



OMFC REGISTRATION REVIEW

College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba Final Registration Review Report (2013)

OFFICE OF THE MANITOBA FAIRNESS COMMISSIONER

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Introduction

This Final Registration Review Report presents the results of the Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner's (OMFC) registration review with the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba (CPM) as of March 2013.

Registration reviews are conducted as part of the Fairness Commissioner's mandate to review the registration practices of regulatory bodies subject to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act (Act)*.

The purpose of a registration review is to enable the Fairness Commissioner to determine a regulator's compliance to the Act and to make recommendations to improve compliance. Compliance refers first and foremost to the fairness of assessment and registration practice, with particular attention drawn to the need for the fair consideration of internationally educated applicants. It also refers to the co-operation of the regulator with the Fairness Commissioner.

The Act stipulates that a registration review for any given regulator is to be undertaken at times specified by the Fairness Commissioner. The content of a registration review is to include an analysis of the relevance and necessity of registration requirements, the timeliness of decision making, the reasonableness of fees and the registration of internationally educated individuals. This may involve the review of any third parties employed in the assessment and registration process.

The OMFC's review process culminates in a Final Registration Review Report, complete with an Action Plan from the regulator. This report is a public document submitted to the Province's Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism and posted on the OMFC's website.

Review Process

For the purposes of the 2012/13 registration review cycle, regulatory bodies with few internationally educated applicants and/or that rely heavily upon third parties for their assessment process participated in a self-assessment review process.

The review process had several steps: agreeing to a review schedule, arranging for the involvement of key staff and council members, participating in a two-day self-assessment workshop, drafting an action plan and finalizing the plan in consultation with the Fairness Commissioner.

The process was designed to support meaningful reviews that concretely identify fairness issues and lead to progressive change.

The Fairness Standard and Self-Assessment Workshop

As a first review encounter with the OMFC, regulatory practice was evaluated against a single broad fairness standard as defined by the OMFC's *Fairness Standard and Criteria Document*:

Dedicated and fair practices are applied for the assessment and registration of internationally educated applicants. Policies and procedures are documented, consistently followed and periodically reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.

This fairness standard covers the full spectrum of fair assessment and registration practice and is defined with multiple elements and criteria in the *Fairness Standard and Criteria Document*.

Over the course of a two-day self-assessment workshop, the standard was explained and regulators examined their practice in light of the various elements and criteria involved. Special emphasis was placed on the importance of clear, complete and accurate assessment and registration information, fair third party assessment practice and the consideration of qualifications acquired through professional work experience. Solutions and best practice models were presented as regulators drafted action plans to address issues of concern.

Action Plan & Compliance Statement

Shortly after the workshop, regulators submitted board-approved Action Plans to the OMFC. Regulators met with the Fairness Commissioner to discuss the plans and in some instances, revisions were made.

The Action Plan contained in this report has been reviewed by the Fairness Commissioner and is comprised of actions needed to address fairness concerns and improve compliance to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*.

Concluding this report, the Fairness Commissioner's Compliance Statement provides comment on the suitability of the regulator's Action Plan and the overall compliance of the regulator's registration practice.

Overview of the Assessment and Registration Process of the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba (CPM) regulates the practice of physiotherapy in Manitoba under the authority of *The Physiotherapists Act* (C.C.S.M. c. P65) and Regulation (204/2001). Only CPM registered physiotherapists are authorized to practise physiotherapy in Manitoba and to use the title "physiotherapist" or any variation of this professional designation.

Physiotherapists plan, administer and evaluate treatment programs and provide maintenance and preventive health-care programs. They may also consult, educate, advise and participate in research. They are employed in hospitals, clinics, schools, rehabilitation centres and extended care facilities. Many physiotherapists work in private practice.

Provincial immigration statistics indicate that 30 internationally educated physiotherapists immigrated to Manitoba from 2005 to 2011.

Qualifications

Chief qualifications required to register as a physiotherapist with the CPM include possessing a physiotherapy degree or diploma approved by CPM'S Council, and pass the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (National Body) two part Physiotherapy Competency Examination (National PCE Exam).

Internationally educated physiotherapists (IEPs) with academic credentials not recognized by CPM'S Council must undergo a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) assessment executed by the National Body to determine substantive equivalence of qualifications.

Assessment and Registration Process

There are several key steps in the assessment and registration process. Namely:

Apply to the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (National Body)

Applicants submit a completed application form and an application assessment fee of \$775.00 to the National Body with the following documents. If documents are not in English, notarized translations are required.

