



Use of Title and Holding Out Provisions

As members of a regulatory college with a mission to protect the interest of the public, it is important to understand the use of title and holding out provisions applicable to social service workers and social workers (and other professions) in the province of Ontario.

Titles and designations—often used to convey information to others about an individual’s role, activities or professional characteristics—are obtained from various sources, such as training or education, and job titles or descriptions. However, regardless of how they are obtained, in Ontario, and indeed in other provinces, many titles and designations are protected by legislation. “Social worker” and “social service worker” are two of the protected titles in Ontario under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998 (SWSSW Act)*, and their use is permitted only through registration or membership in the College.

This issue may seem somewhat clear cut—but in the course of the College’s operation, several other issues and concerns have arisen. This FAQ-type article is intended to help identify and clarify the issues related to use of title and holding out applicable to social workers and social service workers.

It should be emphasized, however, that while this article may help to identify and better clarify issues surrounding use of title and holding out, it is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of the relevant statutory use of title and holding out provisions, nor should this article serve as a substitute for individual review of the relevant statutory provisions. In the event of any discrepancy between this *Perspective* article, on the one hand, and the *SWSSW Act* or the *Regulated Health Professions Act* and regulations, on the other hand, the Acts and regulations will prevail.

What is “title protection”?

It means that in Ontario:

- only people who are registered as social work members of the College can call themselves a “social worker,”

“registered social worker,” “travailleur social,” or “travailleur social inscrit,” or an abbreviation of any of these titles¹; and

- only people who are registered as social service work members of the College can call themselves a “social service worker,” “registered social service worker,” “technicien en travail social,” or “technicien en travail social inscrit,” or an abbreviation of any of these titles.²

What does the prohibition on “holding out” or “representing” that a person is a social worker or social service worker mean?

People who are **not** registered as social work or social service work members of the College are prohibited from representing themselves to the public in any manner so as to lead members of the public to conclude that they are social workers, registered social workers, social service workers, registered social service workers or registered members of the College.³

Why are “title protection” and the prohibitions on “holding out” and “representing” necessary in Ontario for social workers and social service workers?

1. Public/Consumer protection

Consumers (individuals and organizations receiving services from social workers and social service workers) have a right to know that they are receiving services from professionals who abide by a code of ethics and standards of practice and who are competent in their field.

All social work and social service work members of the College have met academic and other entry-to-practice requirements, and are required to abide by the College’s *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. Employers, clients, colleagues and other professionals have a right to know and to expect that a

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¹ Subsection 46(1), *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

² Subsection 47(1), *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

³ Subsections 46(2) and 47(2), *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

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person calling himself or herself a social worker or social service worker is indeed an individual with skills and training required for entry to practice and is accountable to the College.

Title protection and prohibition on holding out promote the ability of members of the public to identify different providers of professional services. This is a cornerstone of public/consumer protection in professional regulation, because it helps consumers/members of the public to make informed choices about service providers.

2. Public confidence

Title protection and holding out provisions maintain public confidence in social workers and social service workers because members of the public know they are receiving services from trained, competent and accountable professionals.

Why does Ontario need these statutory provisions for social workers and social service workers?

Many settings employ individuals to provide social work and social service work services without requiring these employees to be registered as members of the College. These provisions increase awareness among employers about who they are hiring for which positions.

What are the consequences of non-compliance with these public protection provisions?

It is a provincial offence to contravene the statutory use of title and holding out provisions. Upon conviction, a person is liable to a fine of not more than \$5,000 for a first offence, and not more than \$10,000 for a subsequent offence. In addition, there is provision in the *SWSSW Act* for the College to obtain a compliance order from the court.

How have the courts interpreted statutory provisions prohibiting “holding out” or “representing” registered professional status?

Generally, the courts have taken an objective approach to determine whether there was a “holding out” offence. The intent of the person alleged to hold out has not been seen as

relevant. Rather, the courts look to the entire conduct of the person to see whether a reasonable member of the public would infer that the person was a registered member of the College. It is not important that members of the profession may well understand what the qualifications of the person really are; in assessing the conduct, the court will examine how a lay person would interpret the person’s conduct.

How does the College learn that an individual or individuals may have contravened these statutory provisions?

The College learns of such individuals through various means including written reports from members of the public, members of the College and other professionals—some of which are anonymous; and written complaints from members of the public, members of the College, employers and other professionals.

How does the College deal with individuals who may have contravened these statutory provisions?

Currently, in cases where the College is able to locate the individual(s), the College’s Registrar corresponds with the individual(s), alerts the individual(s) to the statutory title protection and/or holding out provisions and the statutorily prescribed consequences on conviction for breach of the statutory provisions, and requests that the individual(s) notify the College of how they will correct their practices. In the future, in an appropriate case, the College may commence a proceeding to obtain a compliance order or proceed by way of a provincial offence prosecution.

Does the College require its social work and social service work members to use any particular designation?

Social work members of the College must use the English designation RSW, or the French designation TSI in documentation used in connection with their practice of social work.⁴ Social service work members of the College must use the English designation RSSW or the French designation TTSI in documentation used in connection with their practice of social service work.⁵

⁴ Subsection 15 (2), O. Reg. 383/00 (Registration), made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

⁵ Subsection 16 (2), O. Reg. 383/00 (Registration), made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

Use of Title and Holding Out Provisions

A College member who inappropriately uses a term, title or designation in respect of his or her professional practice⁶, or who fails to identify himself or herself as a social worker or social service worker to a client when providing social work or social service work services⁷, may be found to have committed an act of professional misconduct. Similarly, College members must not misrepresent professional qualifications, education, experience or affiliation.⁸

Would the College consider an individual who is not a member of the College and who uses the designation “BSW” or “MSW” as a professional designation to have contravened the statutory holding out provisions?

Although such individuals may have earned their BSW or MSW, these individuals also must consider their responsibility to represent themselves, their knowledge, and their skills and abilities in a clear, open and thorough manner and in keeping with Ontario law. In order to achieve transparency and avoid misleading or misrepresentative information it is essential to consider the general knowledge and expectation of the audience receiving the information. Thus, the College considers each individual situation on a case-by-case basis. For example, the College would consider the setting in which the individual provided service, the nature of the clientele served by the individual, the nature of the services provided or offered, whether the client(s) believed service was provided by a registered social work member of the College, and whether a reasonable member of the public would infer that the individual was a registered social work member of the College.

I have a doctorate degree. Can I use the title “doctor”?

In Ontario, under the *Regulated Health Professions Act*, the use of the title “doctor,” or a variation or abbreviation, **in the course of providing or offering to provide health care to individuals**, is restricted to chiropractors, optometrists, physicians, psychologists and dentists.⁹ It is a provincial offence for a person to contravene this provision of the *Regulated Health Professions Act*. College members who hold a doctorate degree need to consider carefully the purpose, audience and services being provided or offered when

choosing to use this title. The principles of clear and appropriate representation to the public also apply to the use of this restricted title.

Why doesn't the College insist that all individuals in Ontario who provide services similar to social work or social service work become registered members of the College?

