

April Bulletin for Physicians

DEAR COLLEGE MEMBERS,

We are excited to share the latest updates and achievements of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick. In our Annual Report released in November, we shared all of the work that the College was undertaking and the goals that we had set for the upcoming year. In this bulletin, we want to update you on some of our recent accomplishments, the Annual Renewal Process, the launch of the Atlantic Registry, and more.

Annual Renewal Process

We understand that our new annual renewal process has been an adjustment for many of our members. We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we continue to refine our process. We received extremely helpful feedback related to the content of the annual attestation and will be revising it for 2024. We would like to thank the over 2000 physicians who have completed the attestation. Your commitment to maintaining high professional standards helps improve patient care and maintains the integrity of the profession. Receipts and membership cards have been sent to these physicians.

We would like to remind the very small number of physicians who have not completed the attestation that it is a mandatory component of the renewal process. Multiple reminders have been sent and College staff have also been reaching out to physicians. **Physicians who have not completed the attestation by June 1, 2023 will be suspended as per the direction provided by Council at its March 24, 2023 meeting.** If suspended, members will be required to complete the attestation and pay a reinstatement fee to have their licence reactivated. Please reach out to the College immediately if you have not completed your attestation or if you have not received your receipt and membership card.

Atlantic Registry

We are pleased to inform you the Atlantic Registry will begin on May 1, 2023. This allows New Brunswick physicians with a Regular Licence, without restrictions, conditions, or competency concerns, to have full mobility to work in other Atlantic Provinces. This Registry will significantly benefit physicians by providing them with the opportunity to work in the other Atlantic provinces without additional paperwork, while also helping to address physician shortages in critical areas.

To enroll in the Atlantic Registry, interested physicians can apply and pay a \$500 annual fee. Additional information will be on our **website**.

We continue to work with our partner colleges to further harmonize and align our registration practices in Atlantic Canada. Further announcements will be available soon on our website.

Achievement Highlights

We are pleased to report on the progress we have made in several areas:

PRACTICE READINESS ASSESSMENT:

This program is aimed at assessing International Medical Graduates' eligibility for licensure with an initial primary focus on Family Medicine. The program will comprise of centralized screening, selection, orientation and a clinical field assessment. Program development is well underway and we are currently hiring staff. We are targeting a launch date later this fall or in winter 2024. Further information, eligibility criteria and how to apply will be published on our website.

IT SYSTEMS UPDATES:

We have signed on with a company that specializes in case management systems for Medical Regulatory Authorities and has extensive experience supporting other health regulators in New Brunswick. This will modernize our system to take advantage of the latest standards in data protection, and ensure that our registrant information is secure and protected. The transition will begin in June 2023 and will be implemented in several phases. The first phase will target annual renewals, fees, and attestations. When fully launched, members will also have the ability to update addresses, print invoices, make payments, and more, on this online platform.

Program Highlights

PEER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE PROGRAM (PAC):

The ability to self-regulate is both a responsibility and a privilege. PAC, based in Moncton, operates with a part-time staff of two, a PAC Board of five physicians, and sixteen trained assessors, all of whom are themselves practising physicians. The process and assessment results remain confidential from the College.

The PAC is still increasing capacity post Covid. This year, PAC anticipates performing 40 onsite, 20 virtual, and 30 offsite reviews. The vast majority of physicians reviewed find the process to be a very positive experience. Their feedback indicates they appreciate the opportunity to discuss their work and share ideas with their peers. For more information on PAC, please visit our **website**.

PHYSICIAN HEALTH MONITORING PROGRAM:

The Physician Health Monitoring program is responsible for providing ongoing monitoring of health conditions to ensure physicians remain healthy and can carry out their professional duties. The aim is to ensure physicians have the support they require to balance health needs with clinical responsibilities.

If you are a physician, resident, or medical student, with a health condition, we encourage you to seek assistance early to minimize the impact on your practice. The College values our members' health and provides quick access to assessment and information about treatment options. If you have questions concerning the monitoring program, Chantal Cloutier (Physician Health Advisor) can be reached at chantalcloutier@cpsnb.org. Resources are also available through the **NBMS Wellness program**.