- original or notarized certificate(s), degree(s)
- official transcripts
- course syllabi (i.e., detailed description of courses studied)
- document request form completed by your educational institution
- current resumé, (optional)
- notarized copy of thesis information, if completed
- two copies of a recent passport photograph (taken within the last six months)

- notarized birth certificate
- notarized marriage certificate (if applicable and only if your name is different in the documents submitted)
- copy of your passport information sheet and picture
- copy of permanent resident card or record of landing certificate
- evidence of language proficiency in English or French (several specified language tests with specified tests scores are accepted)

The National Body assesses the application to verify documentation and determine whether the applicants are eligible for Part 1 of the National PCE Exam. Applicants are informed of their credential assessment result within six weeks of application.

Applicants with international academic training not recognized by the National Body must undergo a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). A new, revised substantive equivalence process is under development and expected in the spring of 2013. The new process will no longer require a line by line review of the applicant's educational program.

If the PLAR assessment does not provide evidence of qualification, applicants may have to complete remedial coursework to become eligible for the Part 1 of the National PCE Exam.

Remedial coursework is offered at the University of Manitoba, School of Medical Rehabilitation and on-line courses are available through Athabasca University. Those with major gaps in qualification are provided with information about alternative careers and physiotherapy educational opportunities.

National PCE Exam Part 1

To write the National PCE Exam Part 1, applicants complete and submit an application and pay a fee of \$775.00 to the National Body. Part 1 of the National PCE Exam is a multiple choice format, 200-question, four-hour exam that tests for knowledge of physiotherapy and the ability to solve clinical problems using clinical scenarios. Exams are scheduled six times a year in major cities across Canada, including Winnipeg. The National Body offers a 'Candidate Handbook' and 'Orientation Resource' that describe the exam and provide exam preparation material.

Applicants are allowed five attempts to pass the exam and the National Body offers advice to those who fail. Once the applicant passes the exam, they have up to two years to pass Part 2 of the National PCE Exam. Extensions are possible at the discretion of the PCM.

College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba: Exam Candidates & Supervised Practice

Passing Part 1 of the National PCE Exam allows the applicant eligibility to register with the PCM as an Exam Candidate and have the opportunity to practice in Manitoba under supervision.

For those that choose or have opportunity to work under supervision, it is their responsibility to find a suitable fieldwork placement. A general hospital setting is

preferred as this can provide exposure to the main areas of clinical practice. A registered physiotherapist must sign a 'Supervised Practice Agreement' and complete a CPM performance evaluation form.

Exam candidates must register with CPM, submitting a completed 'Application for Registration Form' and paying a \$431.00 registration fee. The CPM requires the following documentation from the applicant:

- PCE Part 1 Exam Certificate
- Criminal Record Check valid within six months
- Employer Letter of Offer*
- Supervised Practice Agreement*
- Evidence of Professional Liability Insurance Coverage (\$5 million minimum)*

**For supervised practice exam candidates only.*

The CPM informs applicants within a week of their Exam Candidate decision.

CPM's Prior Learning Assessment

The CPM has a policy that enables it to waive the examination requirement for internationally educated physiotherapists who are "considered beyond entry level and due to employment circumstances, may not be practicing on the general public or may be working in an area of practice where the applicant has gained expertise." In this instance, the CPM may grant an exemption from the Part 2 of the National PCE Exam.

The National PCE Exam Part 2

Applicants, now registered with the CPM as Exam Candidates, must apply to the National Body to write Part 2 of the National PCE Exam. This involves completing a registration application form and paying a \$1,200.00 exam fee.

PCE Part 2 is a five to six hour, objective structure clinical exam. The exams tests physiotherapy knowledge, skills and abilities, including communication skills and professional behaviour. The exam is offered once a year in Winnipeg. Some jurisdictions offer the exam twice a year.

The National Body provides written exam results to applicants within 12 weeks of sitting the exam. Applicants that fail are provided detailed feedback and must retake the exam within two years. Three exam attempts are permitted.

Register with the CPM

The final step involves registering with CPM for active practice. Applicants are required to register within 30 days of receiving their PCE Part 2 National Exam results. A \$575.00 prorated registration fee and a PCE Part 2 exam certificate must be submitted. The CPM takes up a week to process these applications and inform applicants of its decision.

Appeal Process

If an application for registration is denied or conditioned, applicants may appeal to the Council. A written appeal must be filed within 30 days of the decision, specifying reasons.