The College does not have any legal or other authority to do so. However, it has, and will continue to educate members of the College, the public and employers about the statutory use of title and holding out provisions. Similarly, the College will continue to deal with cases brought to its attention regarding individuals who are not registered members of the College and who use the protected titles “social worker,” “registered social worker,” “travailleur social,” “travailleur social inscrit,” “social service worker,” “registered social service worker,” “technicien en travail social,” “technicien en travail social inscrit,” or an abbreviation of any of these titles; or who represent or hold out expressly or by implication that he or she is a social worker, social service worker or a registered social worker or registered social service worker.

What should I do if I believe someone is improperly using a title or holding himself or herself out to be a social worker or social service worker?

You may inform the College Registrar, in writing, of your belief and of the reasons for your belief. You may include with your letter copies of any documents or other evidence in your possession supporting your belief.

Before doing so, you may wish to verify whether or not the individual you are concerned about is actually a registered member of the College. To do this you must make a request in writing (by regular post, courier delivery, fax or e-mail). Your request must include the name of the individual and sufficient information to allow the College to distinguish that individual from other individuals who may have a similar name.

For more information on use of title and holding out provisions, contact Marlene Zagdanski, Director, Complaints and Discipline, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380, ext. 208. E-mail: mzagdanski@ocswssw.org

⁶ Paragraph 15 of section 2, O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct), made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

⁷ Paragraph 16 of section 2, O. Reg. 384/00 (Professional Misconduct), made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998*.

⁸ Principle II, Interpretation 2.2.7, *OCSWSSW Standards of Practice*, First Edition, 2000.

⁹ Section 33, *Regulated Health Professions Act*.



GLENDA McDONALD RSW
REGISTRAR

December 18, 2003, marks a significant anniversary—the fifth anniversary of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act* receiving royal assent. When introducing the then proposed legislation, the Honourable Janet Ecker noted that the Act was crafted to, in part, address concerns that, “anyone can hang out a shingle and use the title social worker or social service worker.” The minister also remarked that “...the proposed legislation, if passed, would improve standards in these fields and ensure better quality service for the public.”

Five years later, the College has come a very long way towards achieving the legislated goals. Nevertheless, questions about “use of title” and “holding out” are among the most frequently received by the College. This issue of *Perspective's* cover story is, therefore, about the statutory “use of title” and “holding out” provisions, and is designed to address the most commonly received questions and concerns of College members, employers and members of the public.

Readers should note that much has happened since the last issue of *Perspective* was mailed. The College's second Annual Meeting and Reception was held on June 23rd at the College's office in Toronto, and plans are underway for the third Annual Meeting and Reception—watch for updates. A new Executive Committee was elected on October 27th at the College's Council meeting—an updated listing is included on page 5 of this issue, as well as on the College's website, which is always a work in progress.

Other issues of note and interest are covered in this issue of *Perspective*, such as the publishing of the College's first Discipline Committee decision, professional incorporation and the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA). Read on and stay informed—as well, your feedback on the newsletter and any other College initiative is always welcome.



DIANE THOMPSON
PRESIDENT

I am very pleased to advise that at its meeting on October 27, 2003, the Council of the College re-elected me to serve a second term as President of Council. I would like to thank Council members for their continued support and trust in my leadership.

This past year presented a number of challenges to the College's ability to conduct business as usual. Both the outbreak of SARS in Ontario and two resignations from Council prevented Council from meeting. In spite of these delays, committees and task groups continued to meet and work, utilizing teleconferencing and other electronic communications during those times.

During the election process last year, I made three commitments to Council. First, the development of a detailed strategic work plan setting out timelines and work plans. This was accomplished and approved by Council. Second, a general membership increase of 20 per cent and an increase of social service work membership of 10 per cent. General membership increased by only 10 per cent, but considering applications in progress, the goal of 20 per cent is likely on target. Social service work membership increased by 20 per cent, doubling my goal of 10 per cent and, similarly, is also likely higher. Third, I promised to submit to Council in October a comprehensive communication plan. It was submitted on time and approved by Council. The components of this plan are being implemented and the upcoming year will bring about new communications initiatives to benefit the membership and the public.

My second term as President for the 2003/2004 year builds on the accomplishments of the first term, concentrating on increased communication and accountability processes. Currently, changes are being implemented to increase and improve communication from the Executive Committee to Council members to ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness. In maintaining accountability to the greater community—our members, stakeholders and the public—our recent Standards of Practice consultation was a valuable opportunity to receive feedback. A detailed report on the consultation is available on page 11 of this issue of *Perspective*. In addition, an immediate communication priority for me is to advance the timelines for the completion of brochures for distribution to our community about the work of the College.

In closing, I would like to thank members of Council for their support and commitment to the mission, vision and values of the College. I would also like to thank staff for their capable support and assistance to Council committees and task groups as we work together to fulfil our primary mandate of serving and protecting the public interest.

Introducing the New Council and Committees for 2004

Council 2004

Council includes 21 persons representing equally the public, social service workers and social workers. The current council members are:

Lisa Barazzutti	Public Member	Timmins	Beverlee McIntosh	RSW	Ottawa
Rachel Birnbaum	RSW	Toronto	Sue-Ellen Merritt	RSSW	Port Colborne
Mary Ciotti	RSW	Hamilton	Jai Mills	RSSW	Richmond Hill
Gary Cockman	RSSW	Port Franks	Marianne M. Park	Public Member	Woodstock
Roman Delicart	RSSW	Kitchener	John Pretti	RSW	London
Zita Devan	Public Member	Lindsay	Judy Shanks	RSSW	Timmins
Anita Gupta	Public Member	Toronto	Diane Thompson	Public Member	Moose Creek
Shelley Hale	RSSW	Ottawa	Joanne Turner	RSW	Waterloo
Muriel Hill	Public Member	London	John Vanderhoeven	RSW	Toronto
Kevin Kennedy	RSSW	Newmarket	Marco Ventola	Public Member	Oakville
Michael Kopot	RSW	Thunder Bay			

Executive Committee:

President

Diane Thompson, *Public Member*

First Vice-President

Sue-Ellen Merritt, *RSSW*

Second Vice-President

Mary Ciotti, *RSW*

4th Executive Member

Kevin Kennedy, *RSSW*

5th Executive Member

Joanne Turner, *RSW*

6th Executive Member

Marianne M. Park, *Public Member*

Complaints Committee:

Judy Shanks, *RSSW (Chair)*

Gary Cockman, *RSSW*

Joe Fecht, *RSW (Non-Council Member)*

Anita Gupta, *Public Member*

Muriel Hill, *Public Member*

John Vanderhoeven, *RSW*

Registration Appeals Committee:

John Pretti, *RSW (Chair)*

Roman Delicart, *RSSW*

Kevin Kennedy, *RSSW*

Marianne Park, *Public Member*

Judith Tremblay, *RSW*

(Non-Council Member)

Marco Ventola, *Public Member*

Discipline Committee:

Zita Devan, *Public Member (Chair)*

Lisa Barazzutti, *Public Member*

Rachel Birnbaum, *RSW*

Shelley Hale, *RSSW*

Paula Klein, *RSW*

(Non-Council Member)

Jai Mills, *RSSW*

Fitness to Practise Committee:

Jai Mills, *RSSW (Chair)*

Zita Devan, *Public Member*

Suzanne Hainer, *RSSW*

(Non-Council Member)

Michael Kopot, *RSW*

Beverlee McIntosh, *RSW*

Marco Ventola, *Public Member*

Standards of Practice Committee:

Shelley Hale, *RSSW (Chair)*

Lisa Barazzutti, *Public Member*

Rachel Birnbaum, *RSW*

Suzanne Hainer, *RSSW*

(Non-Council Member)

Elaine Heckbert, *RSW*

(Non-Council Member)

John Newman, *RSSW*

(Non-Council Member)

Beverlee McIntosh, *RSW*

Sue-Ellen Merritt, *RSSW*

Marianne M. Park, *Public Member*

John Vanderhoeven, *RSW*

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Vital Statistics Act

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Nominating Committee:

Anita Gupta, *Public Member* (**Chair**)
Muriel Hill, *Public Member*
Michael Kopot, *RSSW*
Beverlee McIntosh, *RSSW*
Jai Mills, *RSSW*
Judy Shanks, *RSSW*

Election Committee:

Kevin Kennedy, *RSSW* (**Chair**)
Rachel Birnbaum, *RSSW*
Mary Ciotti, *RSSW*
Zita Devan, *Public Member*
Jai Mills, *RSSW*

Corporations Committee:

Rachel Birnbaum, *RSSW* (**Chair**)
Gary Cockman, *RSSW*
Zita Devan, *Public Member*



Since the last issue of *Perspective*, the College has received several reports from members indicating that social workers and social service workers are not listed as qualified guarantors on birth certificate applications, which were being rejected as a result.

The College notified the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services requesting that this issue be brought to the attention of the Deputy Registrar General at the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services (MCBS).

The Deputy Registrar confirmed that the application forms have not yet been updated to include social workers and social service workers under the list of guarantors. However, she did confirm that members of the College, registered social workers and registered social service workers, are eligible to sign birth certificate applications as guarantors. According to the ministry's "Request for Birth Certificate" application form:

The persons described in this section [page 3 of the application form] are prescribed as **guarantors** for the purposes of section 45.1 of the *Vital Statistics Act*:

Canadian citizens who have known the applicant for at least two years and *who are practicing members in good standing* of a provincial regulatory body established by law to govern one of the following professions:

- i. Chiropractor, dentist, midwife, nurse, optometrist, pharmacist, physician or surgeon, psychologist or veterinarian.
- ii. Lawyer.
- iii. Professional accountant.
- iv. Professional engineer.
- v. Social worker or social service worker.
- vi. Teacher in a primary or secondary school.

For more information access the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services online at <www.cbs.gov.on.ca> or call 1-800-461-2156 (if calling within Ontario) or 416-325-8305 (from the 416 area code and outside of Ontario).

Discipline Decision Summary

This summary of the Discipline Committee's decision and reasons, including the name of the former member of the College who is the subject of the decision, is published pursuant to the Discipline Committee's penalty order.

By publishing such summaries, the College endeavours to:

- illustrate for social workers, social service workers and members of the public, what does or does not constitute professional misconduct
- provide social workers and social service workers with direction about the College's standards of practice and professional behaviour, to be applied in future, should they find themselves in similar circumstances; and
- implement the Discipline Committee's decisions concerning publication of its findings in particular cases.

For a copy of the full text of the Discipline Committee's decision and reasons in the following matter, contact Sam Title, Communication Manager, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380, ext. 219. E-mail: stitle@ocswssw.org

Disgraceful, Dishonourable and Unprofessional Conduct

MICHAELA B. ACKERMANN
– MEMBER #420995

Allegations and Plea

The College's allegations refer to the member's sexual exploitation of a former client. The member did not appear at the hearing although duly served with notice of the hearing.

Evidence

The Discipline Committee received an Agreed Statement of Fact and a Joint Book of Documents in which the member acknowledged, among other matters, that she provided therapy to her former client in relation to bipolar mood disorder and depression, and that the former client had a history of having been sexually abused, of hospitalization for suicide attempts

and of engaging in self-harming behaviour. The member recognized that the former client was extremely vulnerable.

The member transferred the client to another counsellor at the same agency that employed the member, because the member was sexually attracted to the former client. The member had a number of professional contacts with the former client after the transfer for the purpose of contracting safety plans with the former client, who was actively suicidal. During one of those contacts, the member gave the former client her home telephone number and invited the former client to contact her, suggesting they become friends.

The member acknowledged that she made sexual overtures toward the former client, initiated a sexual relationship with the former client, and had sexual relations with the former client. The member further acknowledged that she was in a position of power in relation to the former client, which originated in and survived the termination of the therapeutic relationship. The member subsequently terminated the sexual relationship with the former client.

The Discipline Committee heard evidence from an expert witness in the area of sexual abuse of clients and the counsellor to whom the former client had been transferred. The former client also provided a sworn victim impact statement about the impact of the member's conduct. In addition to pre-existing problems, the former client now has added health problems, substance abuse issues and experiences increased social isolation.

Finding

The Discipline Committee found that the College proved the allegation that the member engaged in conduct or performed an act relevant to the practice of social work that, "having regard to all circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional."¹

Specifically the Discipline Committee found that:

1. The member established a personal and/or sexual relationship with a client to whom she provided counselling services and/or psychotherapy services and who remained a client of her employer, an agency in Orangeville; and

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¹ Section 2.36, O. Reg. 334/00 (Professional Misconduct), made under the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*.

Discipline Decision Summary

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2. The member behaved in a manner that showed patent disregard and indifference to the well being of her client while she satisfied her own sexual curiosity at the expense of her client, who had already suffered childhood sexual assault and rape.

Submissions on Penalty

As the member's certificate of registration as a social worker was suspended and subsequently cancelled prior to the hearing, Counsel for the College sought an order that:

- the member be reprimanded, in writing and in person, and that the fact of the reprimand be recorded on the College Register for an unlimited period
- the Discipline Committee's findings and order be published, with the member's name, in the College's newsletter, on the College's website and in the Orangeville area on the newswire; and that
- the Discipline Committee's findings and order be made known to social work regulators in other provinces and to the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists.

Penalty

In imposing the penalty proposed by the College, the Discipline Committee gave the following reasons:

- the expert witness had described the member's conduct as conduct involving the most severe form of abuse
- the member has shown no remorse for her conduct
- the member told the former client to keep their relationship secret and later blamed the former client for "ruining her life"
- the member has consistently concerned herself with fulfilment of her own needs only, without regard for the impact of her behaviour on the former client; and
- the member's conduct has impacted the former client very seriously.