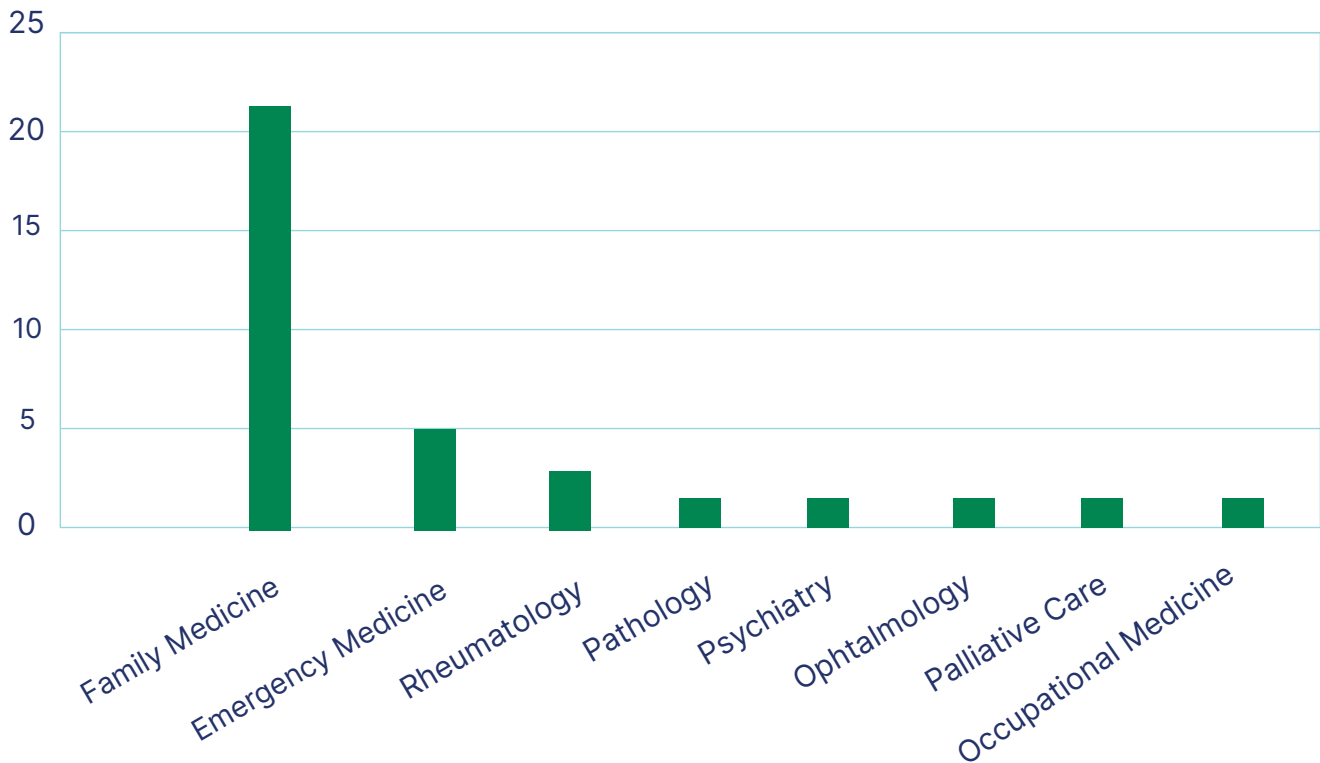
Professional Conduct Department

We are dedicated to ensuring patients receive the highest quality care possible. We remind all physicians to familiarize themselves with our **Guidelines** and to contact our department if they have any questions or concerns. We appreciate the dedication of physicians to providing quality healthcare and are committed to supporting you throughout your career.

Our commitment extends to our complaint resolution process. We are currently addressing 64 open complaints.

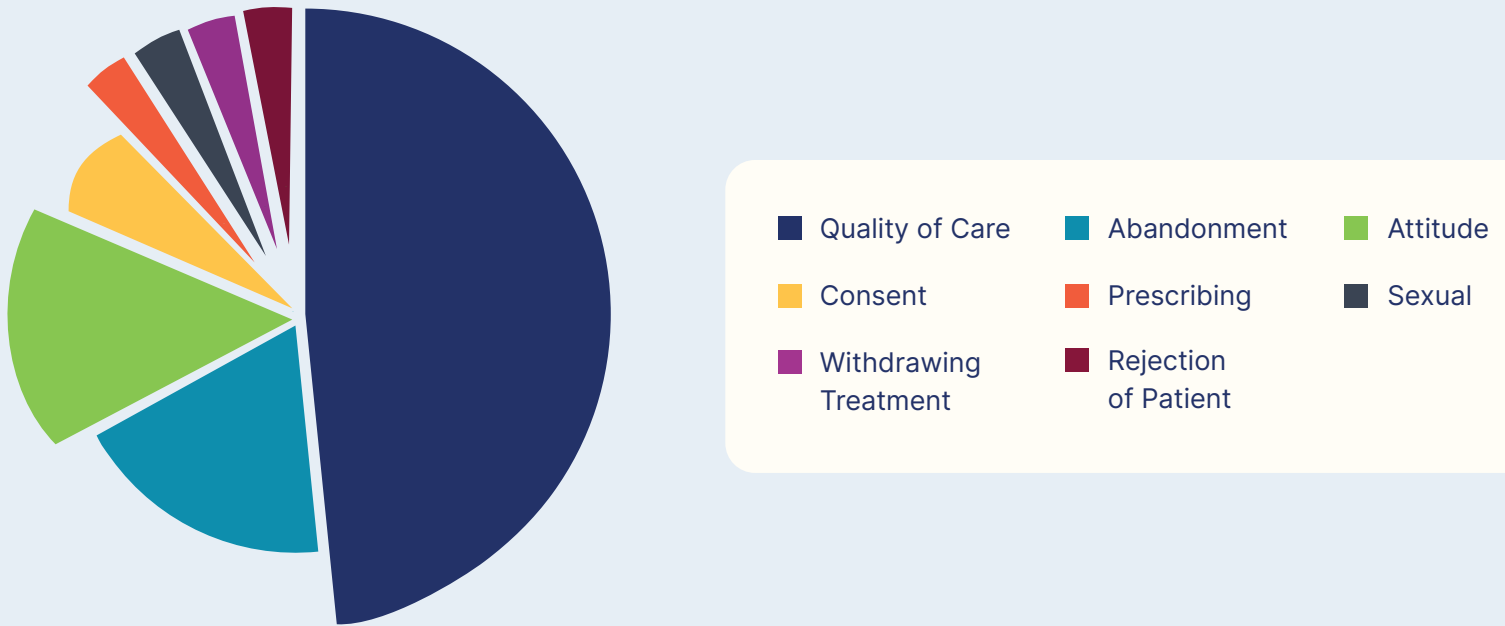
In the first quarter of 2023, family medicine was the highest volume of complaints, followed by emergency medicine.