The Council will schedule an appeal hearing within 90 days. The appellant may appear with counsel. A member of the board of assessors who is also a member of the council may participate in the hearing but will not vote on a decision. The Council has 90 days following the hearing to make a decision and another 30 days to inform the appellant of that decision.

Time and Cost

The time and cost to register will vary according to the circumstances of the applicant. Major factors impacting the length of the process include the need for remedial university coursework, the ability of the applicant to secure employment and the ability to successfully complete the Part 2 of the National PCE Exam. The CPM estimate a 30-month time period for many IEPs. Specific costs can be seen below. Without considering associated costs; e.g., remedial coursework, translation of documents and exam rewrites, the minimal, direct cost of the assessment and registration process is \$ 2,835.00.

2012 Fees:

College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba

Initial processing fee	\$35.00
Annual Practising Register Fee	\$575.00


Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators

PCE Part 1	\$825.00
PCE Part 2	\$1,400.00
Withdrawal Fee	Minimum of \$300.00
Re-Scoring	\$100.00
Administrative Reconsideration	\$300.00
Appeal	\$300.00


College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba's Action Plan


In response to the Compliance Issues identified, the College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba proposed the following action plan as of March 2013. The plan is reprinted under 'CPM's Planned Actions' column in the table below.


The CPM's Action Plan will form the basis of its relationship with the OMFC moving forward. The plan is monitored by the OMFC and will be tracked in the 'Completion Date' box of the Action Plan as it comes to fruition. As the report will be available online, this allows any interested party to see the progress to date.

Compliance Issues	CPM's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Element: Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.</p> <p>Criteria: Qualification requirements and the criteria used to assess qualifications</p> <p>Findings: Alliance Exam handbook has lots of information available. However, relevant information to meet this criteria does not appear until page 6 of the handbook - not a clear direct path to this specific criterion</p> <p>Required physiotherapy qualifications are not mentioned on CPM IEPT portal on website.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and revise new IEPT portal on website 2. Discuss findings with Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (Alliance). 				

Compliance Issues	CPM's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Element: Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.</p> <p>Criteria: Financial support opportunities</p> <p>The CPM IEPT portal on the website is brand new and has only been "live" for a week or two. However, we have just learned that the Credentials Recognition Program, which is mentioned as a resource on the portal, is now defunct. Instead, a new loan program has just been announced.</p>	<p>The plan is to update the information on our website to reflect these changes. First step will be to get more information, and if possible, a link to the loans program.</p>	<p>✓</p>			

Compliance Issues	CPM's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Element: Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.</p> <p>Criteria: A realistic sense and time range of how long the entire process often takes</p> <p>Findings: The CPM website (IEPT portal) has this information. However, there is a lack of information on the Alliance website about timeframes for the entire process. Also, information about registering for the examination is complicated and could be simplified by using a step by step approach.</p>	<p>To notify the Alliance of need for transparency about timelines, especially about how long the entire process can take. Information about the registration process should be easier to navigate and will be brought to their attention.</p>				

Compliance Issues	CPM's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Element: Applicants are provided clear, complete and accurate information about assessment and registration process.</p> <p>Criteria: Information provided about opportunities for general and occupation-specific upgrading.</p> <p>Findings: Information about general and occupation-specific upgrading is not available on either the CPM or Alliance website. There is information on the Alliance website (in the FAQ's section) about what alternatives exists if an applicant is unsuccessful in credentialing as a physiotherapists or is unable to pass the competency exam (PCE). There is no mention of the Bridging programs that exist in Ontario or Alberta.</p>	<p>CPM will add to the IEPT portal, information about alternative career paths and also information about Bridging Programs. Will discuss with the Alliance, adding information and links to Bridging Programs on their website.</p>				

Compliance Issues	CPM's Planned Actions	Short Term Less than 3 months	Medium Term 3 months to 1 year	Long Term 1 year or more	Completion Date
<p>Element: Documentation requirements are reasonable. Alternative documentation opportunities are available and explained to applicants.</p> <p>Criteria: Criminal records policy is warranted and clearly explained.</p> <p>Findings: Criminal record checks are a registration requirement according to the Regulations. However, there is no policy in place to clearly explain why we have this requirement and how we would handle various levels of criminal activity. For example, CPM would probably “forgive” driving infractions, petty theft or drug charges from years ago. However, there is no policy in place and therefore no information to applicants.</p>	<p>Council needs to discuss criminal record checks, seek a legal opinion and develop a policy. Following that, information needs to be posted on the CPM website to explain the requirements purpose and what CPM does with this information.</p>				

Fairness Commissioner's Statement of Compliance

The College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba's Action Plan is a constructive response to the registration review. The College's proposed actions will support fairer practice and improve its compliance to *The Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act*.

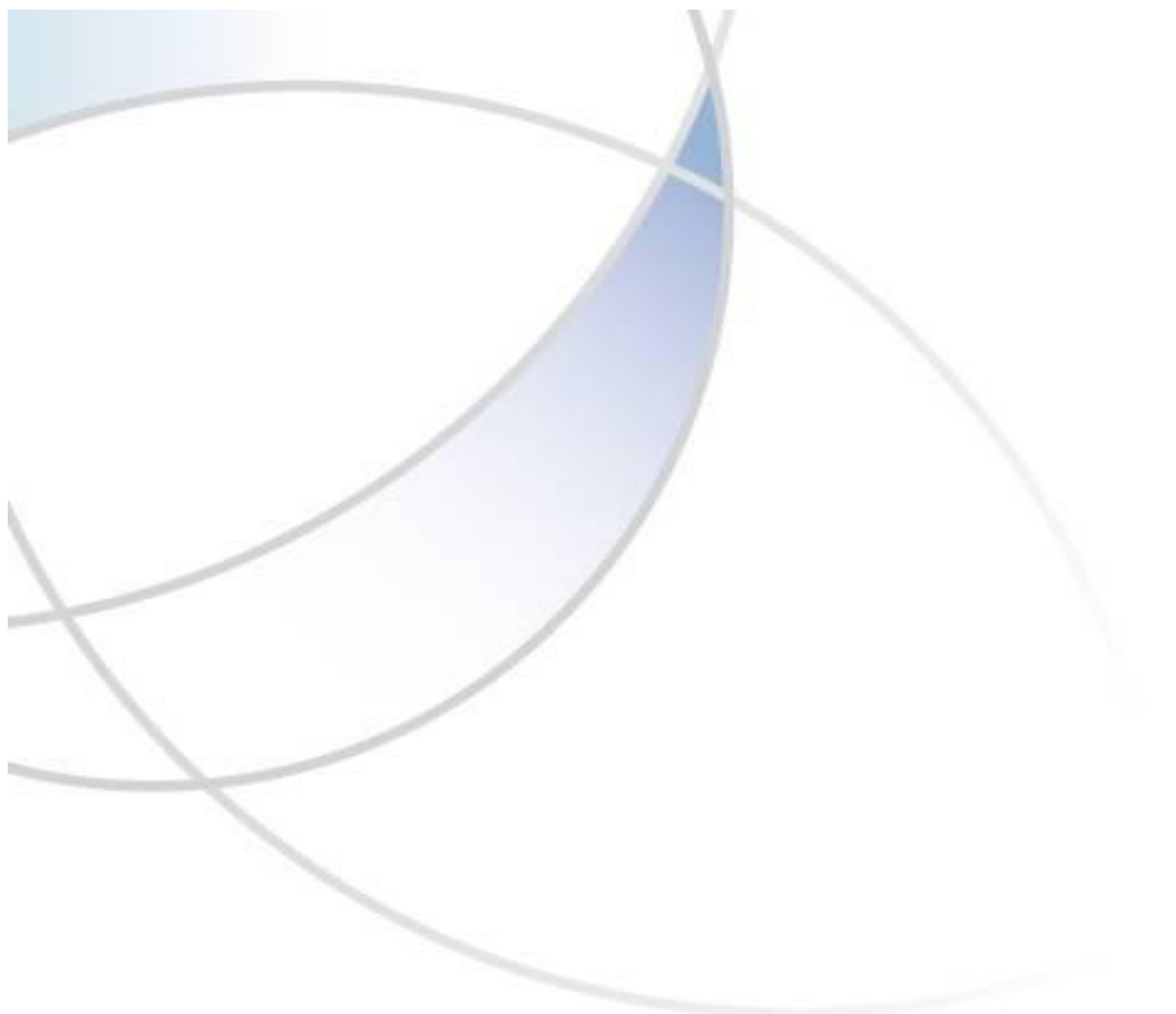
Many aspects of the College registration practice for Internationally Educated Physiotherapists are very progressive. The College's new IEP Portal is a well-designed, helpful information resource and the revisions planned as a result of this review will continue to strengthen it.

We appreciated the participation of the College's staff and board members at the OMFC review workshop. We have also appreciated the College's history of engagement with the OMFC and look forward to our work together moving forward.



Ximena Munoz

Manitoba Fairness Commissioner



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