



January 23, 2015

SENT VIA E-MAIL AND MAIL

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John Amodeo, Director
Health System Labour Relations and Regulatory Policy Branch
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
12th Floor
56 Wellesley St. W
Toronto, ON M5S 2S3

Dear Mr. Amodeo,

Please accept this letter in response to the December 17th, 2014 request from Dr. Hoskins regarding health regulatory Colleges' current efforts to prevent and deal with the sexual abuse of clients. The College of Midwives of Ontario (CMO) is pleased to participate in efforts contributing to the ongoing protection of the public of Ontario, specific to the prevention of sexual abuse. The Council and staff of the CMO take this issue very seriously and are committed to the well-being and safety of all midwifery clients throughout the province.

Current CMO Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan

Since the inception of the *Regulated Health Professions Act*, and the *Midwifery Act*, in 1994, the CMO has had in place a Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan (SAPP) for midwives. The SAPP establishes the CMO's zero tolerance approach to sexual abuse of any kind, and the Guidelines for Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Abuse outline midwives' obligations to report any suspicion of sexual abuse by a regulated health care provider.

Additionally, A Midwife's Guide to Appropriate Professional Behaviour with Clients was developed to clarify the CMO's expectations for midwives and their interactions with clients, specific to the prevention of sexual abuse.

The College also has a Standard on Caring for Related Persons that establishes the expectations and potential consequences of providing care to anyone with whom the midwife has a familial or close friend relationship, as well as explicitly stating that treatment of spouses or any person with whom the midwife has a sexual relationship is considered sexual abuse.

Ongoing Measures to Enhance the College's Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan

Throughout 2014, the Client (Patient) Relations Committee of the CMO met regularly to update the existing SAPP, the Guidelines for Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Abuse, as well as A Midwife's Guide to Appropriate Professional Behaviour with Clients. All of these documents are at the final stages of review by the Committee and are expected to be approved by Council in 2015.

Specifically, the Committee has been considering:

- Revisions to the SAPP to improve clarity regarding the CMO's expectations for midwives in this area, as well as the potential outcomes of non-compliance
- The requirement for a one-year "cooling off" period before a midwife may engage in a sexual relationship with a former client
- A policy that the CMO will report to police with respect to reports of sexual abuse of a client by a midwife
- The inclusion of information pertaining to the SAPP in our CMO brochure that is distributed to clients
- Liaising with the midwifery education programs to ensure sexual abuse prevention is included at the midwifery training level
- Measures for educating the membership regarding their obligations regarding the prevention of sexual abuse
- Measures for educating the membership regarding their mandatory reporting obligations
- Staff sensitivity training regarding the management of sexual abuse reports

In addition, the Committee has decided not to pursue a spousal exemption regulation at the present time. However, we look forward to contributing the Committee's perspective regarding the unique profession of midwifery during the Task Force's consultation phase.

Should you have further questions regarding the CMO's sexual abuse prevention activities, please do not hesitate to contact us. The CMO Council and staff look forward to working with the Ministry to ensure the continued safety of the clients of midwives, as well as all patients receiving health care in the province.



Barbara-Ann Borland, RM
President



Kelly Dobbin, RM, MA, MSc
Registrar