COMPLAINTS PER DISCIPLINE



The complaints received in the first quarter of 2023 are varied in nature, with quality of care being the dominant category.

COMPLAINTS BY CATEGORY



The Complaints Committee has observed certain trends in complaints resolved over the past six months and offers some learning points to members. Below are some themes and helpful tips.

PRIVACY

Protecting patient privacy is crucial to building trust with your patients and is a critical component of providing quality healthcare.

- Always obtain clear written consent from the patient before disclosing any diagnosis, prognosis, or treatment plan to their employer.
- Refrain from commenting on Google reviews or RateMD reviews, as this may lead to breaches of privacy as the patient may be identified in the initial review or in the physician’s comments.
- Ensure your office staff is aware of privacy obligations, such as the use of personal emails to send patient charts.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

Proper follow-up care after surgery or a test is essential to ensure the best possible outcomes for your patients. .

- Do not rely on the patient to schedule a follow-up appointment following surgery or investigations. As a physician, you have a responsibility to take a proactive approach in scheduling follow-up appointments and reviewing test results. Ensure the patient is seen in an appropriate period of time following interventions.
- The physician who requests an investigation has the obligation to review the results and direct care as appropriate.
- Specialists should inform patients of any symptoms to watch for which may require a new/urgent appointment and how to contact them if needed.

Responding to complaints

We understand that receiving a complaint can be stressful and time-consuming, but we urge all physicians to prioritize timely and compassionate responses to ensure that all issues are thoroughly investigated and resolved. As a reminder, the failure to respond to a complaint may also constitute professional misconduct.

A response is required within 60 days of receipt of the complaint. Read the complaint carefully and make note of any specific issues or concerns and take the time to respond thoughtfully as your response is almost always sent to the patient. Some complaints can even be resolved at this stage if the complainant is satisfied with the physician's response. We recommend seeking guidance from the Canadian Medical Protective Association, who can provide assistance for most types of complaints. Keep us informed throughout the process, and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Call for Committee Members

We are actively seeking new members to join our Complaints and Registration Committee and our Review Committee in order to broaden the expertise of these committees. As a committee member, you will have the opportunity to make a real difference in the medical profession, by resolving complaints, and promoting the highest standards of professionalism. By joining one of these committees, you'll gain valuable experience, build your professional network, and develop new skills. You will have the chance to work alongside other passionate professionals, sharing your knowledge and expertise to help make a real impact.

If you are interested in learning more about the roles and responsibilities of committee members, or would like to apply to join one of these committees, please click [here](#) for more information, or you can get in touch with us directly. We look forward to hearing from you!

Contact Information

As part of our commitment to communicating with you more regularly, we want to ensure that we have your most up-to-date contact information so that we can keep you informed of important updates from the College. We are reminding members of their professional obligation to provide the College with accurate and current contact information. Going forward, all College communication to members will be sent via email, and we expect all members to read and stay informed of these communications.

National Doctor's Day - May 1

We want to conclude by thanking you, our valued College members, for your tireless work supporting patients and communities in New Brunswick. We greatly appreciate your ongoing dedication to the medical profession and your commitment to providing exceptional healthcare. As we move forward, we look forward to our continued partnership with you and to supporting you throughout your career. Please reach out to us with any questions or feedback.

Happy National Doctors Day!

CPSNB



COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
AND SURGEONS OF
NEW BRUNSWICK



COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS
ET CHIRURGIENS DU
NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK