

FAQ's

Regulation of Recreation Therapists



Why is the College exploring the possibility of regulating Recreation Therapists?

Our Alberta Health liaison presented ACOT with the possibility of regulating Recreation Therapists. The reason the College exists is to ensure Albertans receive competent and ethical OT health services and the possibility of regulating Recreation Therapists falls within this mandate. It would ensure Albertans receive competent and ethical service from Recreation Therapists who are skilled with an adequate education.

Is partnership between professions for regulation purposes commonplace in Alberta?

Yes, there are many examples of different professions being regulated under one college to ensure Albertans receive competent and ethical healthcare service. The Alberta Government has been promoting partnerships with existing regulated colleges because it believes it is a more fiscally responsible and sustainable model.

For example, the Alberta College of Medical Diagnostic and Therapeutic Technologists regulate Radiological Technologists, Radiation Therapists, Nuclear Medicine Technologists, Magnetic Resonance technologists, and Electroneurophysiology Technologists. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, regulate Physicians and Surgeons as well as Physician Assistants. The Alberta College of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists regulate the professions of Speech-Language Pathologists as well as audiologists.

If this initiative moves forward would it affect Occupational Therapists' employment or wages?

We don't anticipate any effect—employers, marketplace and the union determine positions and wages.

If the initiative moved forward would the annual professional fees change?

We would not predict a change in fees for the foreseeable future. Any change that eventually occurs will be due to economic changes, not the addition of Recreation Therapists.

If the initiative moves forward will Occupational Therapy titles be affected?

The protected titles for Occupational Therapists will not change, it is in regulation and therefore the law.

If Recreation Therapists become regulated they will have their own separate protected titles and would be required to register with the college in order to use them.

If this initiative moves forward will it affect our current legislation, regulations, bylaws, standards of practice and code of ethics?

There is currently no plan for altering the legislation governing Occupational Therapists and the committee will discuss the legislative aspect of the process with the representative of Alberta Health.

If the initiative moves forward how does regulating Recreation Therapists affect the College's finances?

If the initiative moves forward, Recreation Therapists will contribute financially to the College through payment of professional fees. If there are any costs associated with adding Recreation Therapists to the College, the costs should be covered by their first year of professional fees.

If the initiative moves forward why would the College wish to regulate Recreation Therapists?

The College, the Alberta Government and the Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association recognize that it is important for Albertans to know that their recreation therapist has achieved certain registration requirements, is engaged in a continuing competence program and adheres to a Standard of Practice and Code of Ethics.

Who do I contact if I have more questions?

If you have questions, please email them to council@acot.ca.

What are the next steps?

The committee has one more town hall scheduled as a webinar. The feedback from the townhall meetings will be discussed at the next ACOT council meeting on January 30, 2017.

When will I receive follow-up information?

As the process proceeds we will send out eNews with updates on the initiative's progress. Initial discussions are in the works, but moving forward with recreation therapists' regulation is ultimately dependent on the Alberta government—they have the ability to stop, delay, or accelerate the process at any time.