



COLLEGE OF  
**PHYSIOTHERAPISTS**  
of ONTARIO

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

2023-2024 Report







# Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the land our office is on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

We are honouring these lands as part of a deeper commitment to Indigenous communities in Ontario. As provincial health regulators, we have a large role to play in reconciliation to meet the broader goal of public protection.

*Statement of Awareness around Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  
(EDI) by the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario*

How well we achieve **our mission** to  
**protect the public interest** depends wholly  
on our ability to **cultivate a climate** in  
which everyone feels like they **belong**.



Advancing safe, welcoming, and equitable physiotherapy care requires that we acknowledge and address direct and systemic discrimination within our health systems and broader communities. Both types of discrimination lead to barriers that exclude many people from participating in health systems based on identity factors like race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sex and sexual orientation, age, ability levels, and physical appearance. Discrimination often goes unaddressed, resulting in continued inequity and marginalization.

This is our first formal report in the College's ongoing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion journey, and we are excited to share our progress to date. Our goal is to establish a baseline and encourage belonging for all through participation within our organization, the physiotherapy profession, and the public we serve.

We are dedicated to learning about inclusive practices, working with system partners to grow our knowledge base, and evolving our commitment to fostering true belonging. We are consistently humbled by this work and recognize that it requires community-centered decision making.

We also understand that doing this work honestly and productively is not easy, and that it will always be a work in progress. We look forward to learning more about ourselves, the communities we live in and serve, and our society as we forge ahead.

We are proud of the progress and notable achievements from the past year, while recognizing that there is much more to be done. Please consider this the first step in our commitment to advancing EDI and connect with us as we continue on this journey.



Nitin Madhvani  
Chair, Board of Directors



Craig Roxborough  
Registrar and CEO



**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** is a foundational pillar in our **strategic plan**, and our EDI initiatives are connected to our **mission, vision and values**.



# Strategic Plan



## Mission

To protect the public interest by ensuring physiotherapists provide **competent, safe, and ethical care.**



## Vision

Inspiring **public confidence** in the physiotherapy profession.



## Values

Integrity  
& Trust



Inclusion  
& Respect



Transparency  
& Accountability



Collaboration



## Strategic Pillars and Initiatives

# Strategic Plan

## Focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Embrace a culture where an EDI lens is intentionally incorporated into all levels of decision making at the College.



### Focus on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

Embrace a culture where an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion lens is intentionally incorporated into all levels of decision making at the College.



### Improve Governance Based on Government Direction and Best Practices

Create a governance framework which meets or exceeds industry standards as assessed against our regulator peers.



## Our EDI Strategy

Embrace a culture where an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lens is intentionally incorporated into all levels of decision making at the College.

- Increase diversity and representation among people who do work for the College so they reflect the diversity of the profession and society at large.
- Empower individuals to identify and address unconscious bias so they do not lead to inequitable or unfair decisions.
- Design our processes to support equitable outcomes and equitable access for all individuals.
- Meaningfully engage with groups who are impacted by our work to understand their needs and address them.
- Support registrants in incorporating EDI principles in their practice to advance safe, welcoming, and equitable physiotherapy care.
- Always pursue incremental improvements, acknowledging that work towards achieving equity, diversity and inclusion is never truly done.



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# Establishing a Solid Foundation

## EDI Working Group

A staff-led EDI Working Group has been meeting regularly since July 2023.

The goal is to help advance EDI work within the College by initiating and tracking various EDI-related projects and processes.



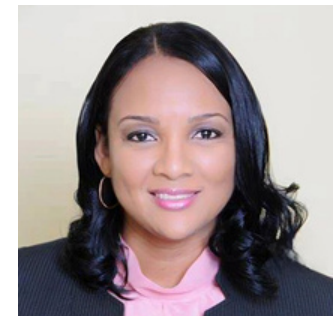
Craig Roxborough  
Registrar and CEO



Mara Berger  
Director, Policy, Governance  
and General Counsel



Joyce Huang  
Manager, Strategy



Diane Daley  
Manager, People and Culture

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# Establishing a Solid Foundation

## EDI Self-Assessment

We conducted an EDI self-assessment in the fall of 2023 to gain a better understanding of our current state and identify areas of improvement. The results illustrated that we are more 'reactive' than 'proactive' and we had work to do.

This helped inspire key initiatives around EDI that were included in the College's operational plan for 2024-2025.

In 2024 we will continue the assessment at a departmental level to help identify specific improvements in the years to come.





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# Establishing a Solid Foundation

## HPRO Support Work and Resources

The College is actively supporting the work of the Health Profession Regulators of Ontario (HPRO) – a collective of all 26 health regulatory colleges – in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion including:

- Establishing recommendations for reviewing existing policies, particularly those for registration, complaints/discipline, and policy/governance.
- Consulting with the HPRO Anti-Racism in Health Regulation project when conducting these reviews.
- Using HPRO's EDI assessment toolkit to conduct our organizational self-assessment.



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**Education** is the most **powerful** weapon  
you can use to **change the world**  
for the **better**.

—Marian Wright Edelman





## A Learning Journey: Education and Training

We are working diligently to source and create reliable education and training materials to help us ensure that an EDI lens is incorporated into all levels of decision making at the College, while also supporting physiotherapists in integrating EDI in their practice.

We recognize that every board director, committee member, staff person, physiotherapist, student and system partner will be on a unique learning journey.

The opportunity to reflect and learn from some influential minds in this space has been welcomed and appreciated, and we look forward to continuing this journey.





## Board of Directors and Committee Training and Education

- Blanket Exercise with Braving the Healing to explore the rich and complex history of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and learn about the ongoing impact of colonization and various attempts to assimilate Indigenous cultures, traditions, ceremonies, and people.
- Anti-bias training with Dr. Javeed Sukhera to gain a better understanding of types of biases, their implications, and how to mitigate them to make decisions that are more accommodating and inclusive.
- Education session with Dr. Nafeesa Jalal to explore EDI principles in regulatory work, define cultural competence, better understand unconscious bias, and learn more about Ontario's changing demographics.



## Board of Directors and Committee Training and Education

- Education session about the Community Rehabilitation Worker training program in Northern Ontario. This program trains local members of Indigenous communities to provide rehabilitative services to help Elders as they age, while supporting their health, wellbeing, and quality of life.

As part of the session, the Board heard from two program graduates who are now delivering rehabilitation services in their communities. The session highlighted the unique barriers and challenges experienced by remote Indigenous communities in accessing care, and potential ways the regulator can help address some of those barriers and challenges.



## Board of Directors and Committee Training and Education

- Education session on trauma-informed regulation to gain a deeper understanding of how trauma shows up in different regulatory areas, how power and privilege can impact the people we serve including registrants and the public, and various trauma-informed practices that the College can implement to create a safer experience.
- Discipline Committee members are required to complete a training module on gender inclusive writing for decisions and other materials.





## Staff Training and Education

- Staff participated in a Blanket Exercise with Kamamak Consulting and received the education session about the Community Rehabilitation Worker training program in Northern Ontario.
- The Practice Advice team completed a program on anti-Black racism and race education to gain a greater understanding of concepts such as race and racism, and how they can unconsciously manifest in general and organizational relations.
- Several staff have participated in various workshops and webinars independently. These sessions covered topics including creating safe workplaces, anti-racism, working with Indigenous communities and more.



## Staff Training and Education

- The Practice Advice, Professional Conduct, Registration, Quality Assurance and Exam teams (along with some other staff members) participated in a mental health first aid course to better understand trauma and psychological wellbeing.
- All staff members have also completed training sessions covering an introduction to equity, diversity and inclusion and unconscious bias.
- The Quality Assurance and Practice Advice teams completed training on unconscious bias and communication to help them provide a welcoming and inclusive experience to the physiotherapists and other system partners they interact with.





# Staff Training and Education

## Still to come...

- Plain language training to help all staff communicate more clearly and effectively, therefore removing unintended barriers. Takeaways from this training will be applied to all written communication including the website, emails, presentations, reports, decisions and social media.
- Additional training and education for some staff to help increase understanding and awareness of Indigenous experiences and how we can incorporate further change in our work.





