



***Quality Professionals, Healthy System  
Public Trust***

**Five Year Strategic Direction  
2008 – 2010 Strategic Priorities**

**College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario**

## Forward

---

Just as individual doctors are obligated to put the best interests of their patients first, professional self-regulation must put the best interests of the public first.

As our lives, our world and the delivery of health care becomes more complex, we need to take stock of our processes and find ways to improve how we carry out our mandate.

We are, therefore, delighted to present the College's five-year strategic direction and two-year plan.

Our commitment to secure the public trust by effectively regulating ourselves and advocating for system change has been clear throughout the development of this strategic direction.

The *Regulated Health Professions Act*, the legislation which governs us, defines our mandate to regulate the profession, protect the public and work collaboratively within the health-care system to ensure effective health care delivery in Ontario.

Within the mandate of this legislation, we have charted a strategy that will allow us to achieve our vision of **Quality Professionals, Healthy System, Public Trust**. We will use this vision to guide us in our thinking, our actions and how we define and measure success.

The commitment to this new plan is fuelled by the passion, energy and commitment of our Council, each and every staff member, and members of the profession and public. Only with a common purpose, active and sustained leadership, and tolerance for change - and the challenges associated with it - will we be successful in achieving our vision.

**Dr. Preston Zuliani**, President

**Dr. Rocco Gerace**, Registrar

February 2008.

## Executive Summary

---

The College regulates the practice of the medical profession and governs doctors in accordance with the regulations of our province. As such, we are committed to:

- ▶ Ensuring quality physicians practise and deliver safe medicine across the province,
- ▶ Working with our health-care partners to ensure a healthy medical system, and
- ▶ Serving and engaging the public to ensure trust.

As a regulator, our role is broad and complex.

We are accountable to serve and protect the public interest. We are mandated by legislation to govern the profession through many different avenues including, developing, establishing and maintaining standards of qualification and practice; promoting continuing evaluation and competence; and developing, establishing and maintaining standards of professional ethics.

The expectations, at times, are daunting.

Daunting because although we work in a collegial manner with physicians to promote effective medical practices and uphold professional conduct, we discipline members of the profession when that is the appropriate course of action. At times, this role duality creates apprehension. Within the profession, members fear the power of the College to suspend or revoke their license to practice. The public, on the other hand, question whether or not we act fast enough or effectively enough on issues of concern about individual members. It is time to take ownership and responsibility.

Our commitment is clear.

Despite the challenges we face, we are committed to the public and the profession, committed to a high level of transparency and accountability and committed to fostering excellence in medical practice. This report will outline how we will deliver on those commitments and outlines our plans for the next few years, describes our new strategic framework and priorities and introduces the vision that guides us over the next few years ... **Quality Professionals, Healthy System, Public Trust.**

## The Plan

---

To help guide us in achieving our strategic direction and business plan, we refocused our mandate and guiding principles, developed strategic themes and adopted the balanced scorecard management process.

Our five-year direction is broken down into three key time spans:

### **Short-Term: Enhance Our Regulatory Foundation**

Over the short-term (one-two years), we will focus on enhancing our regulatory foundation to achieve our new vision. This will be supported by integrating our strategy with financial management and other core processes; implementing legislative changes to develop a quality profession; developing effective relationships with our partners; and, laying the groundwork to develop and advocate public policy solutions to improve the health system. More detail about the short-term priorities is included in this document.

### **Medium-Term: Invest to Better Interact with Community and Enhance Services to Public and Profession**

Over the medium-term, as our initial strategic priorities are implemented, we will begin to see some of the benefits of our initial work. This will allow us to invest further in the various methods and approaches that we use to interact with our community and enhance the services that we provide to the public and to the profession.

### **Long-Term: Check In and Refresh Strategy**

Five years from now we will see the benefits of our regulatory system enhancements. Full implementation of our plan will allow us to significantly enhance our effectiveness with our community. We will need to refresh our strategic direction and plan based on issues and opportunities of the time.