Practice notes is designed as an educational tool to help Ontario social workers, social service workers, employers and members of the public gain a better understanding of recurring issues dealt with by the Complaints Committee that may affect everyday practice. The notes offer general guidance only and members with specific practice inquiries should consult the College, since the relevant standards and appropriate course of action will vary depending on the situation.

Recurring Issue: Boundaries in the Helping Relationship

The College often receives calls from members, employers and the public concerning the conduct of members, which might constitute a boundary transgression or violation in their relationship with a client.

Establishing a helping relationship is fundamental in addressing a client's concerns and assisting in meeting his or her goals. Although focusing on client strengths, encouraging self-determination and empowering the client are established professional values, members must recognize that it is the member—not the client—who is in a position of power. The client is seeking assistance and is in a vulnerable position. The client places trust in the member by disclosing personal thoughts and feelings. The member must be alert to the potential for conflict of interest and client abuse, and is responsible for ensuring safety in the helping relationship.

Practice Considerations

One boundary violation that must be addressed in this issue of Practice Notes is sexual misconduct, an offence that is discussed in the summary of the Discipline Committee decision on page 7 of this issue of *Perspective*. Both the College's Professional Misconduct Regulation (O. Reg. 384/00, as amended, s.5) and its Standards of Practice prohibit the sexual abuse of clients. The Standards of Practice, Principle VIII, Sexual Misconduct, provides that "Behaviour of a sexual nature by a College member toward a client represents an abuse of power in the helping relationship." College members do not engage in behaviour of a sexual nature with clients. Interpretation 8.1 of Principle VIII states that it is the College member who is "solely responsible for ensuring that sexual misconduct does not occur." The College's Professional Misconduct regulation makes the sexual abuse of a client (and the contravention of

Practice Notes: Boundary Violations

the College's Standards of Practice in that regard) acts of professional misconduct.

It should be noted that under Principle VIII, the prohibition against sexual misconduct applies, not only to sexual relationships with clients during the course of the professional relationship between the member and client, but also to "sexual relationships between College members and clients to whom the members have provided psychotherapy and/or counselling services...at any time following termination of the professional relationship."

Due to its grave and long-lasting consequences, sexual misconduct is one of the most serious violations in the helping relationship. However, there exists a host of other potential violations that are crucial to consider for two reasons. First, sexual misconduct is frequently preceded by less serious forms of boundary violations. (For example, unnecessarily arranging sessions in off-site locations, such as a restaurant or the client's (or member's) home, or beyond normal business hours.) Second, members on many occasions are confronted with a dilemma in their practice and are called upon to make a sound ethical decision, often involving multiple and complex factors.

How then is a boundary violation defined? This issue is complicated since whether or not particular conduct amounts to a boundary violation may depend on the context in which it occurs and the nature of the member's practice. For example, is it acceptable for a member to meet the client in his or her home, to help with laundry or grocery shopping? For a social worker engaged in insight-oriented psychotherapy with a client, this would be inappropriate. For a social service worker employed on an Assertive Community Treatment team, whose client has a severe and persistent mental illness, this would be acceptable conduct provided that it is of therapeutic benefit to the client and within the scope of the social worker's or social service worker's contract with the client. It is critical at the outset to make explicit to the client the boundaries of the relationship. The onus then is on the member to ensure that those boundaries are maintained.

Boundaries define the set of roles and expectations for the member and client, and establish ground rules for their work together. These principles are reflected in the following Standards of Practice:

Principle I, Relationship with Clients

1.1 College members and clients participate together in setting

and evaluating goals. A purpose for the relationship between College members and clients is identified.

Principle II, Competence and Integrity

2.2 College members establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in professional relationships for the protection of clients.

To determine appropriate boundaries, it may be helpful to view boundary transgressions on a continuum from those which likely pose little risk of harm to the client, to those which pose a major risk to the client, including lasting or permanent damage (such as suicidal behaviour or completed suicide).

The least harmful end of the spectrum may be called a boundary crossing or a digression from usual practice. An example of this is a client giving the member a small gift. Should the member accept it? A number of factors need to be considered: What are the circumstances under which the gift is given – at the termination of the helping relationship? In response to a difficult session in which there was conflict between member and client? The intent of the client in offering a gift needs to be understood. (For example, is the gift a gesture of thanks, or is it motivated by a fear of rejection by the member?) The value also must be considered – is the gift a handcrafted glasses case, made by the client, or a set of tickets in a prime location for a major league baseball game? Exploring the gift-giving by the client can reveal important information, which can be used constructively in the helping relationship. Cultural influences and how often a client offers a gift also should be considered. Ultimately, the member must judge whether the client will be helped by accepting the gift or whether this could put the client at risk in any way. The member also must be aware of any policies set by their employer about accepting gifts from clients and respond accordingly. As well, members in private practice may wish to develop their own policies regarding gifts.

Other dilemmas may arise when a client makes a request the member knows is a boundary crossing. For example, a client asks the member to sponsor her in a walk-a-thon to raise funds for AIDS research. In this, as in other situations, the context of the request needs to be considered. The work with the client has centred on helping her come to terms with the

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death of her brother from AIDS and her difficulty accepting his lifestyle. Her decision to participate in the walk-a-thon represents significant resolution of her conflicted feelings and her desire to demonstrate this to the member. Having understood the meaning of the client's request, a judgment must be made. Assuming that the request is practically feasible, does agreeing to sponsor the client pose any risks? What would be the impact of agreeing? Refusing? Both the decision and the rationale need to be discussed with the client.

Another dilemma encountered by members is the request by a client to see his or her friend or relative in counselling or psychotherapy. One perspective is that the risks are so high that this should never be agreed to. Indeed the safest route would be to decline. However, there may be circumstances that warrant consideration of this request. In locations where resources are limited, or the member specializes in a particular kind of work, refusing may mean that the person does not receive badly needed assistance.

However, in addition to the issue of boundary violations this dilemma gives rise to a host of other issues which require meticulous scrutiny. Among these is conflict of interest (2.2.1): "College members do not engage in professional relationships that constitute a conflict of interest or in situations in which members ought reasonably to have known that the client would be at risk in any way. College members avoid or declare conflict of interest situations. College members do not provide a professional service to the client while the member is in a conflict of interest." The member must be careful to make a decision not based on financial considerations or feeling flattered that their work has been affirmed. Members also are reminded of standard 1.6: "College members distinguish their needs and interests from those of their clients to ensure that, within professional relationships, clients' needs and interests remain paramount."

Entering into a professional relationship with the friend or relative of a client also raises the issue of dual relationship. Standard 3.7 is relevant to this: "College members avoid conflicts of interest and/or dual relationships with clients or former clients, or with students, employees and supervisees that could impair members' professional judgement or increase the risk of exploitation or harm to clients." In this regard it should be considered whether the request is coming from a current or former client. If from a former client, how recent

was the contact and might the client at any time wish to return to see the member? If a current or recently terminated client, a member would be strongly advised against seeing a friend or relative. The nature of the relationship between the client and potential client should be considered. It also may be necessary for the member to determine whether he or she already has formed an opinion of the potential client based on the client's perspective. How would the member keep in check his or her own reactions to both clients? Only if a member can truly declare that their professional judgment would not be unduly affected and that risks to the client are minimal should seeing a friend or relative of a client be given any further consideration.

