

## RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDERS

# Position Statement

**When CASLPO members disagree with other service providers (including other CASLPO members) regarding services to patients/clients, members must make reasonable attempts to resolve the disagreement directly with the other service provider, and take such actions as are in the best interests of the patient/client.**

### BACKGROUND

There may be situations where a member disagrees with another service provider on an aspect of patient/client services. The College does not arbitrate disagreements between service providers. The onus is therefore on the CASLPO member to make reasonable attempts to resolve these disagreements.

CASLPO members will act in the best interests of the patient/client in accordance with CASLPO's Code of Ethics. The following statements from the Code of Ethics are reflected in this position statement:

The professions of audiology and speech-language pathology seek to maintain high standards of conduct and moral judgement in their practices and relationships with patients/clients, the public and fellow practitioners.

#### Ethical Principle

The primary ethical obligation of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists is to practise their skills for the benefit of their patients/clients.

#### Ethical Principle 2

In the pursuit of patient-client benefit, Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists have an ethical obligation to respect patients/clients as persons.

Rules Governing Practice

Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists:

- 1.3 will be honourable and truthful in all their professional relations,
- 4 will respect patients'/clients' choice of practitioners,
- 5 will respect the patients'/clients' right to participate in treatment decisions and to be informed of potential risks and benefits of treatment options,
- 2.7 will exercise independent professional judgement before implementing professional service/prescription,
- 3.7 will develop and maintain positive professional relationships with their colleagues, students and other professionals.

CASLPO members must comply with the mandatory reporting requirements in the Child and Family Services Act, Nursing Homes Act and Regulated Health Professions Act.

**REQUIREMENTS**

In all situations of disagreement with another service provider, a member must:

- a. make reasonable attempts to resolve the disagreement with the other service provider(s) when deemed necessary, in the patient/client's best interest, recognizing that more than one approach to appropriate services may exist. The College recognizes that in some situations, it may not be possible or appropriate for the member to attempt to resolve the disagreement with the other service provider(s). In circumstances where a member determines that the other service provider(s) should not be contacted, the member should document the rationale for that decision.
- b. ensure that they have the patient/client's consent to disclose information to the other service provider. In some situations, the patient/client's explicit consent may be required. In other situations, members may, under the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), rely on implied consent to disclose information to other health information custodians (HICs) who are practitioners or facilities providing care to the same patient/client.
- c. document all relevant information pertaining to the disagreement including any attempts at resolving it.

If the disagreement is not resolved to the member's satisfaction, the member must:

- a. inform the patient/client of the nature of the disagreement.
- b. inform the patient/client of any other options, including that of obtaining another opinion.
- c. document all relevant information regarding the disagreement including information provided to the patient/client, the nature of the disagreement and the protection of the best interests of the patient/client.
- d. respect the patient/client's fully informed decision

In addition to the above:

When an audiologist wishes to change a hearing aid prescription written by another audiologist, the audiologist is required to comply with CASLPO's Position Statement on Changing Hearing Aid Prescriptions.

When disagreement occurs between members providing concurrent intervention to a patient/client, members must comply with the College's position statement Concurrent Intervention Provided by CASLPO Members. Concurrent intervention is considered intervention provided to a patient/client by more than one clinician over the same time period.

### **CASLPO REFERENCES**

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario. Code of Ethics. May 1996.

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario, Concurrent Intervention Provided by CASLPO Members, December 2001.

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario. Changing Hearing Aid Prescription, December 2000.