



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS  
OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

SPRING 2022



# 2021 SNAPSHOT



**NEW COLLEGE  
REGISTRAR IN  
DECEMBER:  
DR. TANIS ADEY**

**1,585  
NEW & RENEWED  
MEDICAL LICENCES  
ISSUED**

**604  
NEW & RENEWED  
PROFESSIONAL  
MEDICAL  
CORPORATION  
LICENCES ISSUED**

**97  
LOCUM  
LICENCES\*  
ISSUED**

**103  
COMPLAINTS  
ABOUT  
PHYSICIAN CONDUCT  
RECEIVED**

**80  
COMPLAINTS  
FILES  
CLOSED**

**COMPLAINTS  
ABOUT  
PROFESSIONALISM  
ON THE  
INCREASE**

**MEDIAN TIMES  
TO CLOSE  
COMPLAINTS  
FILES REDUCED  
BY 3 MONTHS**

\* Total does not include Postgraduate  
Educational Licences

## OUR VISION

Trusted quality  
medical care  
in the public interest  
through the  
effective regulation  
of medical doctors.



CYBER  
SECURITY  
ASSESSMENT  
COMPLETED

480  
CERTIFICATES OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
CONDUCT ISSUED

REDESIGN AND  
ENHANCEMENTS  
OF CPSNL.CA  
COMPLETED

8  
NEW OR REVISED  
STANDARDS  
OF PRACTICE

15  
FAMILY PHYSICIAN  
PEER REVIEWS  
COMPLETED

11  
FITNESS  
TO PRACTISE  
CASE REVIEWS  
CONDUCTED

NEW COURSE:  
“PROVIDING  
CULTURALLY SAFE  
HEALTH CARE FOR  
INDIGENOUS  
PATIENTS IN NL”

25  
NOTICES TO  
COLLEGE MEMBERS  
CIRCULATED

10  
PHYSICIANS  
UNDER  
HEALTH  
MONITORING

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The College—  
CPSNL— sees the  
value in continuing  
to use technology to  
overcome geographic  
and other barriers  
as we transition from  
the restrictions of the  
global pandemic.



As in 2020, the College’s resilience and fortitude were again tested by global issues in 2021. COVID-19 concerns did not recede and cyber security risks were highlighted, forcing the College once more to pivot through both ongoing and new challenges.

Businesses and regulatory bodies alike are now vigorously **debating the future of in-person and remote work**. Highly touted “hybrid work” was meant to combine and benefit from the best aspects of both approaches, but this idyllic new reality is more elusive than many had hoped. As had occurred earlier in the year, College staff resumed remote work on December 20, 2021, returning to in-person operations on January 31, 2022. We continue to conduct much business with stakeholders remotely, however, and **see the value in continuing to use technology to overcome geographic and other barriers as we transition from the restrictions of the global pandemic**.

The College’s mandate did not change in 2021, but how we accomplished our work was necessarily affected by circumstances beyond our control and by our adaptations to them. This report speaks to our five main lines of work: licensing, quality programming, complaints, governance, and College operations. With a staff of 16, it takes all of us working well together to deliver on the College mandate, which is similar to that of larger colleges with many more employees and resources. CPSNL continues to regularly assess our work progress against an annual Work Plan

## 2021 IN REVIEW



**The physicians we  
license must have,  
and maintain, the  
knowledge, skills,  
and competencies  
to effectively deliver  
safe and ethical  
medical care.**

and we identify, through a yearly strategic planning exercise, the work that is expected of us, the work we want to do, and how we organize and deliver this work.

### **MATTERS OF GOVERNANCE**

The College governance structure is strong. Council members are informed and engaged, and they **challenge College staff with constructive questions**. Medical regulation is complex and ever evolving, however, and so we continue to carefully monitor governance changes in other Canadian medical regulatory authorities and those of other professional regulatory bodies.

Governance review must also address College-wide risk identification and risk-mitigation planning. Although COVID-19 advisories have recently suggested we could resume more “normal” work and operations, the College continues to involve our Council and Committees in risk identification and mitigation planning for these activities.

### **AT OUR CORE: LICENSING . . .**

Licensing physicians to practise medicine is, perhaps, the major risk activity of medical regulatory colleges. Licensing will be, and should continue to be, a major College focus.

Our College has presented to Council, government, and other health care partners for over two years on licensing changes we propose:

- To increase our ability to assure the public of quality health care
- To suggest a pathway where otherwise qualified physicians who have not yet met our provincial qualifications could be active participants in health care delivery in Newfoundland and Labrador with necessary requirements for assessment, supervision, and scope of practice

Partnerships with Memorial University’s Faculty of Medicine, the Medical Council of Canada, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada will considerably augment licensing processes and standards going forward.

### **. . . TWINNED WITH QUALITY**

As stated in the *Medical Act, 2011*, the College must (1) promote high standards of practice as well as continuing competence and quality improvement and (2) administer a quality assurance program. College work in the development and implementation of quality programming duly continues. **The physicians we license must have, and maintain, the knowledge, skills, and competencies to effectively deliver safe and ethical medical care.** The public needs assurance of their physicians’ competence and also that their physicians are practising in good health.

We designed the Physician Peer Review program (PPR-NL) to help the College achieve these goals. This program recognizes both that physicians are lifelong learners and that

## OUR MANDATE

### (2) The objects of the College include

- (a) the promotion of
  - (i) high standards of practice, and
  - (ii) continuing competence and quality improvement through continuing medical education;
- (b) the administration of a quality assurance program; and
- (c) the enforcement of standards of conduct.

As established by the *Medical Act, 2011*

their own work assessment, self-reflection, and feedback help them maintain and refine existing competencies and develop new and improved ones throughout their careers. PPR-NL resembles programs delivered by other provinces' medical regulatory authorities. We benefit by learning from each other's programs and experiences and this sharing helps us learn together about ongoing physician competency.

### ISSUES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The College Complaints Department continued to optimize how it functions during 2021. **Robust and comparable processes for both complainants and physician responders are in place** and there is year-upon-year improvement in their efficiency and effectiveness.

That said, fairness, impartiality, transparency, and timely complaint resolution remain paramount for all case files. These are the guiding values of the Complaints Authorization Committee, which oversees the College's professional conduct responsibilities.

### INTERNAL OPERATIONS AND FINANCES

The tenets of good and appropriate governance and the work of licensing physicians, delivering quality programming, and hearing complaints cannot proceed in timely and constructive ways without the support of the College's robust Operations Department. College-wide oversight of security, privacy, finance, budgeting, physical premises, human resources, and administrative policies and procedures is a foundational underpinning for everything we do. Given the demands of hybrid work, **examining how to better perform our oversight responsibilities was ongoing in 2021**. In the future, we hope to strike a balance between the convenience and productivity of remote work with the camaraderie of the office. And that augurs well for innovation.

As noted earlier, **our College is small by Canadian standards**. This means we cannot benefit from the economies of scale of larger colleges. We also have a small registrant base from which to collect fees. Solid financial stewardship in all College programs and work is thus essential. College finances remain favourable and well-managed and in 2021 we once again maintained College fees at the 2017 level. In addition, contingency funds are in place to help us cope with unforeseen circumstances, and the College budgetary process continues to grow ever more refined and detailed.

To conclude, we sincerely thank all College and Council members, our colleagues and stakeholders, and the public whom we serve for your support, encouragement, comments, and advice.

**To listen is to learn.**





**Ms. Gail Hamilton**  
CPSNL COUNCIL CHAIR

## A MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL CHAIR

As 2021 drew to a close, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador warmly welcomed Dr. Tanis Adey as its ninth registrar. She replaces Dr. Linda Inkpen, who notified College Council in September 2020 that she would retire in December 2021. The College sincerely thanks Dr. Inkpen for her outstanding leadership and service over the seven years she served in that role. Together with her CPSNL office colleagues, she placed the College on a strong administrative footing and helped both College and Council deeply understand our regulatory role in serving the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. She also ensured that administrative policies and processes were solidly in place to underpin our current work and effect changes going forward.

In August 2021, following a comprehensive search process, the College announced Dr. Adey's appointment as its new registrar. We thank all physicians who engaged in our search process. Your interest in the College's work and your perspectives on medical regulation are greatly appreciated. Dr. Adey began serving as registrar on December 1, 2021. She brings to the College her extensive leadership experience as well as her lengthy career as a medical practitioner and educator.

I offer sincere thanks to all Council members for their dedication, efforts, and support in governing the College over the last year. Together we extend our thanks to our colleague Dr. Amir Gammal for his service on Council from 2019 to 2021, which included valued contributions to the Quality Assurance, Complaints Authorization, and Licensing committees. Dr. Gammal's thoughtful contributions will be missed. We also welcome Drs. Robert Forsey, Diane Keating Power, and Kara Laing, elected or re-elected in December 2021.

Finally, Council extends heartfelt appreciation to College staff for their tireless work. Your efforts are indispensable as we strive together to deliver on the College mandate: working to ensure—in the public interest and through the effective regulation of this province's medical doctors—that there is trusted quality medical care in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.



It was my honour to be named registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador and it is my privilege to assume the responsibilities that the position entails. My heartfelt thanks go to College staff and Council for their warm welcome, patience, and support as I learn my new role, build on the work that has been done at the College, and forge new pathways that will support the College in its efforts to deliver efficiently and effectively on its mandate.

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Linda Inkpen, who provided me with support and guidance during the registrar transition. I also thank her for the tremendous work she has done, in collaboration with the College team, to advance medical regulation in this province and beyond. For a summary of Dr. Inkpen's many accomplishments as registrar, please see page 6.

College work in 2021 took place in the context of the release of *The Big Reset: The Report of the Premier's Economic Recovery Team* and the report of Health Accord for Newfoundland and Labrador: *Our Province. Our Health. Our Future. A 10-Year Health Transformation*. Looking ahead, the College must perform its regulatory role in tandem with the changes to the province's health care system that are clearly on the horizon. I welcome members' comments and advice as these changes unfold and we navigate our way through them. And I welcome public comment on College work, particularly as we move ahead on issues such as the regulation of team-based care and the growth of virtual care in our province.

I look forward to collaborating with College Council, staff, and registrants, as well as members of the public and other stakeholders. Together we will build on the solid work already accomplished while addressing the new and ongoing challenges of tomorrow.



Dr. Tanis Adey  
CPSNL REGISTRAR



## A MESSAGE FROM THE COLLEGE REGISTRAR

# A CHANGE OF WATCH IN 2021

It is fitting to note, with gratitude, a few of the achievements of our outgoing registrar in this 2021 annual report.

An experienced family physician, Dr. Inkpen formalized the College's processes in the areas of Governance, Annual Strategic and Operational Planning, Administrative Policy and Procedures, and Organizational Risk Management. She built a strong leadership team and moved legal services in-house. She oversaw the renovation of the College offices, making the facility more efficient and allowing for Council and Committee meetings—and creating surplus office space with rental capacity. Under her prudent leadership, the College has not increased the licence fee in the last five years, yet could allocate funds to cover unforeseen expenditures. Dr. Inkpen also oversaw implementation of a new Enterprise Content Management System and Registrant Management Database, as well as Human Resource Planning reviews.

The focus of her efforts and vision was not simply internal, however. In collaboration with Memorial University's Faculty of Medicine, Dr. Inkpen spearheaded the development of two mandated courses for physicians: "Introduction to Safe Prescribing," and "Providing Culturally Safe Health Care for Indigenous Patients in Newfoundland and Labrador." She further promoted

culturally safe health care by authoring the College Policy Paper: "Our Commitment to Cultural Safety – As it pertains to providing culturally safe health care to Indigenous patients in Newfoundland and Labrador."

Nationally, Dr. Inkpen sat on the Board of the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC) during her tenure as CPSNL registrar. Between 2017 and 2021 she served on FMRAC'S Executive

Committee: one year as President-elect, two years as President, and a final year as Immediate Past-President, and assumed additional FMRAC roles. FMRAC has expressed a large debt of gratitude to Dr. Inkpen for her clear-headed, take-charge attitude during the first three months of the COVID-19 global pandemic. She marshalled the Board into a weekly series of meetings for quick action on many evolving issues including emergency licensure of retired

physicians and learners in the final year of postgraduate training, unproven and misleading treatments for COVID-19, and difficult triage decisions.

Dr. Inkpen has made significant contributions to medical regulation provincially and beyond. She has left the College on a very solid footing to embrace the regulatory innovation and challenges that the future will deliver.

The CPSNL Council and her College colleagues wish to express deep thanks for her invaluable contributions and best wishes for her new adventures.



**DR. LINDA INKPEN**  
**CPSNL REGISTRAR 2014-2021**

In the College's continuing efforts to deliver on our mandate—to regulate the medical profession in the public interest—in 2021 the College required physicians to complete the course “Providing Culturally Safe Health Care for Indigenous Patients in Newfoundland and Labrador.” This accredited online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program, created in collaboration with Memorial University’s Faculty of Medicine Office of Professional and Educational Development, was initiated in response to the report *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015). Our intention was to develop a course for all physicians practising in the province to increase their awareness of the historical trauma experienced by Indigenous Peoples and the ways in which this trauma has impacted health and wellness within the Indigenous community. As of September 2021, physicians must complete this course in order to obtain a licence to practise medicine in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Two related College 2021 initiatives were: CPSNL Council and Leadership Team member attendance at the presentation “Board Responsibilities in Diversity and Inclusivity,” and the releasing of the College Policy Paper “Our Commitment to Cultural Safety –As it pertains to providing culturally safe health care to Indigenous patients in Newfoundland and Labrador.” In 2022, the College staff will attend sessions on unconscious bias sensitivity and systemic racism.

Additionally, one of the goals of the 2021 upgrading of cpsnl.ca (see page 20) was to improve intuitive navigation and the ability to find pertinent College processes, policies, and news updates quickly and easily, to support the transparency of College communications.

A College goal  
for 2021 was to  
raise awareness of  
how historical trauma  
experienced by the  
Indigenous community  
has affected health  
and wellness.



## RAISING OUR SENSITIVITIES AND INCLUSIVITY





## APPOINTED MEMBERS

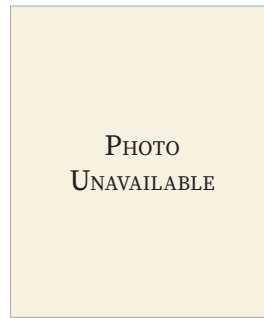
# THE COLLEGE COUNCIL 2021



**Ms. Gail Hamilton**  
(COUNCIL CHAIR)  
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE



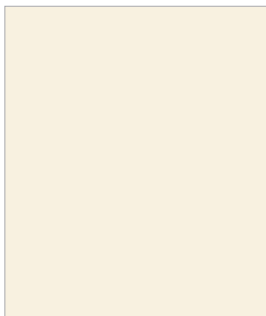
**Mr. Allan Bradley**  
PUBLIC  
REPRESENTATIVE



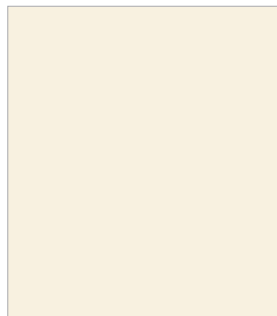
**Mr. Dave Dove**  
PUBLIC  
REPRESENTATIVE



**Dr. Tony Gabriel**  
NLMA  
REPRESENTATIVE



**Vacant**  
NLMA  
REPRESENTATIVE



**Vacant**  
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY  
REPRESENTATIVE

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## NON-VOTING MEMBERS

**Dr. Linda Inkpen†**  
**Dr. Tanis Adey\***  
CPSNL REGISTRAR

**Dr. Oscar Howell**  
CPSNL DEPUTY REGISTRAR

† To November 2021

\* As of December 2021

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The College of Physicians and Surgeons of NL is governed by a 15-person Council. Council members are either elected physicians or appointments made by the Minister of Health to represent the public, the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association, and the Memorial University Board of Regents. The College's registrar and deputy registrar are licensed medical practitioners and ex-officio Council members. In 2022, the College will work toward filling existing vacancies.

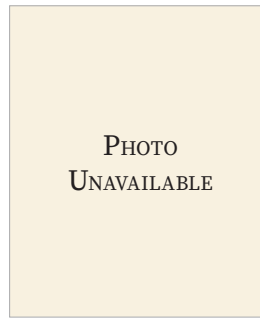
## ELECTED MEMBERS



Dr. Rebecca Rudofsky  
(COUNCIL VICE-CHAIR)  
ST. JOHN'S/MOUNT PEARL



Dr. Robert Forsey<sup>°</sup>  
REMAINDER OF  
THE PROVINCE



Dr. Amir Gammal<sup>†</sup>  
ST. JOHN'S/MOUNT PEARL



Dr. Kevin Hogan  
ST. JOHN'S/MOUNT PEARL



Dr. Diane Keating Power<sup>\*</sup>  
ST. JOHN'S/MOUNT PEARL



Dr. Kara Laing<sup>\*</sup>  
ST. JOHN'S/MOUNT PEARL



Dr. Carl Sparrow  
REMAINDER OF  
THE PROVINCE



Dr. Tracey Wentzell  
REMAINDER OF  
THE PROVINCE

<sup>°</sup> Re-elected December 2021

<sup>†</sup> To November 2021

<sup>\*</sup> As of December 2021



**The Council  
may appoint  
committees and  
establish the duties  
and responsibilities  
of the committees.**

# COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

## **QAC – QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

Oscar Howell (CHAIR, NON-VOTING)  
Allan Bradley  
Dave Dove  
Diane Keating Power \*  
Carl Sparrow  
Tracey Wentzell

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Gail Hamilton (CHAIR)  
Dave Dove  
Kevin Hogan  
Kara Laing \*  
Rebecca Rudofsky  
Carl Sparrow  
Tracey Wentzell

## **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Gail Hamilton (CHAIR)  
Allan Bradley  
Robert Forsey  
Kevin Hogan

## **CAC – COMPLAINTS AUTHORIZATION COMMITTEE**

Oscar Howell (CHAIR, NON-VOTING)  
Allan Bradley  
Robert Forsey  
Tony Gabriel  
Amir Gammal †  
Gail Hamilton  
Kevin Hogan  
Kara Laing \*  
Rebecca Rudofsky

## **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Gail Hamilton (CHAIR)  
Allan Bradley  
Tony Gabriel  
Kevin Hogan  
Tracey Wentzell