The issue of confidentiality also is paramount. In accordance with standard 5.1.6: "College members in clinical practice do not disclose the identity of and/or information about a person who has consulted or retained them unless the nature of the matter requires it. Unauthorized disclosure is justified if the disclosure is obligated legally or allowed by law or if the member believes, on reasonable grounds, that the disclosure is essential to the prevention of physical injury to self or others." How would a member ensure confidentiality of information for both parties?

Seeing a friend or relative of a client is highly risky and should not be embarked upon without scrupulously weighing the risks and benefits to the client and potential client, both now and in the future. Ensuring that safeguards and ground rules are in place and that no other viable options are available also is essential.

In summary, seeing a friend or relative of a client raises a multitude of professional and ethical issues, some of which have been raised here. These will be addressed further in future *Perspective* articles.

Due to the nature of social work and social service work, and of helping relationships, dilemmas involving boundary crossings certainly will arise. With the exception of the most serious boundary violations, it is not useful to declare absolute prohibitions. Rather it is more useful for the member to make a sound professional judgment based on each individual situation. In every case a member must remember that the best interest of the client is the primary professional obligation.

Members must learn about this critical topic throughout their professional training. However, regardless of level of training or experience, the member must be vigilant about

The Development of a Continuing Competence Program

Practice Notes: Boundary Violations

boundary issues, to make sound judgments when these dilemmas arise, and to recognize indicators of pre-sexual boundary violations.

Much has been written on the critical topic of boundary violations and this article is not intended as an exhaustive review of this complex issue. Rather it is meant to increase members' awareness and provide some guidance about how to approach boundary dilemmas.

Important Considerations in Avoiding Boundary Violations

- remain current with knowledge and practice relevant to areas of professional practice, in keeping with the continuing competence requirements of the College
- become familiar with and refer to the Act, Regulations, *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook* for guidance
- engage in supervision or consultation, especially when considering conduct that deviates from usual practice
- engage in personal therapy, if needed; and
- ensure that any boundary crossing has evidence of relevant factors being considered and the rationale for the decision, and that this is documented.

For more information about relevant guidelines, please refer to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook:

Principle I, Relationship with Clients

1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7

Principle II, Competence and Integrity

2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2

Principle III, Responsibility to Clients

3.7, 3.8, footnote 6

Principle V, Confidentiality

5.1.6

Principle VIII, Sexual Misconduct

Over the last year, the College's Standards of Practice Committee has continued to develop a continuing competence program, and in the coming months, the committee will propose the program to the Executive Committee and Council. Once the program is approved, the committee anticipates piloting it prior to launching it with members.



Based on its research of other regulatory Colleges' continuing competence programs, the committee has been developing the various components of a program—one based on an adult education model, which would require each member to carry out an annual self-assessment based on the standards of practice. The self-assessment would then help members identify learning goals, either to enhance competence in a particular area or to identify areas for new learning. Members then would identify strategies for reaching these goals.

In order to ensure accessibility, the committee recommends defining learning strategies broadly to include not only attendance at workshops or conferences, but also such activities as independent study, teaching and conducting research. The primary objective is to ensure that learning strategies are directly linked to learning goals, which in turn, are related to the standards of practice.

The College has received many calls from members with questions about the continuing competence program. Following are some of the frequently asked questions and their corresponding answers:

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The Development of a Continuing Competence Program

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Should I be collecting professional development credits?

It is expected that all members engage in ongoing professional development. As stated in Principle II of the standards of practice regarding competence and integrity, "College members are committed to ongoing professional development and maintaining competence in their practice. College members remain current with emerging social work or social service work knowledge and practice relevant to their areas of professional practice. Members demonstrate their commitment to ongoing professional development by engaging in any continuing education and continuing competence measures required by the College."

Accordingly, it is a professional obligation to engage in ongoing professional development. However, since the specific requirements for demonstrating continuing competence are not yet in place, collecting professional development credits is not necessary.

I am planning an educational workshop for social workers and social service workers. What is the process for having this event approved for educational credits?

The College does not approve educational sessions or workshops for credits. You may wish to issue a certificate of attendance to participants, which they can retain as a record of their participation in an educational workshop.

Will the requirements of the continuing competence program be retroactive?

The program will not be retroactive; however, once the continuing competence program is approved, all members will be given notice of the start date in sufficient time to ensure that all members are able to participate.

Will I get credit for professional development I did before the continuing competence program was launched?

This is a question that will require further consideration prior to the program being implemented. However, members are reminded of their obligations under the standards of practice to be committed to ongoing professional development, to maintain competence in their practice and to remain current with emerging social work or social service work knowledge and practice relevant to their areas of professional practice.

My employer does not provide financial assistance for ongoing education. How can I be expected to attend workshops or conferences?

Attendance at workshops and conferences is only one way of learning. We anticipate that the definition of learning strategies will be broad so that everyone can participate in the program. Members will need to consider various resources for meeting learning goals.

My employer has increased my caseload and is requiring me to do additional administrative tasks. With such a heavy workload, I have no time to fulfil continuing competence requirements.

The primary purpose of a continuing competence program is to ensure that members meet professional and ethical standards and that ongoing professional development occurs. This is one way that the College fulfils its mandate of protecting the public interest.

In accordance with the Registration Regulation of the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, a member must provide evidence of continuing competence to practise social work or social service work according to the guidelines set by the College. It is anticipated that members will be required to provide an annual declaration of their participation in the continuing competence program. One of the responsibilities of being regulated professionals is to ensure that requirements set out in legislation are met.

For more information, contact Pamela Blake, M.S.W., RSW, Director of Professional Practice and Education, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380, ext. 205. E-mail: pblake@ocswssw.org

Standards of Practice Consultation – Update

In May 2003, the final reports from the standards of practice consultation were received from Zorzi and Associates. The consultation, which began in the fall of 2002, included member and stakeholder focus groups and a questionnaire sent to all members. In July 2003 an update and summary of the consultation was sent to members and stakeholder groups who participated in focus groups.

The standards, which all registered members receive, are used to guide and assess the professional behaviour of registered social workers and registered social service workers who, regardless of particular work situations, are accountable to these standards. The standards should be used in conjunction with relevant legislation, organizational policies and professional knowledge and judgment. As stated in Principle II, Competence and Integrity, 2.1.3., “College members maintain current knowledge of policies, legislation, programs and issues related to the community, its institutions and services in their areas of practice.”

Results from member focus groups and the questionnaire were extremely useful, as the College takes steps to ensure that standards remain relevant to practice realities. The time and effort put forward by members participating in the consultation also was noted and appreciated.

