President presents and look forward to continuing to serve in this capacity for another year.

Respectfully submitted

Teresa Blimkie - President CHAPA

PUBLIC MEMBERS REPORT

Public Member Report to CHAPA – October 2015

I joined the CHAPA as a Public Member representative in July 2014 and have attended all meetings in person or via teleconference.

As a Public Member, my role is to seek assurance that Practitioners carry out their Mission, that is:

To promote and develop the hearing health profession in order to provide exemplary service and maintain consistently high standards for the greatest benefit of the general public.

I have been impressed with the efforts of the Council in fulfilling this mandate.

As well, I have seen the Council and Association strengthen and then follow through on their commitment to make meetings more formal. The Council follows a structured process in conducting its meetings and again, all members should be congratulated for their efforts

Finally, the Council has spearheaded some important work in terms of reviewing and making learning and training courses more relevant and perhaps rigorous.

In summary, it is a privilege to be involved with CHAPA. I would welcome an opportunity to complete some targeted activities.

Respectfully Submitted

Patricia Hull

September 25, 2015

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 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 2014-2015 year, there was a meeting with government officials to start the process of reviewing and rewriting sections of our current regulations. Some of the changes that were discussed included possible changes to membership categories and the inclusion of practice visits.

We are currently waiting to hear further word of where our request is in the process and if an additional meeting will be needed for further discussion.

B. Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics:

Our Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics that were approved by council in 2014, were submitted for review and feedback and it was deemed that no further changes at this time were required.

C. Bylaws

The fall of 2014 moving into 2015 CHAPA underwent a major revamping of the bylaws to bring them into congruency with our other governing documents. In March of 2015 the proposed bylaw changes went before the membership for review and vote. Aside from section 6 of the bylaws, all were approved. The final discussion and vote of approval for section 6 of the bylaws by the membership will be occurring on October 17, 2015. It was deemed that nothing actually needed to be changed in this set of bylaws, rather it was more a matter of misinterpretation of the statements on the part of some members.

D. Other Initiatives

CHAPA hired a psychometrics group (Alpine Testing Solutions) to do an assessment of our current competency exam, theory part. It was determined that there were a number of areas which required attention. A number of members of CHAPA attended a workshop on how to write better test questions and since July 2015, CHAPA has been moving forward with further development and rewriting our theory exam. In this process a means in tracking the results of individual questions and their effectiveness will also be implemented.

INFORMATION ON REGULATED MEMBERS

A) Applications for Registration:

The total number of new registrants in the 2014/2015 registration year: 19
Breakdown of routing of applicants as follows:

Number of Graduates who became licensed as regulated members from Nov 1, 2014
– October 31, 2015: 19

- From Grant MacEwan University Hearing Aid Practitioner Program: 12
- Licensing of individuals transferring licenses inter-provincially: 3
- Licensing of individuals applying from out of country: 3
- Return to Profession – Leave of Absence: 1

Applications for Renewal of Practice Permits/Registration:

Total number of renewal for application forms sent out: 224

This registration year for the College of Hearing Aid Practitioners of Alberta commenced upon March 1/2014 and ended February 28/2015. Therefore Renewal of Registration forms for the 2014/2015 year were sent out as of Dec 31/2014. 224 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, 2014 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 Nov 30, 2014 (which represents a snapshot of the membership closer to the time of sending out the upcoming year annual registration renewal forms) there were:

168 Members on the General Register, membership category RHAP

8 Members on the General Register (Inactive),

16 Members registered on the Temporary Register, membership category HAP

24 Student Interns (membership category SI)

Post renewal membership data: As of March 31, 2015 the regulated membership consisted of: 219 members (Total membership including non-regulated members: 225)

165 Members on the Active General Register (RHAP)

14 members on the General Register (Inactive)

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

22 Student Interns (SI)

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

Practice Permits Denied: 0

Practice Permits Restricted: 1

Practice Permits not renewed: 12, (5 on the General Register, 3 on the Temporary register, 4 on the Student/Intern Register)

Reasons for non- renewal:

Retired: 2

Moved to another Province: 7

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

Renewed as an Associate Member: 0

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

Reason for non-renewal of practice permit; unknown: 2

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 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, 2015: (pertaining to the 2014/2015 year)**

Retirees: 2

Inactive members: 9

Student members: 0

Interim members (members who have graduated from a program of study but are not yet licensed): 25

Associate members: 4

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

INFORMATION ON 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 Hearing Aid Practitioner program of study in Alberta. There are no anticipated changes to MacEwan University curriculum, although there has been a change in the structure of the administration which we will be finding more about at the AGM in October 2015

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.

Currently there are three approved two year Canadian programs of study: MacEwan University, Conestoga College and George Brown College. Foreign applicants who wish to register with CHAPA require education minimally equivalent to the MacEwan University Hearing Aid Practitioner program.

Examinations:

There are three examinations new members are required to complete before becoming fully Regulated Registered Hearing Aid Practitioner (RHAP) Members:

CHAPA Theoretical Examination

CHAPA Practical Examination

NBC-HIS Examination

The first two exams are created and governed by CHAPA. This spring, CHAPA hired Alpine Test Solutions to review the Theoretical Examinations and make suggestions to improve the questions. CHAPA volunteers subsequently attended a weekend seminar with Alpine in July. The volunteers learned how to write better questions and reviewed the Theoretical Examinations for consistency with Alpine's suggestions.

The NBC-HIS exam is governed by NBC-HIS. It has come to the committee's attention that NBC-HIS requires exam applicants to have a minimum of two years of full-time dispensing experience. Many of our members who are writing the exam have less dispensing experience than the requirement. If NBC-HIS begins to enforce their own requirement, it may have a significant impact on our new graduates.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Spiller CHAPA Registration Committee Chair

CONTINUING COMPETENCE PROGRAMS

During the 2014/2015 operational year for CHAPA there were no significant changes to the Continuing Competence Program.

The program did see a change in the chairperson of this committee as the previous chair moved into a new position within CHAPA.

Looking forward to the 2015/2016 operational year, the program is looking at developing a jurisprudence module that will be delivered the Continuing Competence site. At this time the details of what this program will look like, how it will be administered and the scoring of the exam are all to be determined.

Members continue to be in compliance with the annual requirements of this program.

Respectfully Submitted

Karen Scheffelmaier - Continuing Competence Chairperson

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 seventh 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. In 2014, it was determined that a change in the completion date for submission to the program was needed to assist in the renewal of practice permit process. The new completion date for 2015, which came into effect in 2014 is November 30.

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 informed of non-completion and expected to have all submissions in place no later than December 31. The registrar is provided a list of non-compliant members; the registrar will not issue practice permits until the program requirements are met. 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.

Initiatives

As the updates to bylaws and policies have now been completed, CHAPA is now starting to move forward in the development of the Jurisprudence exam. Rollout of a jurisprudence exam is anticipated in 2016.

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.

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

COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE

A) Complaints

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

In the October 2014-October 2015 year, there was one new complaint (January 16, 2015).

Source: a consumer against RHAP.

Number of complaints carried over from the previous year:

One complaint was carried over from the previous year. This has gone to an alternate complaints resolution and has been resolved.

Number of complaints handled during the year:

A total of 2 complaints were handled during the year.

Number of complaints still open:

None

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:

None

Number of complaints referred to the Alternative Complaints Process:

None

Number of complaints referred to an investigation:

The January 2015 complaint was investigated by the Complaints Director

Number of complaints referred to a hearing:

None

C) Alternative Complaints Resolution Process (ACR)

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

None

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.