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Allan Bradley (CHAIR)  
Dave Dove  
Gail Hamilton  
Rebecca Rudofsky  
Tracey Wentzell

† To November 2021

\* As of December 2021

## **AUDITORS**

Noseworthy Chapman

# CPSNL LEADERSHIP TEAM



**Dr. Tanis Adey**  
REGISTRAR



**Dr. Oscar Howell**  
DEPUTY REGISTRAR



**Jamie Osmond**  
ASSOCIATE REGISTRAR  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



**Elyse Bruce**  
CORPORATE COUNSEL  
DIRECTOR OF COMPLAINTS

## LICENSING & REGISTRATION



### LEFT TO RIGHT

**Tanya Drover**  
LICENSING OFFICER

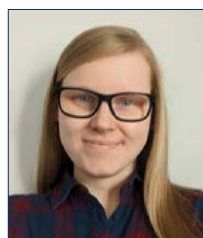


**Kate MacDonald**  
LICENSING COORDINATOR



**Andrea Somerton**  
LICENSING COORDINATOR

## COMPLAINTS & POLICY



**Rebecca Lethbridge**  
CLINICAL INVESTIGATOR, POLICY COORDINATOR



**Darlene Manning**  
COMPLAINTS COORDINATOR

## FINANCE & OPERATIONS



**Clinton Lee**  
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE &  
ADMINISTRATION



**Natasha Denty**  
ACCOUNTING & OPERATIONS  
COORDINATOR



**Janice Howell**  
RECEPTION

## QUALITY



**Brian Bennett**  
DIRECTOR OF QUALITY, PRIVACY OFFICER



**Stephanie Mullins**  
QUALITY PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

## OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR\*



**April Bixby**  
COMPLIANCE OFFICER



**Elizabeth Wheeler**  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE REGISTRARS

\* We acknowledge with thanks the work of Lorraine Phillips, Administrative Assistant to the Registrars, who retired in December 2021 after 12 years of dedicated service to the College.





The detailed process of licensing physicians to practise medicine includes verification of credentials, education, experience, and professional conduct.

# LICENSING OUR PROVINCE'S PHYSICIANS

Licensing physicians to practise medicine in Newfoundland and Labrador is the major regulatory task that the College performs to support the delivery of trusted medical care in this province.

The numbers of physicians entering and leaving the province generally resumed pre-pandemic trends in 2021. Significantly, the College also implemented several new standards that physicians must now meet (or continue to hold) to be eligible for a licence. These new standards included:

1. **Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) Eligibility:** Beginning January 2021, all applicants applying for a Specialist Licence with the College were required to provide evidence of current RCPSC eligibility in their primary specialty.
2. **Medical Council of Canada (MCC) Exam Minimum:** Starting in September of 2021, physicians applying for a licence to practise medicine (in both Family Medicine and as a Specialist) were required to have completed a minimum of the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination (MCCQE) Part I.
3. **Currency of Practice:** As of September 2021, all applicants applying for a licence to practise medicine were required to provide proof of acceptable practice for a minimum of 120 days over the preceding three years. Beginning with the 2022 annual renewal of licensure process, all physicians were required to attest to this new standard.
4. **Providing Culturally Safe Health Care for Indigenous Patients in Newfoundland and Labrador:** September 2021 saw the accredited “Providing Culturally Safe Health Care for Indigenous Patients in Newfoundland and Labrador” course become mandatory for all licensed physicians.

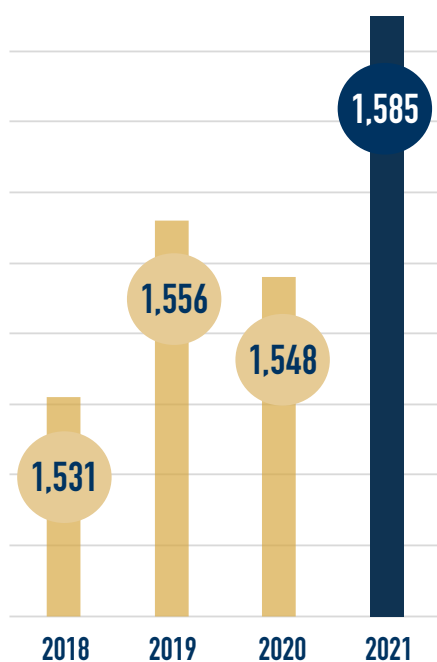


**480**  
CERTIFICATES  
OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
CONDUCT\*  
ISSUED

**312**  
NEW  
LICENCE  
APPLICATIONS  
RECEIVED  
AND  
REVIEWED

\* A Certificate of Professional Conduct (CPC) reports a physician's current standing with CPSNL. A CPC is required when physicians apply for a licence in another jurisdiction.

