

**COLLEGE OF PODIATRIC SURGEONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

**LEAVING PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

**1. General Principles**

- 1.1** These rules affect all podiatric practitioners and practices in B.C. insofar as they are relevant and apply to the practitioner who is leaving practice and the relevant practice.
- 1.2** Practitioners continue to be subject to the regulatory authority of the College after registration with the College is cancelled.
- 1.3** Registrants should prepare in advance by having proper protocols in place to ensure compliance with these rules, in the event of their planned or unexpected departure from practice. This includes training of staff to carry out the requirements of these rules.
- 1.4** The principles governing these rules are orderly continuity of patient care, safekeeping and integrity of personal information, and respect for the surrounding community's needs.

**2. Notification of College of Podiatric Surgeons**

- 2.1** Notification must be provided in writing to the College of Podiatric Surgeons of British Columbia prior to the departure date.
- 2.2** The said notification must include:
  - 1) Forwarding contact information for the departing practitioner.
  - 2) A description of the location and general arrangements in place for storage of patient records.
  - 3) A description of the arrangements in place including contact information for the purpose of patient access to their medical records.
  - 4) All other applicable requirements set out in this Guideline.
- 2.3** The written notification to the College may be made by email or letter.

**3. Notification to Patients**

- 3.1** Notification must be made to all current patients; this includes all patients who have been seen within a year of the departure date.
- 3.2** This should be done in a timely manner which can allow for patients to arrange for an alternate provider. At least 3 months notice is reasonable.
- 3.3** Primary notification to patients must be made, by:
  - 1) A detailed letter, or
  - 2) A hand-out or visible signage in the office, or
  - 3) Discussion with patients by the doctor and by the staff.

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**3.4** Supplementary notification to patients may be made, by:

- 1) Notice in a local news publication, and
- 2) Notice on the practice website.

**3.5** The notification(s) should include all of the following:

- 1) The planned departure date.
- 2) A note of introduction where applicable for the new practitioner taking over the practice.
- 3) The names of other partners in the practice where applicable who are available and willing to assume the patients' care.
- 4) The names of other podiatrists currently practicing in the nearby community.
- 5) A description of the location of the practice's medical records and the process and contact information by which patients may obtain a copy of their medical records.

**4. Notification to Colleagues**

**4.1** Notification must be made in writing to all colleagues with whom the departing practitioner has patients in common.

**4.2** Notification of colleagues may be made by email or letter.

**4.3** A copy of every such notification must be placed on the relevant patients files.

**5. Storage of and access to Medical Records**

**5.1** Arrangements must be made for the safe storage of, and patient access to, the patients' medical records.

**5.2** The College must be notified of these arrangements forthwith in writing, in advance of the practitioner's departure date.

**6. Patient Care Issues**

**6.1** Care of any patient under acute, active treatment should be transferred to a colleague.

**6.2** All outstanding reports/test results should be reviewed and acted upon.

**7. Notification to Third Party Agencies**

**7.1** Notification of leaving must be made in written form to the following third parties:

- 1) CPS-BC.
- 2) MSP.

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- 7.2** It is recommended that the practitioner notify
- 1) Pharmacies that are frequently used by the practitioner or the practitioner's patients.
  - 2) Laboratory and x-ray services or facilities frequently used by the practitioner or the practitioner's patients.
- 7.3** Notification of the third parties may be made by email or letter.
- 7.4** Notification to the third parties must include:
- 1) The date of departure.
  - 2) Forwarding contact information for the practitioner.
  - 3) The person(s), including their relevant contact information, to whom correspondence and results respecting patients should be sent following the practitioner's departure.

**8. Closed Practices and Pharmaceuticals**

- 8.1** The practitioner must make arrangements for the transfer to another practitioner, or disposal, of all pharmaceuticals in the departing practitioner's practice, in accordance with all applicable laws.
- 8.2** The College must be notified of these arrangements forthwith in writing, via email or letter, in advance of the practitioner's departure date.
- 8.3** The notification should be complete enough to enable the College to locate the pharmaceutical's location and fate.