# Physiotherapists Training and Education

**Several EDI resources related to anti-racism, allyship, disability, weight bias and more are listed on the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion page](#) of the College website.**

We also have a series of blogs covering several topics related to EDI. These are available on the College website and are regularly featured in the Perspectives newsletter and on social media.

- [A Northern Learning Journey: Helping Transform Ageing in Place and Quality of Life for First Nation Elders](#)
- [Providing Culturally Safe and Welcoming Care for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Patients](#)
- [Strengthening the Therapeutic Relationship: Identifying and Addressing Implicit Bias](#)
- [Being More Inclusive in Your Practice](#)



# Physiotherapists Training and Education

## Anti-Racism and Equity Workshops with Future Ancestors

In 2022, we partnered with the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario, the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario and the College of Dietitians of Ontario to host two webinars about anti-racism and equity with [Future Ancestors](#).

Asynchronous learning materials were distributed to all registrants to encourage ongoing reflection, and recordings of the sessions are available to physiotherapists through the Future Ancestors YouTube channel.



## Examiners, Assessors and Practice Coaches Training and Education

### OCE Examiners

All examiners for the Ontario Clinical Exam participate in anti-bias training to help ensure an inclusive and consistent experience for all candidates.

### Assessors

Assessors for the Quality Assurance program attended a session on trauma-informed care and completed a training module that includes a section on inclusive language.

### Practice Coaches

Practice Coaches participated in a training session on trauma-informed practices.



# Building Connections

We can't do this work alone and we value the thoughts, opinions and experiences of physiotherapists, patients, PT Residents, students, the academic community, our regulatory colleagues and other system partners.

We appreciate the connections we have established with many of you as we further our EDI initiatives, and we look forward to more opportunities to collaborate and learn in the future.





## Data Collection – Open Consultations

In November 2023 we held an open consultation on proposed by-law changes that would allow the College increased flexibility to collect additional data about our registrants to support future strategic directives, including those related to EDI.

We greatly appreciate everyone who shared their thoughtful feedback. It highlighted the need for us to make sure we are asking the right questions to understand the diversity of identities and lived experiences that exist within physiotherapy.

You can read some additional reflections on the results of the consultations in this blog by Craig Roxborough, Registrar and CEO: [Let's Talk Data: The Role of Data Collection in our EDI Work.](#)

# Prioritizing Inclusivity and Accommodation

## Recruitment

- An inclusivity statement is included on all College job postings and candidates are encouraged to reach out to the Manager, People and Culture to request any accommodations that would improve their experience with the recruitment process.
- Job postings are listed on Indigenous recruitment sites including [Aboriginaljobboard.ca](http://Aboriginaljobboard.ca).
- We intentionally recruit examiners from various backgrounds, including different practice settings and physiotherapists who were educated internationally.
- An EDI lens is incorporated in committee recruitment to help ensure college committees are representative of the diverse communities we serve.
- As a part of the competency profile for Board and Committee members, candidates will be assessed on whether they have knowledge, experience and/or training in areas of EDI.







## Accessible Communications

### PISA and Jurisprudence

- The Professional Issues Self-Assessment (PISA) and the Jurisprudence Module are offered in English and French.
- PISA uses gender inclusive language.



# Accessible Communications



## Complaints Process and Patient Resources

- Information about how to make a complaint about the care received from a physiotherapist is available in 11 languages including French, Arabic and Tagalog. Audio clips explaining the complaints process are available in seven languages.
- The College has staff members fluent in French, Spanish, German and Russian. We can also connect with an interpretation service to answer questions in other languages.

# Accessible Communications



## Complaints Process and Patient Resources

When submitting a complaint, patients or caregivers have the option of doing so in whichever language they choose. The College offers a comprehensive translation service that will provide information in a preferred language throughout the entire complaints process. This includes interviews, email updates and written decisions. To date, we have been pleased to provide this service in several languages including Korean and Farsi.



## Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee Decisions

- The Professional Conduct team created a new template for written decisions from the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee to make them more concise, accessible and reader friendly.

## Ontario Clinical Exam Resources

- Exam content is reviewed by an independent plain language consultant to help remove unintended barriers.
- The Ontario Clinical Exam (OCE) is available in both English and French. To support candidates taking the OCE in French, we created and published OCE resources in French on the website.