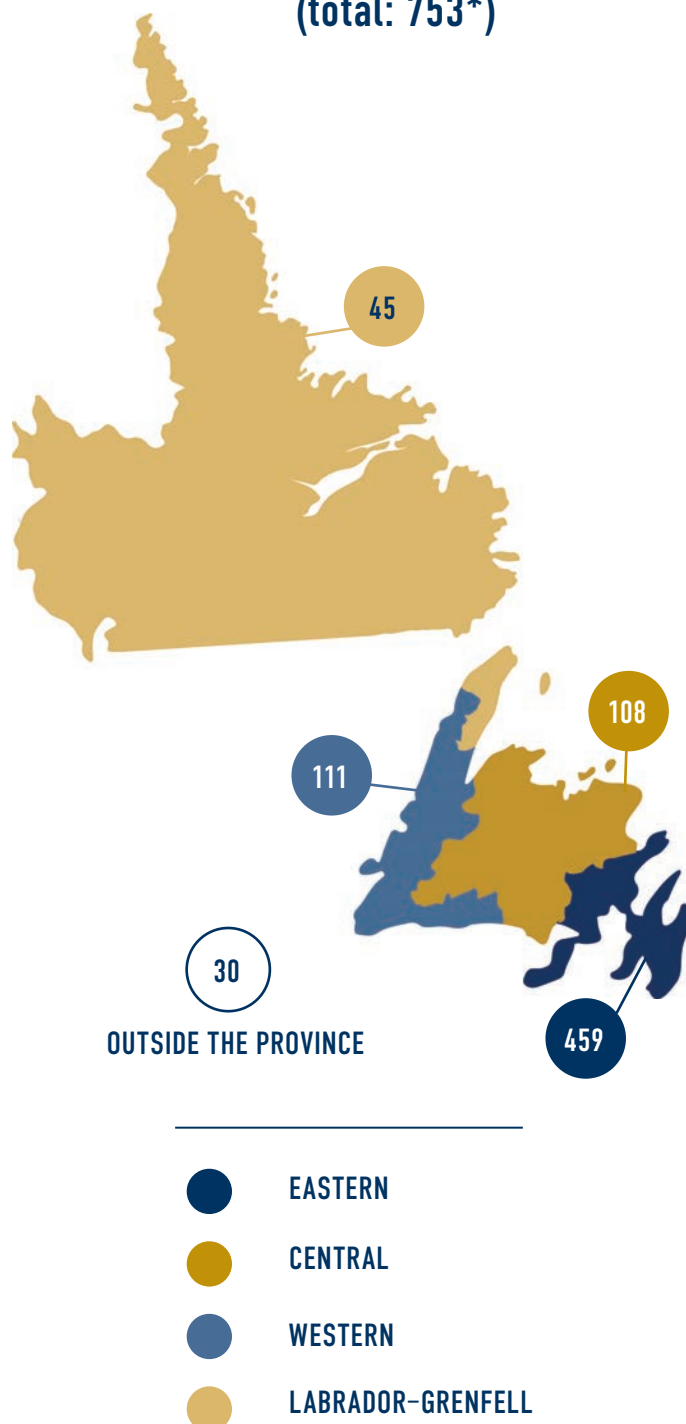
### LICENCES ISSUED: 4-YEAR TREND\*



\* New and renewed Full and Provisional Licences, excluding licences for locums and Postgraduate Education Licences. The 2020 figure has been updated from the number published in the 2020 annual report.

### 2021 FAMILY PHYSICIAN LICENCES by PRACTICE ADDRESS

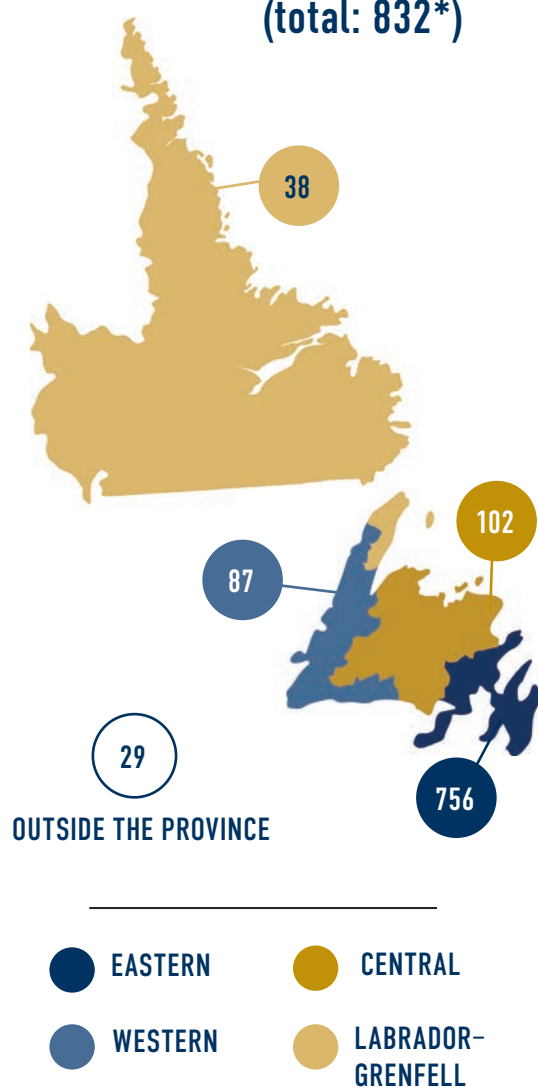
(total: 753\*)



\* Calculated by calendar year, not renewal year

## 2021 SPECIALIST LICENCES by PRACTICE ADDRESS

(total: 832\*)



\* Calculated by calendar year,  
not renewal year



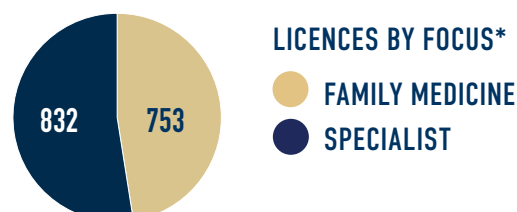
\* These breakdowns exclude locums

## INTER-JURISDICTIONAL IMPROVEMENTS IN 2021

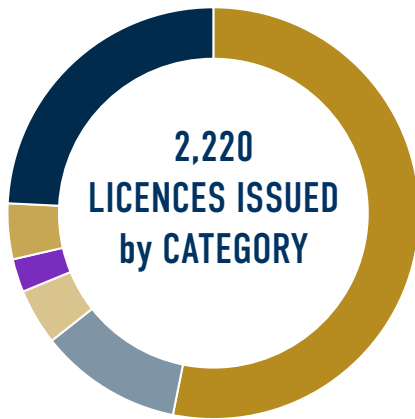
In 2021, the College became a participating signatory to the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC) **Framework on Fast-Trackd Licensure**. The Framework informs approaches to fast-track licensure and pan-Canadian consistency. This is intended to help provide a faster, simpler process for physicians who meet agreed-upon eligibility criteria to move inter-provincially.

The College also adopted the **updated FMRAC Model Standard for acceptable English language proficiency exams**. In addition to International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Academic exam, the College now accepts the Occupational English Test (Medical) and the Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program-General (CELPIP-General) Test.

The College issued 480 Certificates of Professional Conduct (CPCs) in 2021. The largest proportion (122) went to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. Forty CPCs were issued to non-medical regulatory bodies or jurisdictions outside of Canada, 16 of which were to regulatory bodies in the United States.



