



VIRTUAL CARE & CLOSURE OF PRACTICE UPDATES

Notice to College Members

June 21, 2023

The College Council recently updated the Standard of Practice on **Virtual Care** and approved a new Standard of Practice on **Closing or Taking Leave from a Medical Practice**.

We engaged in two rounds of consultation with physicians, patients, and stakeholders across the health care system to ensure these documents reflected current practice issues, embodied the duties of medical professionalism, and were consistent with the College's mandate to act in the public interest. Overall, there was a strong consensus supporting the proposed changes to the Standards of Practice. We appreciate the insight and perspectives provided by those who participated in the consultation. All feedback received was thoughtfully reviewed and considered in finalizing these documents.

[Virtual Care](#)

As evolving technology provides opportunities for new approaches to the practice of medicine through virtual care, the College has set practice standards for physicians who provide virtual care. The updated standard includes a requirement to offer in-person care as a part of your usual practice of medicine in Newfoundland and Labrador or have an arrangement which allows the patient the ability to access in-person care from another regulated healthcare provider. Physicians are also now required (in most circumstances) to hold a licence from the College to provide virtual care to patients in Newfoundland and Labrador.

If you provide virtual care, you must familiarize yourself with the expectations of the College as set out in the updated Standard of Practice. The accompanying [FAQ](#) provides general advice to support the understanding of the College's expectations.

Note: We appreciate that some of you may need to make changes in your practice of medicine to comply with the new expectations set out in this Standard of Practice. As such, we expect your compliance to the extent which is possible and your commitment to work towards implementing any necessary changes in your practice to ensure full compliance by **October 1, 2023**.

[Closing or Taking Leave from a Medical Practice](#)

The College expects physicians to take adequate measures to reduce the impact of their closure of practice or leave from practice on continuity of care for patients. This new Standard of Practice (formerly a Practice Guideline) sets out the steps required when contemplating a closure of practice or a leave of three months or longer from practice. The accompanying [FAQ](#) provides general advice to support the understanding of the College's expectations.

This and all other Notices can be viewed on our website at www.cpsnl.ca > News

All College communication to its members will be by email. It is a professional obligation for College members to read all College communications.