

# **College of Hearing Aid Practitioners**

## **Of Alberta**

### **Annual Report**

#### **2015-2016**

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# **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE**

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015/2016:

- CHAPA Theory exam has been rewritten and was used for the first time September 2016.
- Jurisprudence on line training course is now in place as a mandatory learning requirement for all new CHAPA registrants with existing members having until November 2019 to complete the course and quiz.
- CHAPA website updated
- Appointment of 2nd Public Member

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 be 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**

The role of the Public Member is to attend all Council and Association meetings and, as appropriate to identify issues or practices of members that could compromise the safety of Albertans.

To this end, the only issue that might be a concern is that some members might not report practitioners whose work may not be fully compliant with CHAPA's standards of practice. Please note that I might be wrong in my perceptions about this.

The Public Member also has an opportunity to contribute in other areas as appropriate. As such, the Public Member received job descriptions from the President and:

1. Reviewed all the modules of the Jurisprudence course as prepared by Russell Sawchuk and provided substantive feedback
2. Reorganized the job descriptions for Chair positions and Committees made available by the President to have a more uniform format. These documents are :
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - Vice-President
  - Symposium Chair
  - Finance Committee
  - Nominations Committee
  - Advertising Committee
  - Chair, Complaints Committee
  - Examinations Committee
  - Registration Committee
  - CHIPS Committee
  - Chair Continuing Competency Committee
  - Chair, Awards Committee
  - Negotiations Committee

It is recommended that:

CHAPA develop a customized Terms of Reference for each Committee that would include the following:

- Role of the Committee
- Membership of each Committee
- Appointment method and length of appointment
- Role of the Chair
- Role of Members
- Required Qualifications for the Chair
- Required Qualifications for the Members
- Duties of the Committee

As well, some job descriptions, notably the President and Registrar were not received. They may be available. Pending direction from the President and Council and the individual Committees, I would like to continue developing and/or customizing these documents.

Sincerely

Patricia Hull, Public Member

September 25, 2016

# **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 client's alternative methods used to enhance communication and referral to sources such as Deaf and Hear Alberta which may be of benefit to the client.

# **Governance**

## **A. Regulations**

In the 2015-2016 year, there was no further movement in changes to regulations. CHAPA council has approved the creating of an ad-hoc committee to review the regulations and compile our requests to submit to government for change.

## **B. Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics:**

Our Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics that were approved in 2014, will be reviewed as part of the regulations ad-hoc committee responsibilities.

## **C. Bylaws**

All current bylaws have been approved by membership. No changes are anticipated at this time, but may be necessary once changes in regulations occur.

## **D. Other Initiatives**

CHAPA has been interacting with the executive directors of Ontario and British Columbia. It is the hope of each of these provinces to work together, along with CHIPS to potentially develop a Federally accepted standard of practice statement and entrance to practice exam. This will take time.

# **INFORMATION ON** **REGULATED MEMBERS**

## **A) Applications for Registration:**

**The total number of new registrants in the 2015/2016 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: 17
- Licensing of individuals transferring licenses inter-provincially: 1
- Licensing of individuals applying from out of country: 0
- Return to Profession – Leave of Absence: 0
- Audiologists: 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 1/2015 and ended February 28/2016. Therefore Renewal of Registration forms for the 2015/2016 year were sent out as of Dec 31/2015. 234 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, 2015 the regulated membership consisted of:

183 Members on the General Register (Category RHAP), 14 of which registered as Inactive  
14 Members on the Temporary Register (Category HAP), 1 which is registered as Inactive  
22 Student Interns (SI's), 3 of which registered as Inactive

**Pre-renewal membership data: As of Nov 30, 2015** (which represents a snapshot of the membership closer to the time of sending out the upcoming year annual registration renewal forms) there were:

177 Members on the General Register, membership category RHAP

9 Members on the General Register (Inactive),

16 Members registered on the Temporary Register, membership category HAP

25 Student Interns (membership category SI)

**Post renewal membership data: As of March 31, 2016** the regulated membership consisted of: 215 members (Total membership including non-regulated members: (221)

169 Members on the Active General Register (RHAP)

14 members on the General Register (Inactive)

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

16 Student Interns (SI)

3 Members on the Student/Intern Register (Inactive)

**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: 12, (10 on the General Register, 2 on the Student/Intern Register)

**Reasons for non- renewal:**

Retired: 2

Moved to another Province: 3

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: 3

Reason for non-renewal of practice permit; unknown: 3

Moved Out of Country: 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 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, 2016: (pertaining to the 2015/2016 year)**

Retirees: 2

Inactive members: 19

Student members: 0

Interim members (members who have graduated from a program of study but are not yet licensed): 19

Associate members: 4

Honorary members: 2

Public members: 2

**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:**

Rewritten theory exam approved and incorporated

**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. There have been no advisory committee meetings hosted by MacEwan University since the change and have not heard of any plans for one in the upcoming future.

**C. Major consultations with stakeholders:**

Consultations were held with WCB-AB prior to the renewal of the contract. A major highlight for CHAPA is that WCB is now accepting RHAP tests acceptable as first test. Clients no longer require testing by an audiologist to have an application to WCB for a hearing loss claim approved.

**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 2015-2016 operational year for CHAPA the Jurisprudence e-Course and exam were introduced and applied to the program. The two quizzes were deleted, previously mandatory in the program and were replaced by the Jurisprudence e-Course/exam. The program saw a change in chairperson this year. Karen Scheffelman no longer chairs the position and Tammy Caswell took over the position in January 2016 within CHAPA.

Looking forward to the 2016-2017 operational year, the program will continue with the Jurisprudence e-Course/exam and all other requirements documented within CHAPA's CCP.

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

Respectfully Submitted

Tammy Caswell – Continuing Competence Chairperson

## **A. The Status of the Continuing Competence Program**

A significant change has been made to the Continuing Competence Program, with the implementation of the Jurisprudence e-course and exam. This is a mandatory participation by all new registrants, and providing existing members until November 30 of 2019 to complete as part of their CCP requirements. As this is mandatory we are offering members the opportunity to receive 5 of the 10 CEU's required annually to maintain membership upon successfully passing the final exam associated with the e-course. Participation in the Program is entering the eighth 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 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 analyze 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, are also required to complete the jurisprudence e-course and final exam 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 November 30. 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**

There are no new initiatives in place related to the CCP at this time.

**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:**

March 20, 2016 by a regulated CHAPA member vs. a regulated CHAPA member: Withdrawn and redirected.

2. May 10, 2016 by a member of the public vs. a regulated CHAPA member: Dismissed as vexatious.

3. September 27, 2016 by a regulated member vs. CHAPA complaints procedures: Under review.

**Number of complaints carried over from the previous year:**

No carry overs from previous year.

**Number of complaints handled during the year:**

A total of 3 complaints were handled during the year.

**Number of complaints still open:**

1

**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:**

None

**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 is still in progress

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*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.