## 2021 LICENCES



1,180 RENEWED FULL

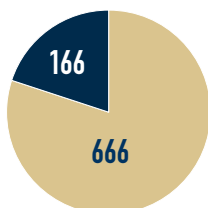
249 RENEWED PROVISIONAL

98 NEW FULL

58 NEW PROVISIONAL

97 LOCUMS

538 POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

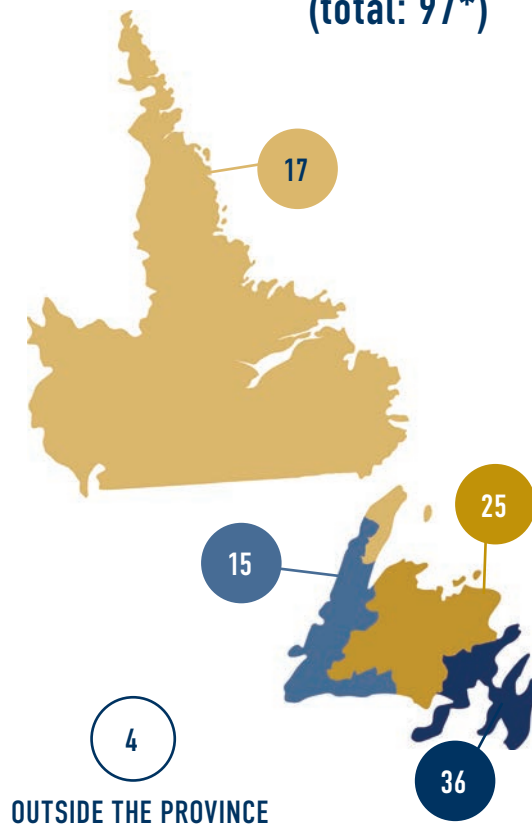


832 SPECIALIST LICENCES\*

● CERTIFIED  
● NON-CERTIFIED

## 2021 LOCUM LICENCES by PRACTICE ADDRESS

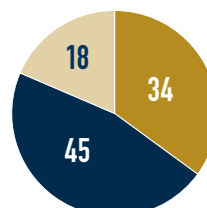
(total: 97\*)



OUTSIDE THE PROVINCE

● EASTERN ● CENTRAL  
● WESTERN ● LABRADOR-GRENFELL

\* Calculated by calendar year,  
not renewal year



97 LOCUM LICENCES

● FAMILY MEDICINE  
● SPECIALIST, CERTIFIED  
● SPECIALIST, NON-CERTIFIED



An educational  
peer review program,  
PPR-NL gives  
physicians the tools  
they need to make  
meaningful changes  
that will optimize  
their medical practice.

## SUPPORTING WELLNESS, FOSTERING EXCELLENCE

CPSNL promotes high standards of practice and continuous improvement in the quality of care that physicians in this province provide to their patients. The College's Quality Division helps support these goals through programs aimed at quality improvement, quality assurance, and physician health monitoring.

In 2021, the challenges introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic continued to place extraordinary pressures on both physicians and patients. College members were faced with an increasing need for patient care while dealing with the demands of adapting to continuously evolving public health requirements. As part of its response to these realities, the College expanded and refined programming aimed at supporting physician wellness and quality in practice.

### PHYSICIAN WELLNESS AND PATIENT SAFETY

Like the patients they care for, physicians are not immune to developing medical illnesses. When their own health has the potential to impact their ability to do their work, the College strives to ensure that patients are not exposed to risk and that physicians are given the ability to manage their condition so that they can continue to care for both their patients and themselves.



7

QUALITY  
ASSURANCE  
COMMITTEE  
MEETINGS

11

FITNESS TO  
PRACTISE  
CASE  
MANAGEMENT  
REVIEWS  
CONDUCTED

When the  
COVID-19 pandemic  
disrupted plans  
for on-site PPR-NL  
reviews, the College  
adapted the program  
to allow for remote  
assessments.



Working with physicians' own health care providers and with trusted partners such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association's Physician Care Network, the College ensures patient safety by supporting physician wellness under a focused and flexible "fitness to practise" model of monitoring.

#### PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT TO SUPPORT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

In June 2021, the College launched the Physician Peer Review program (PPR-NL). This endeavour both aligns with the College's vision for quality healthcare in the province and fulfills one of the Objects of the College outlined in the *Medical Act, 2011*: to administer a quality assurance program.

The intent of the program is to support excellence in practice through assessment and feedback. Its 2021 enrollees were Family Medicine physicians. The approach of PPR-NL is not punitive—reviews are collaborative, reflective exercises that validate positive practice while identifying areas for improvement. The ultimate goal of quality improvement activities such as PPR-NL's peer reviews is to create a culture of continuous personal and professional development.

#### RESPONDING TO EMERGING ISSUES

Where concerns are raised regarding a physician's competence or wellness that could impact practice quality, the College can conduct a quality assurance (QA) review. QA reviews are distinct from those done through the PPR-NL program. Quality improvement assessments—like PPR-NL's—are *proactive* and catalyze change through reflection on practice. Quality assurance reviews are *reactive*; they help ensure that physicians are practising safely, competently, and in good health.

15

PPR-NL  
QUALITY  
IMPROVEMENT  
PEER REVIEWS  
LAUNCHED



Many of the professionalism complaints received in 2021 were related to breakdowns in communication.



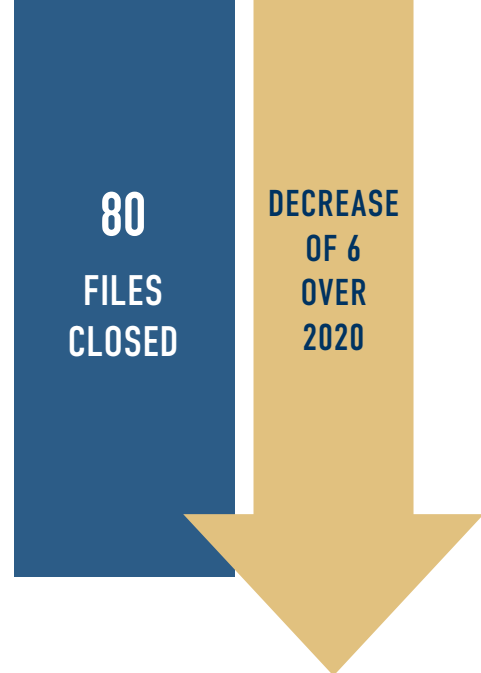
## HANDLING COMPLAINTS



One of the College's primary responsibilities is to receive, assess, and address complaints about physician behaviour—and we take this responsibility very seriously. Full details about the College processes involved—from how to file an allegation to the steps we take to address them—are presented on [cpsnl.ca](https://cpsnl.ca).

