



The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Prince Edward Island

14 Paramount Dr.
Charlottetown, PE C1E 0C7
Phone: 902-566-3861 Fax: 902-566-3986
Website: www.cpspei.ca

STATEMENT ON Withdrawal of Physicians Services

DESCRIPTION

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Prince Edward Island uses, as its ethical guide, the CMA Code of Ethics as developed by the Canadian Medical Association. Article One of the code states, “*Consider first the well-being of the patient*” and Article Ten states, “*Having accepted professional responsibility for a patient, continue to provide services until they are no longer required or wanted, until another suitable physician has assumed responsibility for the patient or until the patient has been given adequate notice that you intend to terminate the relationship.*”

Definition - Withdrawal of Services during Job Actions

The temporary discontinuance of medical services for the sole purpose of applying pressure on one’s employer during times of negotiation.

Preamble

The College acknowledges the right of physicians to withdraw services under specific circumstances. It also acknowledges its obligation to communicate clearly to all parties what is expected from the medical profession in Prince Edward Island during any withdrawal of services.

The College reaffirms that discontinuing required services to existing patients without arranging alternative services or providing reasonable notice is unacceptable and may constitute Professional Misconduct.

What does the College expect from physicians who wish to withdraw services?

- The College expects that individual physicians will adhere to their ethical obligations and avoid placing their patients at undue risk.
- The College expects and is confident that physicians in Prince Edward Island will act responsibly toward patients during any withdrawal of services.

- The College expects and is confident that physicians in Prince Edward Island will provide appropriate emergency care and will ensure that patients are not abandoned.
- The College expects that physicians will put in place a plan that will ensure patient access to emergency and other required services in circumstances where groups of physicians decide to withdraw services at the same time.
- The College expects that any physicians choosing to withdraw services will inform patients of their decision and assure that patients are informed of the availability of emergency services.
- The College expects that physicians will recognize the need for ongoing monitoring of their patients with conditions that could deteriorate during a delay in treatment resulting from a withdrawal of services.
- The College expects and is confident that physicians will make appropriate arrangements for the treatment of patients under their care who remain hospitalized or who are receiving or completing a course of treatment and who may suffer if the course of treatment is not continued or completed.

What does the College expect from the physician members of its Council and Committees?

- The College expects that physician members of the Council and its Committees will refrain from participating in a service withdrawal related to a job action in order to avoid a potential conflict of interest.

What can the public expect from the College during a withdrawal of physician services?

- The College will monitor the situation in Prince Edward Island communities by communicating with individual physicians, with the Medical Society of Prince Edward Island and with district health authority directors and administrators to address concerns regarding patient access to medical care and to resolve difficulties where possible.
- If the College receives written complaints arising from a withdrawal of physician services, it will apply its established investigative process to these complaints.

	<p><i>Acknowledgements:</i> The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Prince Edward Island wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the following licensing authorities in the development of this policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Quebec – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia – The Medical Board of Newfoundland.
<p>APPLICABLE LEGISLATION</p>	
<p>APPROVED BY:</p>	<p>Council of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of PEI Approved: May 9, 2001</p>
<p>REVIEWED:</p>	<p>DATE:</p>