Feedback from both the focus groups and the questionnaire indicates that many members see the standards as broad and in some cases, vague. While some members commented that this was important in order to leave room for professional judgment, others indicated they wanted more specific guidance. However, while it is neither possible nor

desirable to develop standards that are narrow and prescriptive, the College does plan to provide education for its members about the application of standards to practice decisions, and future newsletter articles and fact sheets on this topic are planned. Members also are encouraged to contact the College to discuss practice issues.

The Standards of Practice Committee reviewed the recommendations from all components

practice, such as community and advocacy work. New practice guidelines on topics such as custody and access work and medication practices also are planned.

Members also volunteered issues of concern unrelated to the standards of practice, such as the importance of employers being familiar with the College and its standards. This information is extremely useful and will be considered.



of the consultation and identified processes for addressing these recommendations, a number of which called for revisions to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice Handbook*. Defining “social work diagnosis,” developing a glossary of terms and electronic communications guidelines are among these. Work is underway on these issues and, together with suggestions such as ensuring simple, clear language and adding an index, will be incorporated when the handbook is reprinted.

There was consensus that the standards do not currently reflect the full scope of social work practice. Plans are underway to develop new standards that are appropriate for non-direct

Members will continue to be updated and involved in the process of implementing the recommendations wherever possible. To assist the College in consulting with members about specific revisions or new standards, members will be asked to provide information about their work settings and fields of practice on the 2004 Annual Renewal of Registration form. Please take the time to complete and return this information.

For more information, contact Pamela Blake, M.S.W., RSW, Director of Professional Practice and Education, at ext. 205. E-mail: pblake@ocswssw.org

Ontario Disability Support Program

Many members are aware of the *Ontario Disability Support Act* (1997), which established the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). ODSP sets out the requirements for income and employment supports available to persons with disabilities in Ontario. In order for a person to receive income supports [related to a disability], the Act requires that “persons with prescribed



qualifications” verify the diagnosis, extent and likely duration of a person’s disability as well as “the direct and cumulative effect of the impairment on the person’s ability to attend to his or her personal care, function in the community and function in a workplace, results in a substantial restriction in one or more of these activities of daily living.”

In order for a person receiving income supports under the Act also to

receive employment supports under the Act, it is required that “persons with prescribed qualifications” verify that “the person has a physical or mental impairment that is continuous or recurrent and expected to last one year or more and that presents a substantial barrier to competitive employment.”

Regulation 222/98 and Regulation 223/98, made under the Act, define “persons with prescribed qualifications” who may verify the disability and/or the impact of the disability on a person’s activities of daily living and/or the impact of the disability on a person’s employment competitiveness. Such verification is provided by the completion of the *Health Status Report* and *The Activities of Daily Living Index*.

The *Health Status Report* may be completed by physicians, psychologists, optometrists, and registered nurses in the extended class (RNEC), licensed to practice in the Province of Ontario.

The *Activities of Daily Living Index* may be completed by physicians, psychologists, optometrists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, audiologists and registered nurses in the extended class (RNEC), licensed to practice in the Province of Ontario.

At the time the Act and regulations were passed neither social work nor social service work were regulated professions. However, many members have reported to the College that many clients with disabilities that impact activities of daily living and employment had social workers or social service workers as their primary “worker.”

Consequently, the omission of these professions from the regulations is a

public interest issue in that these clients encountered difficulties in obtaining the required verifications.

The College struck a task group to address this matter, specifically whether or not the provision of such verification was within the scope of practice of one or both professions. Additionally the task group was asked to confirm that social workers and/or social service workers had the necessary knowledge, skill and judgement to conduct such assessments. Following a thorough review of the issue, the task group concluded that “both social workers and social service workers have the required qualifications to complete the *Activities of Daily Living Index* in support of an application for ODSP.” The task group further concluded that the public is not well served by the omission of social workers and social service workers” from the list of “persons with prescribed qualifications” who can verify impact of a physical or mental impairment on a person’s activities of daily living and/or the impact of a physical or mental impairment on a person’s employment.

Council approved the report and recommendations of the task group on May 27, 2003. The report was forwarded to the Minister of Community, Family and Children’s Services requesting a change to the Regulations made under the Act. The College will continue to monitor this matter.

Members are asked to direct questions regarding this matter to Pamela Blake, M.S.W., RSW, Director of Professional Practice and Education, at ext. 205. E-mail: pblake@ocswwsw.org

Privacy Legislation in Effect January 1, 2004

The *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA) is privacy legislation that was enacted by the federal government in 2001. Initially, PIPEDA applied to federal works, including banks, radio stations and airports, and to transborder transactions. As of January 1, 2004, PIPEDA applies to organizations that collect, use or disclose personal information in the course of a “commercial activity” within Ontario.¹

“Personal information” means any information about an identifiable individual. It includes information about such matters as physical characteristics, health, religion, political affiliations, education, credit record and opinions. Personal information does not include the name, title, business address and telephone number of an employee of an organization.

PIPEDA will apply to every organization (which includes an individual) in respect of personal information that the organization collects, uses or discloses in the course of “commercial activities.” “Commercial activity” is defined as any particular transaction, act or conduct, or any regular course of conduct that is of a commercial character, including the selling, bartering or leasing of donor, membership or other fundraising lists.

Generally, PIPEDA is intended to apply to the entire private sector but may extend beyond the private sector where an organization collects, uses or discloses personal information in the course of a commercial activity. Organizations engaged in a commercial activity must justify, explain and

document why they are collecting personal information and, with some very limited exceptions, they must obtain the consent of the individual providing the information for its collection, use and disclosure. No more information than is reasonably necessary for the identified purpose shall be collected. The collection of information must be reasonable and it must be accurate. Organizations must keep personal information secure from unauthorized use or disclosure. Personal information that is no longer required should be destroyed, erased or made anonymous.

An individual has a right to be informed of the existence, use and disclosure of his or her personal information, and the individual has a right to access the information and challenge its accuracy. If the information is inaccurate, an individual has a right to have personal information corrected. If an organization breaches its obligations to properly manage personal information, the individual may complain to the Federal Privacy Commissioner who, among other things, may conduct an investigation. If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant has a right to bring proceedings in the Federal Court.

Every organization covered by PIPEDA must review its privacy practices and have information publicly available regarding the policies and procedures that will govern the handling of personal information. This publicly available information would include a description of the purposes for which personal information will be collected, used and disclosed; obtaining consent

for the collection, use and disclosure of personal information; limiting the collection and use to “what is needed,” for the purposes identified by the organization; retention and destruction policies; providing access to the person to whom the information relates; permitting the correction of erroneous information; security practices; designating a person accountable for the organization’s compliance and establishing a complaints process.

Members of the College practise social work and social service work in many different types of organizations. Those who are in private practice may be considered to be carrying on a commercial activity. The College recommends that members in private practice obtain legal advice on PIPEDA's application to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information in their practice and the steps necessary to ensure compliance with the legislation.

For those who are employed by a for-profit organization, the organization's activities generally may be considered to be carrying on a commercial activity. For those who are employed by a not-for-profit organization, some of the activities carried on by the organization may be considered to be a commercial activity. The College recommends that members who are employed by an organization consult with senior management of the organization on PIPEDA's application to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information by the organization and the steps necessary to ensure compliance with the legislation.

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¹ Under PIPEDA, an “organization” includes a person, an association, a partnership and a trade union.

Privacy Legislation in Effect January 1, 2004

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For more information about PIPEDA, members may wish to consult the Privacy Commissioner of Canada's website at <www.privcom.gc.ca>. This site has a Guide for Businesses and Organizations to Canada's *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*, which is intended to assist organizations to understand and meet their obligations under PIPEDA. The guide can be accessed at <www.privcom.gc.ca/information/guide_e.asp>.

For more information regarding PIPEDA, contact Pamela Blake, M.S.W., RSW, Director of Professional Practice and Education, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380, ext. 205. E-mail: pblake@ocswssw.org

Something new is happening to social work in the United Kingdom. After years of change and taking a battering in the media, the profession is finally "growing up." Much like Ontario over the past decade, regulation is coming to social work, finally putting it on a par with professions like nursing and medicine.

Many in the profession believe it's about time. High profile problems like the tragic deaths of children in care have tarnished the reputation of a profession that is the lifeline for about two million people. In a recent survey, 96 per cent said doctors made a significant contribution to society while social workers scored only 40 per cent. There are many reasons for this, but bad press is certainly centre stage.

Starting in early April, about 80,000 qualified social workers began registering with England's first workforce regulator, the General Social Care Council (GSCC). Social workers in Ontario might take regulation for granted; however, the changes in England have been a long time coming.

The campaign for a social care council had been going on for more than 20 years. It ended in the *Care Standards Act 2000*, launching a major government initiative to drive up standards by regulating social care.

Since coming into being in October 2001 the GSCC has grown from approximately 70 staff to 140. It produced the first codes of practice for social care workers and their employers. Developed in collaboration with the sector, they spell out the standards social care workers have to meet. They command strong support among social workers, and more than half a million have been distributed.

The codes are at the heart of the new social care register. To get on the register, social workers have to meet rigorous criteria for training and character as well as promising to obey the codes. Should they fail to meet those standards they could face a conduct committee, and ultimately become ineligible to practise if removed from the register. The main focus of the system is public protection and better services for people.

And unlike regulatory systems in other countries, the English system is not simply the profession regulating itself. The GSCC's council has a majority of lay members, and lay people are to be central to its conduct committees with the user's interests at heart.

The council also verifies the eligibility of overseas workers for U.K.-qualified social worker jobs. It is planning to allow internationally-qualified social workers to register later in 2003.

Charged also with improving the reputation of the profession, the GSCC takes its dual roles of "guardian and champion" very seriously. It is aiming to improve the reputation and status of social work and social care for the better and enjoys the backing of unions and professional bodies, as well as many social workers. According to one, "the register is a positive step. Anything that ensures widespread good practice and makes people accountable for their actions is bound to have good results."

Originally from Welland, Ontario, Mark Oakes is Director of Corporate Communications for the General Social Care Council in the U.K. For more information, visit the GSCC online at <www.gsc.org.uk>.

Professional Incorporation

In the last issue of *Perspective* members were informed that, further to amendments to the *Business Corporations Act (Ontario)* and the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act (SWSSW Act)*, they are allowed to incorporate and practise social work or social service work through a professional corporation. Although the legislation was in effect, there were a number of tasks for the College to complete before members of the professions would be able to practise social work or social service work through a professional corporation.

The following is an update on the status of those tasks:

Revise College by-laws to include professional corporations

On February 12, 2003, the Council of the College approved By-law 46 relating to professional corporations. The by-law came into effect on June 1, 2003, and sets out all matters relating to the application for, issuance of and renewal of a Certificate of Authorization. A Certificate of Authorization issued by the College is required in order to practice the profession of social work or social service work through a professional corporation.

Determine fees for the initial application process

As part of the application process, a member may elect to apply for a certificate confirming that the College does not object to the establishment of a professional corporation under a proposed name. The application fee for such a certificate is \$100. The application fee for a certificate of authorization is \$500, less the amount (to a maximum of \$200) paid in conjunction with the application for a certificate that the College does not object to the establishment of a professional corporation under a proposed name.

Determine fees for the annual renewal of certificates of authorization

The fee for the annual renewal of a certificate of authorization is \$400.

Create application forms and an application guide

For the convenience of members, the application guide and application forms will be available on the College website in PDF format. Adobe Acrobat will be required to download the forms and guide.

Update the register of the College to include information related to professional corporations

In accordance with the SWSSW Act and the by-laws of the College the register of the College will include the name of every professional corporation issued a certificate of authorization; if applicable, the name of each professional corporation in which the member of the College is a shareholder; the name and registration number of each of the shareholders of each professional corporation; the name of each of the officers and directors of each professional corporation and the title and office held by each such person; the business address, business telephone number, facsimile number and e-mail address of each professional corporation; the address and telephone number of any location (other than the residences of clients) at which professional services are provided by a professional corporation; if applicable, any practice name used by a professional corporation; any terms, conditions and limitations applicable to the certificate of authorization of any professional corporation; and a notation of every revocation or suspension of a certificate of authorization.

Review and revise the Standards of Practice

By-law 46 sets out the standards of practice for every member of the College who is a shareholder, officer or director of a professional corporation. Additionally, By-law 48 amended certain sections of the Standards of Practice Handbook. The amended sections of the Standards of Practice are included with this issue of *Perspective*.

For more information regarding professional incorporation, please contact Gail Vormaworh, Office Manager, at 416-972-9882 or 1-877-828-9380, ext. 202. E-mail: gvormaworh@ocswssw.org

Letters To The Editor

Hamilton RSWs Applauded

The College received the following client letter on November 18, 2002, and is reprinted with permission of all parties. Perspective encourages its readers to submit similar accounts for possible publication. Please send your letters to <editor@ocswssw.org>.

Recently my grandmother fell and broke her hip and was hospitalized for approximately three months. Until this time, she and her husband had been living independently in Hamilton, with their family living out of town. I live in Scarborough, their daughter-in-law (son deceased) and grandson in Forest, near Sarnia, Ontario. Being a nurse I knew we would need help and planning. I asked to speak with a social worker.

This is when we met Cherilyn vanBerkel (McMaster University Medical Ward 4Y). She was professional at all times, making time to talk with us as a family, and try and set up care for my grandfather in the community, and figured out that our goal as a family was to keep them together.

My grandmother was transferred to Henderson [Hospital] for rehabilitation. Although we had planned well, it became apparent that my grandfather could no longer stay at home alone. He was not eating, or drinking and had become dehydrated and depressed. We took him to Henderson Hospital for admission.

During their hospitalization my grandfather celebrated his 89th birthday, and their 65th wedding anniversary. He was also diagnosed with lung cancer.

This is where we met Catriona

[Mascarin] and Terry [Banham]. It was decided that my grandparents would need long term/palliative care. Our goal remained unchanged. It was a lot to ask. Almost unrealistic but, we wanted them to be together. They needed to be together.