The College's professional conduct work is overseen by a committee of Council—the Complaints Authorization Committee (CAC). The CAC held 11 meetings in 2021. Additionally, in June, two hearings were held before College Adjudication Tribunals.

The College received 103 complaints about physicians during 2021, which is a significant increase from the 63 received in 2020. Specifically, the number of professionalism complaints increased, as has been the trend in previous years. Many of these complaints were related to breakdowns in communication between physicians and their patients or families.

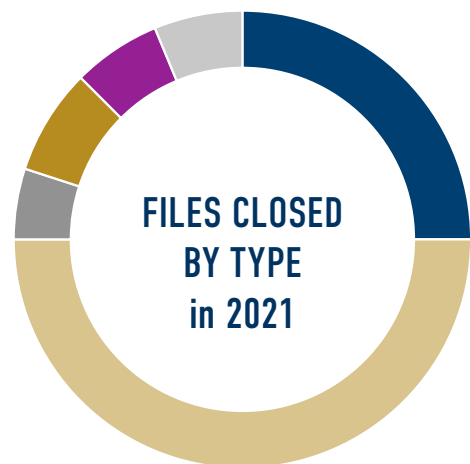


Notably, a new process was put in place in 2021 to bring to the attention of College Council any systemic issues identified during the investigation phase of a complaint. Council can thus discuss the issue and determine what appropriate College action may be required.

Another highlight of 2021 was a further reduction in the median time between receipt of a new complaint and the date its file was closed. This time frame decreased from 13 to 10 months in 2021.

We also made time to review the College communication processes relating to our professional conduct process. The goal was to identify ways to improve how the College communicates with both complainants and respondent physicians.

The College also ensured that staff members in this department received individualized training specific to their roles.



- 20** RESOLVED AT INITIAL STAGE
- 40** DISMISSED
- 4** DISMISSED WITH DIRECTION
- 6** CAUTIONED OR COUNSELLED
- 5** REFERRED TO TRIBUNAL
- 5** REFERRED TO ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

4

QUARTERLY  
UPDATES

25

NOTICES TO  
COLLEGE  
MEMBERS

1

COMPLAINTS  
& DISCIPLINE  
UPDATE

# COMMUNICATING ABOUT COLLEGE WORK

The College recognizes that effective communication to stakeholders is a critical component of successful delivery on its mandate of regulating medicine in the public interest. As always, the College continues to remind members that it is a **professional obligation to read all College communications.**

Proactively, the College continued in 2021 to provide registrants with quarterly *Updates* following every Council meeting. As well, *Notices to College Members* were emailed to registrants and stakeholders throughout the year to update them on College activities, solicit input on changing Standards of Practice and Practice Guidelines, and provide specific direction (to registrants) on issues related to their practice of medicine. The College also responds to queries received via email, telephone, and regular mail.

As a priority communications endeavour for 2021, the College launched a fully renewed **cpsnl.ca** in September to improve the website's presentation, navigation, and efficiency. The redesign involved updated technology, optimized navigation, improved Physician Portal, and an extensive review of published material. The College website hosts important information for the public and College members, including physician licensing status and practice information, licensing and complaints processes, as well as Standards of Practice and Practice Guidelines.



**6**  
**STANDARDS  
OF PRACTICE  
UPDATED**

**2**  
**NEW  
STANDARDS  
OF PRACTICE  
APPROVED**

The CMA  
Code of Ethics  
and  
Professionalism  
can be found  
on [cpsnl.ca](https://cpsnl.ca).



One of the important ways that the College promotes high standards of medical practice in this province is by creating, reviewing, and updating **Standards of Practice** that licensed physicians *must* follow and **Practice Guidelines** that recommend practices physicians *should* adopt.

Current Standards and Guidelines can be accessed on the College's website, [cpsnl.ca](https://cpsnl.ca). Also listed are the events or clinical conditions that physicians have a duty to report to the appropriate government department or regulatory agency.

The College reviews its Standards and Guidelines on five-year cycles. When these reviews identify areas for improvement, the Standard or Guideline goes through an updating process, which may involve public and member consultation.

In 2021, eight new or revised Standards of Practice were approved by Council:

- **Continuity of Care (new)**
- **Physical Examinations (new)**
- **Advertising**
- **Bloodborne Viruses**
- **Boundary Violations**
- **Chaperones**
- **Disclosure of Harm**
- **Virtual Care**

# SETTING PRACTICE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES



**The College  
remained in  
a stable  
financial  
position  
in 2021.**

# MANAGING COLLEGE RESOURCES

## **FINANCE**

The Finance and Audit Committee met five times in 2021 to perform its work on the fiscal management of the College, as well as exercise its oversight of broad operational items.

As the following pages demonstrate, the College remained in a stable financial position in 2021. The financial information presented in this report is in summary form. Full audited statements are available, by request, following their presentation at the College's Annual General Meeting, scheduled to take place on June 18, 2022.

## **OPERATIONS**

In 2021, the College completed the implementation of the organization-wide SharePoint Enterprise Content Management (ECM) solution.

## **CYBER SECURITY**

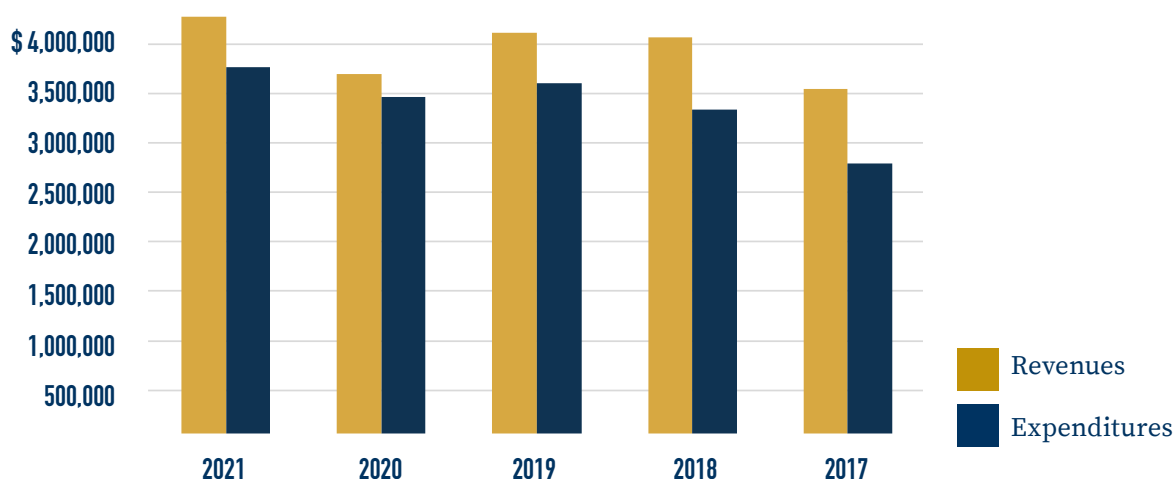
The College's Risk Management program calls for continued evaluation of risk, and then planning and implementing risk mitigation strategies. Cyber security is always at the forefront of risk evaluation and planning.

