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- Hon. Adrian Dix, Minister of Health.*



Our Regulatory Future: The Minister of Health Discusses

Hon. Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, British Columbia

1. What is one of the biggest benefits to the modernization of the health regulatory bodies?

The goal of modernizing health profession regulation in B.C. is to put patients first. In August 2020, the multi-party steering committee on modernizing health profession regulation made recommendations in six areas of focus: cultural safety and humility, improved governance of regulatory colleges, improved efficiency and effectiveness through a reduction in the number of regulatory colleges, strengthening oversight, improving the complaints process and transparency, and information sharing.

These recommendations will help make B.C.'s health system more culturally safe; ensure board members put public interest and patient safety first; create fewer, better resourced regulatory colleges; increase accountability and transparency by defining, measuring and reporting on performance standards; create clearer separation between the investigation and discipline stages of complaints; and increase information sharing to help regulatory colleges, health authorities and other agencies to better work together to protect the public.

2. What opportunities and/or solutions will this restructuring create?

The proposals being put forward are the outcomes of the collaboration we've done in the province, and draw on input that we invited from the public, health professionals, regulators, associations, Indigenous partners, unions, and health authorities.

Not only are the recommendations an opportunity to bring the province's regulatory system into the 21st century, they leverage opportunities to find efficiencies in the system, increase transparency and accountability, and ensure that ultimately, patient safety is at its forefront.

3. Were physiotherapists in B.C. consulted about these changes? What did they offer in terms of weighing in on the plans?

Absolutely. Two phases of public and health sector partner consultations were held. I thank the PABC and the individual physiotherapists who engaged with this work and provided feedback. We released a What We Heard report with a summary of the engagement results.

Our steering committee considered all feedback, which helped us confirm that there is support for modernizing health profession regulation in B.C.; and that we share the common goal of ensuring that regulatory colleges place public interest and patient safety first. Feedback also helped us revise our proposal for reducing the number of regulatory colleges and recommend splitting the originally proposed large umbrella regulator into two: one for allied health and care professionals, which would regulate several professions, including physiotherapy; and a second for complementary and alternative health and care professionals.

4. How will these changes help B.C.'s hardworking healthcare workers?

These changes improve the system for all of us. For health care professionals, a culturally safe health care system benefits all British Columbians, as does board membership based on clearly set out competencies and overseen by an independent body; a strong regulator resource base will allow regulators to provide registrants with timely, up-to-date standards and guidance; an oversight body for health profession regulators can increase accountability and lead to greater public trust; and a new independent discipline process can increase consistency in discipline processes and outcomes.

5. What is your advice for physiotherapists and physiotherapist assistants in B.C., who might soon have to adapt to this remodelling of the regulatory system?

Changes to the regulatory framework will be implemented with input from The College of Physical Therapists of BC (CPTBC) to ensure an effective transition for regulators, health professionals, and members of the public.

Until any changes are made, the College of Physical Therapists of BC (CPTBC) is responsible for regulating physical therapists in the public's interest and will continue to have this responsibility. On the day-to-day, physiotherapists and physiotherapist assistants will interact with the new regulator in the same way as they do now with the existing regulator, as they perform the same function.

I encourage your readers to follow the progression of this work on the Ministry of Health's Professional Regulation [website](#).