**9. Sale of Practice**

- 9.1** This section applies to the sale of any podiatric practice, whether it is a sale of the assets only or the entire practice including the good will.
- 9.2** Where the departing practitioner has sold their practice, regardless whether the sale occurred before, as of, or after the date of retirement including the date of cancellation of their registration, the practitioner must advise the College in writing of the following:
- 1) The date of the sale.
  - 2) The name and contact information of the practitioner(s), entity or entities who have purchased the practice.
- 9.3** The written notification to the College may be made by email or letter.

**10. Corporations**

- 10.1** This section applies to practitioners who are leaving practice and have held and practiced through a podiatric corporation and any purchasers of the corporation.

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- 10.2** A practitioner who is leaving practice must in addition to all other applicable notification requirements in this document, advise the College in writing of the following:
- 1) The arrangements for winding down the corporation, if applicable.
  - 2) Whether the corporation is being or has been sold, and if so, the name and contact information of the practitioner(s), entity or entities who have purchased the corporation.
- 10.3** The College must be notified of the matters in section 10.2 in writing, in advance of the practitioner's date of departure from practice.
- 10.4** The written notification to the College may be made by email or letter.
- 10.5** Registrants must keep in mind that a podiatric corporation permit will not be valid as of the date of the sale of the corporation or cancellation of the practitioner's registration with the College.
- 10.6** The practitioner must surrender the corporation's corporate permit to the College in advance of the practitioner's date of departure from practice.
- 10.7** It is the responsibility of the purchaser(s) of the corporation to apply for an appropriate name change and if a name change is approved by the Registrars of the College and the Corporate Registry, to apply for a valid podiatric corporation permit.
- 10.8** The purchasers of the podiatric corporation may not provide health care services to patients through the corporation unless and until the corporation holds a valid permit issued by the registrar.

**11. Associate and Partner Departures**

- 11.1** This section applies to podiatrists who are leaving associate or partner positions in podiatric practices; both are referred to herein as 'associate'.
- 11.2** An associate is a practitioner who is in the employ of another practitioner's or other practitioners' practice, who is not a partner or a locum, or sharing office space as an independent practitioner.
- 11.3** Despite section 11.2, locum practitioners, particularly when the locum has had an extended position at a podiatric practice, are also governed by applicable provisions of this section.
- 11.4** In addition to the principles set out in section 1 of this document, principles governing this section are openness with patients and the public, patient freedom of choice in health care providers, and orderly transfer of patient care and records.
- 11.5** In addition to all other applicable notifications set out in this document, the following information must be included in notifications to patients regarding the departure of an associate from a practice:
- 1) The new practice location of the associate, if known.
  - 2) A reminder that the patient has freedom of choice with respect to their health care providers.

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- 3) The process by which patients may make a request and have their files transferred to the associate's new practice.
- 11.6** The associate and the practice shall not make critical comment about the other to patients.
- 11.7** The practitioner(s) remaining at the original practice must respond promptly to all patient requests for the transfer of their records to the associate's new practice.
- 11.8** A reasonable fee may be charged to the patient by the original practice in respect of the costs incurred in the transfer of the patient records.
- 11.9** The original practice must retain a copy of all patient records.
- 11.10** A request for the transfer of patient records may be made by the associate to the original practice and does not have to be made directly by the patient.
- 11.11** The practitioner(s) remaining at the original practice shall not require that patients produce a written request or signed consent for transfer of records.
- 11.12** The associate must not without the patient's express written permission, take copies of any patient information away, or request the transfer of the patient records, from the original practice.
- 11.13** The original practice must not withhold patient records or refuse to transfer records on the basis that podiatric fees of the relevant patient remain unpaid; podiatrists are expected to use other legal avenues to collect the fees that are owed to them by patients.