In 2021, the College engaged an external cyber security firm to conduct a thorough threat-risk and vulnerability analysis of College technology and processes. The goals were to assess current state, identify gaps, and propose solutions. In this constantly shifting area, steadfast work continues into 2022.

## **PRIVACY**

The College has a duty to protect the confidential information that it collects, uses, and discloses in the performance of its regulatory functions. CPSNL fulfills this responsibility by complying with legislative requirements, and by adopting practices set out in recognized privacy standards. In 2021, the College revised its enterprise-level privacy framework.

## COLLEGE REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES



## AN IMPORTANT NEW CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE

“Providing Culturally Safe Health Care for Indigenous Patients in Newfoundland and Labrador” is an online continuing professional development course created in response to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015).

The objective was to develop and maintain a course for all physicians in Newfoundland and Labrador to increase awareness of the historical trauma experienced by Indigenous Peoples in this

province and the ways in which this trauma has impacted health and wellness within the Indigenous community.

Total costs incurred to date by the College are \$120,863. The College’s intention was to allocate course net surplus funds to course maintenance and accreditation, as well as other Indigenous-related initiatives.

The Indigenous community is being consulted regarding this plan.

## SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021

		2021	2020
<b>ASSETS</b>			
	Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 5,551,999	\$ 5,029,428
	Accounts receivable	312,159	111,376
	Equipment and leasehold improvements	1,296,316	1,575,495
	Investments	1,323,039	1,199,106
		<b>\$ 8,483,513</b>	<b>\$ 7,915,405</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
	Accounts payable	\$ 251,184	\$ 324,447
	Deferred income	2,773,864	2,636,364
	Deferred lease inducements	40,098	48,117
		<b>\$ 3,065,146</b>	<b>\$ 3,008,928</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			
	Invested in capital assets	\$ 1,266,511	\$ 1,539,729
	Unrestricted and internally restricted	4,151,856	3,366,748
		<b>\$ 5,418,367</b>	<b>\$ 4,906,477</b>
		<b>\$ 8,483,513</b>	<b>\$ 7,915,405</b>



## SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021

		2021	2020
<b>REVENUES</b>	Annual fees	\$ 3,049,220	\$ 2,989,280
	Professional corporation fees	177,000	175,100
	Registration and licensing fees	379,400	304,675
	Investment income	126,574	44,849
	External projects	252,485	33,075
	Miscellaneous	292,128	151,338
	Rental income	500	–
		<b>\$ 4,277,307</b>	<b>\$ 3,698,317</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	Salaries and employee benefits	\$ 1,974,562	\$ 1,902,387
	Complaints and discipline	186,870	154,627
	Council and committees	207,808	168,781
	Occupancy	239,277	242,915
	Office and operational	868,837	723,702
	Amortization	288,063	268,599
		<b>\$ 3,765,417</b>	<b>\$ 3,461,011</b>
	<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 511,890</b>	<b>\$ 237,306</b>
<b>USE OF EXCESS REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES FROM OPERATIONS</b>	Operational Contingency	\$ 250,000	\$ 100,000
	Adjudication Tribunal Hearings	–	–
	College Infrastructure	–	–
	QA/QI Development	–	–
	Providing Culturally Safe Health Care for Indigenous Patients in NL	95,267	–
	<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 166,623</b>	<b>\$ 137,306</b>

NOTE: The excess of revenue over expenditures (2021) will assist the College in providing resources for the Operational Contingency Funds.

# LOOKING AHEAD



LICENSING  
COMMITTEE  
EXPANDING  
ITS  
POLICY SCOPE

IMPROVING  
THE  
CPSNL.CA  
PHYSICIAN PORTAL  
EXPERIENCE

ENABLING  
ONLINE  
COMPLAINTS  
FILING

SUPPORTING  
LIFE-LONG  
LEARNING IN  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

ENHANCING  
STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS

ASSESSING  
OPPORTUNITIES  
RELATED TO  
REMOTE  
PEER REVIEW

REVIEWING  
THE  
MEDICAL ACT,  
2011

IMPROVING  
ONLINE LICENCE  
APPLICATION FORM  
EXPERIENCE

## HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR 2022 ANNUAL REPORT?

Please email feedback  
and suggestions about  
the College's annual report  
to [cpsnl@cpsnl.ca](mailto:cpsnl@cpsnl.ca).



**IMPLEMENTING  
AN ONLINE CPC  
APPLICATION  
PROCESS**

**ADDING ASSESSOR  
CAPACITY TO  
PEER ASSESSMENT  
TEAM**

**NEW GUIDELINE:  
OPIOID  
PRESCRIBING  
FOR OPIOID-USE  
DISORDER**

**PARTICIPATING  
IN LEAN TRAINING  
AND  
PROCESS  
IMPROVEMENTS**

**COLLEGE  
TRAINING:  
UNCONSCIOUS BIAS  
SENSITIVITY**

**2022 TARGET:  
100 PHYSICIAN  
PEER REVIEWS**

**UPDATING  
THE STANDARD  
FOR MEDICAL  
ASSISTANCE  
IN DYING**

**COUNCIL  
TRAINING:  
TRAUMA-INFORMED  
PRACTICE FOR  
REGULATORS**

**IMPLEMENTING  
COLLEGE  
CYBER  
SECURITY  
ENHANCEMENTS**



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College Council: Submitted