## Our Strategic Framework

---

The following section provides in more detail information about each component of our strategic framework.

### Our Mandate:

Build and maintain an effective system of self-governance.

The profession, through and with the College, has a duty to serve and protect the public interest by regulating the practice of the profession and governing in accordance with the *Regulated Health Professions Act*.

### Our Vision Defined:

Quality Professionals, Healthy System, Public Trust.

Our new vision is the framework by which we organize ourselves.

It guides our thinking and actions into the future. It defines not only who we are, but what we stand for, the role we see for ourselves, our critical relationships, in what system we work, and the outcomes we seek.

Each component of our vision is defined below:

**Quality Professionals** – as a profession and as professionals, we recognize and acknowledge our role and responsibility in attaining at a personal, professional, and at a system-level, the best possible patient outcomes.

We are committed to developing and maintaining professional competencies, taking a leadership position on critical issues that impact the performance of the system, and actively partner to provide tools, resources, measurement, to ensure the optimal performance at all levels of the system.

**Healthy System** - the trust and confidence of the public and our effectiveness as professionals is influenced by the system within which we operate. Therefore, we, as caring professionals, are actively involved in the design and function of an effective system including:

- ▶ accessibility
- ▶ the interdependence of all involved
- ▶ measurements and outcomes
- ▶ continued sustainability

**Public Trust** – as individual doctors garner the trust of their patients, as a profession we must aim to have the trust of the public by:

- ▶ building positive relationships with individuals
- ▶ acting in the interests of patients and communities
- ▶ advocating for our patients and a quality system

## **Our Guiding Principles:**

### ***Integrity, accountability, leadership and cooperation.***

The public, through legislation, has empowered the profession to regulate itself through the College.

Central to the practice of medicine is the physician-patient relationship and the support of healthy communities. As the physician has responsibility to the patient, the profession has the responsibility to serve the public through the health-care system.

To fulfill our vision of *quality professionals, healthy system, public trust* we will work to enhance the health of the public guided by professional competence and the following principles:

**Integrity** – in what we do and how we go about fulfilling our core mandate:

- ▶ Coherent alignment of goals, behaviours and outcomes;
- ▶ Steadfast adherence to a high ethical standard.

**Accountability to the public and profession** – we will achieve this through:

- ▶ An attitude of service;
- ▶ Accepting responsibility;
- ▶ Transparency of process;
- ▶ Dedicated to improvement.

**Leadership** – leading by proactively regulating our profession, managing risk and serving the public.

**Cooperation** – seeking out and working with our partners – other health-care institutions, associations and medical schools, etc. – to ensure collaborative commitment, focus and shared resources for the common good of the profession and public.

## 2008 – 2010 Strategic Priorities

---

Over the next two years, we are committed to achieving the following strategic priorities:

### **1. Building a Strong Regulatory Foundation**

We want to build an even stronger regulatory foundation to improve patient safety, build public trust, and support the growth and performance of physicians throughout their careers.

Changes have recently been made to the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*, many of which come into effect June 2009. The changes in legislation together with our new strategic direction, give us a unique opportunity to strengthen our regulatory foundation.

#### **1.1 Increasing Physician Assessments**

We will significantly increase the number of physician assessments to support the development of a system of continuing professional development and continuing competence. This direction will supplement other activities underway.

We will build the capacity to conduct 2,000 assessments on an annual basis by 2010. This is a major undertaking. A proportion of assessments will be tied to identified practice indicators of educational need, as these are the physicians who will benefit most from the peer review model.

#### **1.2 Increasing Participation in Self-Regulation**

Engagement of the profession is critical to achieving a quality profession. We will better coordinate engagement of the profession in self-regulation and find new and innovative ways of obtaining physician and public input into our regulatory processes.

Involvement of members of the profession with specific competencies is critical to our overall performance.

We will focus first in those areas where we need to recruit additional personnel. For example, we need more assessors to complete our planned annual peer assessments. We have also had difficulty obtaining medical experts in certain disciplines.