Through many hours of rounds, planning, discussing, I'm sure swaying of doctor's opinions about discharge, and official and unofficial family meetings, our goal was met. On July 15th they were transferred from Hamilton Henderson General Hospital, in the same ambulance to the same nursing home into a couple room in Forest. Sadly, my grandfather passed away the next day. They were able to spend his last moments side by side.

As a family, we want to recognize the time, effort and energy that went into meeting our goal. Cartriona and Terry worked as a team, professional at all times, comforting when needed, helpful always. As a nurse I have always known that social workers are an integral part of our health care system, but now I know as a layperson how true it is.

On behalf of my family, thank you,
Leslie and Mark Ramage and family

Perspective O.K. in U.K.

I read with interest a copy of *Perspective* on your website and wanted to let you know that I found it very interesting. Some of the issues being raised are similar to those being experienced by our organization and the social care sector in England. The General Social Care Council came into being in October 2001 as a result of legislation brought in by the U.K. parliament to regulate the social

care workforce in England. More than 1.2 million people work in social care and our new register will be launched in April with qualified social workers being the first wave of professionals to be registered. The task will take a number of years to complete but is seen as an essential part of improving standards of care in England and also improving the reputation of a profession that has taken a battering in recent times.

If you think your readers might be interested in some of the developments in the U.K., I'd be happy to write an article for you. I'm originally from the Niagara peninsula.

Mark Oakes
Director of Corporate Communications
General Social Care Council
Goldings House, London U.K.

(Editor's note: Mark Oakes' Article appears in this issue of Perspective on page 16.)

RSSW Chimes in on High Note

Thank you for an excellent newsletter. I finally got a chance to read it, and found it most useful. I am a Registered Social Service Worker, and work in a long-term care facility. Currently my job is not hands-on social service work, but I strive to apply my skills wherever I can! The *Perspective* Publication brings me back to reality, helping me remember, and keep in touch with, my roots.

I especially enjoyed the articles on Regulatory colleges, Practice Notes and Bulletin Board.

Thank you again, and I anticipate the next newsletter this year, probably in the summer.

Juliana R. Billing, RSSW

One of the strategic goals of the College is improving communication with our members. If you have comments or questions about the College, please

forward them to:
Sam Title, Communication Manager
80 Bloor Street West, Suite 700,
Toronto ON M5S 2V1

E-mail: editor@ocswssw.org
Some letters to the editor may be edited for spelling, grammar and space.

Bulletin Board

"I HAVE MY PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION...NOW WHAT?"

Members who hold a provisional certificate of registration have signed an undertaking to successfully complete additional training approved by the College in social work/social service work ethics and standards of practice. This must be done, to the satisfaction of the Registrar, within three years after the day the College notifies the member of the additional training.

The College is establishing the specific requirements of the additional training—once Council approves policy, the Registrar will notify members holding provisional certificates of registration of those requirements. For more information on additional training requirements for provisional certificate holders, please contact Mindy Coplevitch, RSW, Director of Registration, at extension 203. E-mail: mcoplevitch@ocswssw.org

ELECTION 2004: GET INVOLVED

The next election for members of the College to be elected to the Council of the College will take place on May 27, 2004. In 2004, elections will take place in District One (Northern Ontario¹); District Two (Eastern Ontario); and District Five (Southwestern Ontario). Each of the three districts will elect one social work member and one social service work member to Council.

All members² are encouraged to consider participating in this important process. The Council governs the College and is accountable for ensuring that the legislated responsibilities as outlined in the Act are carried out. As such Council members play a leadership role in the regulation of the professions, reflecting the professions' commitment to professional regulation in the public interest. A call for nominations will be sent to members of the College in Districts one, two and five at the end of January 2004.

Members are encouraged to contact Pat Lieberman, Manager, Council and Employee Relations, at [<plieberman@ocswssw.org>](mailto:plieberman@ocswssw.org), with any questions regarding the election process.

COUNCIL MEETING NOTICE

The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 13 and Wednesday, January 14, 2004.

College Council meetings are open to the public and are held at the College office in Toronto. Visitors attend as observers only. Seating is limited. To reserve a seat, please fax your request to the College at 416-972-1512 or send it via e-mail to [<plieberman@ocswssw.org>](mailto:plieberman@ocswssw.org). Please monitor the College's website for any updates and additional information.

PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE COLLEGE

If you are interested in participating on one of the College's committees or task groups, please e-mail Pat Lieberman, Manager, Council and Employee Relations, at [<plieberman@ocswssw.org>](mailto:plieberman@ocswssw.org) to receive an application form.

The College welcomes all applications; however, the number of available positions for non-Council member participation is limited to the statutory committee requirements in the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*, and by the by-laws and policies of the College.



¹ For a specific geographic description of the Electoral districts for the election purposes, please refer to the College website.

² Details regarding eligibility requirements to stand for election to the College Council can be found on the College website.



Ontario College of
Social Workers and
Social Service Workers

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers protects the interest of the public by regulating the practice of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and promoting excellence in practice.

VISION STATEMENT:

The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers strives for organizational excellence in its mandate in order to:
Serve the public interest; regulate its members; and be accountable and accessible to the community.

Perspective is the official publication of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. It is published twice a year. The College serves and protects the interest of the public by regulating the practice of social workers and social service workers and promoting excellence in practice.

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Contact Pat for Council information.

REGISTRATION

Mindy Coplevitch
Director
Ext. 203 or E-mail:
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Susanne Pacheco
Registration Coordinator
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Ema Sevdina
Registration Administrator
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Elaine Hall
Registration Administrator
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Contact Mindy, Susanne, Ema or Elaine when inquiring about the registration process.

Frances Ma
Registration Assistant

Angella Rose,
Registration Assistant

For general registration inquiries, please e-mail:
registration@ocswssw.org

MEMBERSHIP/ADMINISTRATION

Gail Vormaworh
Office Manager
Ext. 202 or E-mail:
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Lynda Belouin
Membership Administrator (bilingual)
Ext. 212 or E-mail:
lbelouin@ocswssw.org

Catherine Painter
Information Assistant

Nadira Singh
Information Assistant

Contact Gail, Lynda, Catherine or Nadira for general information, status of application inquiries, register requests, as well as fees information and address changes. For general inquiries, please e-mail: info@ocswssw.org

COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE

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Tracey Richards
Administrative Assistant
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trichards@ocswssw.org

Contact Marlene or Tracey for information on complaints, discipline and mandatory reporting.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND EDUCATION

Pamela Blake
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Contact Pamela with professional practice questions.

COMMUNICATIONS

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Contact Sam regarding College publications, media inquiries and the website.

FINANCE

Eva Yueh
Financial Administrator
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REMINDER:

If you change employers or move, advise the College in writing within 30 days. We are required to have the current business address of our members available to the public. Address change information can be e-mailed to info@ocswssw.org, faxed to 416-972-1512 or mailed to our office address. Changes of address must be made in writing and include your registration reference number, your old address and your new address information.