We will also expand opportunities for physician and public participation in the policy development process. Our policies provide guidance and direction to the profession in a number of challenging areas of practice and contain information of value to the public.

## **2. Developing Public Policy Solutions**

Public policy development and advocacy activity affords tremendous opportunity for the College to improve the health-care system. The new focus in the vision – *Healthy System* - envisions focused leadership (to lead as well as participate) in the development and implementation of positive changes to the health system.

The College has focused the majority of its policy resources on membership policy development to guide the profession and inform the public on issues involving medical practice. The time has come to expand the College's policy focus to the public policy environment in areas where the College is best positioned to make a contribution.

We plan to identify two to three major public policy/health system-related issues of focus annually and by late 2009, we will evaluate the effectiveness and value of our public policy work and determine whether we should expand our focus in this area.

It is also anticipated that as we implement changes to our data management systems, we will have the ability to better understand the factors that impact physician performance. We would like to be in a position, for example, to more effectively analyze our complaints data. This information will give us valuable quantitative system information to initiate and support our public policy activity and ultimately improve patient safety.

## **3. Working with our Partners**

Our effectiveness is dependent in large part on our relationships with our community. Greater focus on our partnerships is central to achieving our new vision.

We will strive to enhance those partnerships required to more effectively govern the profession and best meet the needs of the public. Our key partners include the public, the profession (including medical schools), and government.

Together with our partners, we can accomplish much more than any of us can individually. We will develop relationship management plans for our key relationships and invest the time and expertise to develop these relationships.

## **4. Improving Communications**

Attainment of our vision demands that we refine and continue to improve our communications with our community.

In 2008 we will launch our new website. This will provide significant opportunities to improve communications with all our stakeholders. As well as improving the overall organization of the site, there will be new features that will increase opportunities for feedback and interaction with the public and the profession. In addition to creating opportunities to hear from and interact with the public and profession, the profession will also be able to conduct all of their business with the College on-line.

We will also continue to refine and improve our communications to more effectively manage our regulatory activities and create opportunities for greater dialogue about issues impacting health care in Ontario.

Our traditional methods of communication will be supplemented by the new forms of technology that offer a number of new opportunities. We will continue to look for additional dynamic, open and interactive approaches to our communications.

## **5. Managing Risk**

An effective risk management strategy, together with a strong regulatory foundation, will ensure that we are well positioned to avert risk where possible.

In order to manage risk effectively, we need to identify potential risks and develop plans to deal with them at the appropriate time. Some situations will require a proactive strategy to prevent problems that we know could occur, and others will benefit from having a general risk management plan available to activate when unexpected risk occurs.

The development and implementation of an effective risk management strategy will help us protect the public and the integrity of the profession.

## **6. Integrating Strategy with Core Processes**

Full integration of our strategy, planning and other core processes will give us the structure necessary to help support the attainment of our new vision.

We will integrate our strategy, planning, financial management, and other core processes to ensure that we have and make the best use of our resources to perform at a consistently high level. By building the internal planning capacity and discipline we will be better positioned to achieve our new vision.

We have initiated a project to integrate our core processes. This includes integration of strategic planning, budgeting, resource allocation, human resources, and corporate governance.

Our leadership team will be made clearly accountable for specific core processes and for implementing our strategic priorities.

We will also initiate a project to secure additional sources of revenue and to help ensure that we have the necessary resources to achieve our vision.

## **7. Enhancing Employee Development and Performance Management**

Our staff members are vital to the attainment of our vision.

We will build the competencies required to achieve our new direction through training, recognition and succession planning. We will ensure that we are acquiring and/or building strong leadership both within the Council and the College.

Over time we will develop and implement a performance management and reward system that aligns employee accountabilities to the vision and strategic objectives of the College. This will begin at the senior management level.

We will also define and develop a culture of service to help us translate our strategy into concrete results.

## **8. Measuring and Reporting**

We will implement and effectively use the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) management system as our measurement and reporting tool to help us achieve our new vision.