## Website, Social Media and Video Assets

- The College website is compliant with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, and our compliance is reviewed on a regular basis to identify improvements.
- Our social media accounts include alt text on all images for people who use screen readers.
- Our social media accounts acknowledge cultural holidays and recognition days including Pride Month, Black History Month, Ramadan, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and more. We aim to recognize the diverse communities we serve and highlight helpful resources created by the College or other organizations.



## Website, Social Media and Video Assets

- Our video assets include voice over for all on-screen elements including text for anyone who is blind or partially sighted, and closed captioning for people with hearing loss.
- Alternative formats including large print, braille or audio are available upon request.







## Fostering a More Inclusive Experience

Across the College, all audiences and system partners are encouraged to connect with us to request accommodations or specify if there's anything we can do to help improve their experience.

Exam candidates can request accommodations for the Ontario Clinical Exam. This may include additional time, scheduled breaks, access to medication, etc. Accommodation requests are reviewed by the exam team, and a specific accommodation plan is developed for each candidate.



## Fostering a More Inclusive Experience

- The exam team conducts a comprehensive review of all faith-based calendars before scheduling exam dates to be as inclusive as possible and remove any barriers that would prevent candidates from being able to take the Ontario Clinical Exam.
- Physiotherapists selected to participate in a screening interview or practice assessment as part of the Quality Assurance program are asked if they require any accommodations to participate in the process. This may include additional time to complete the screening interview or assessment or requesting materials in alternate formats.
- All staff signatures include a territorial acknowledgement, pronouns, inclusivity statement and an invitation to request accommodations to better access our services.



# What's Next

While it's important to take time to learn as much as we can about the communities we serve, it's equally important to make sure these learnings translate into meaningful action.

We're proud of the work we have accomplished so far, while also recognizing that we're only just getting started. In the coming year, we look forward to moving closer to our overarching goal by continuing to implement various initiatives and processes that enable us to further our guiding principles for equity, diversity and inclusion.





## New Standards

Two new standards will be developed in the coming year or so to solidify guidance and support physiotherapists in the delivery of safe, welcoming and equitable care. We look forward to meaningfully engaging with all system partners as the standards are developed.

- Health Equity and Anti-Discrimination Standard
- Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility Standard



## A More Inclusive and Welcoming Workplace

In the coming year, the College will continue to make efforts to foster an inclusive and welcoming workplace within the organization by:

- Reviewing all human resource policies with an EDI lens
- Implementing an EDI-focused staff engagement survey to explore how well we are currently integrating and applying EDI principles in our work culture





## Initiating New Relationships and Furthering Established Connections

We are identifying opportunities to meaningfully engage with Indigenous health care providers and communities to learn more about how regulatory processes and guidance impact them and how we can make changes that respond to their experiences and needs.

We understand that fostering these connections requires time, humility and demonstrated authenticity.





## Initiating New Relationships and Furthering Established Connections

We will continue to seek opportunities to establish and build connections with physiotherapists, community groups, academics and system partners who can support our work in this space including:

- Physiotherapists and PT collectives representing different racial and ethnic backgrounds and the LGBTQ2S+ community
- Internationally educated physiotherapists and newcomer networks

We appreciate any opportunities to collaborate and meaningfully engage with these communities to better understand their experiences and expectations.



## Next Steps in Data Collection

We will continue to learn about data and the role it can play in helping us further our EDI work. Our goal is to ultimately collect the right data in the right way so we can:

- Understand who comprises the physiotherapy profession.
- Understand if the diversity of the profession reflects the diversity of the public we serve.
- Consider the composition of our Board of Directors and committees.
- Proactively assess whether there is unequal or inequitable treatment or outcomes in our regulatory process and implement corrective actions as needed.

We can only do this with your willing participation so we will take time to engage with you and find the right way forward.



COLLEGE OF  
**PHYSIOTHERAPISTS**  
of ONTARIO  
*Regulating Physiotherapists*

## Keep in Touch

We look forward to sharing our ongoing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) journey with you, and your thoughts are always welcome.



[www.collegept.org](http://www.collegept.org)

Visit the College website for updates and information about new and existing resources.

[cpo@collegept.org](mailto:cpo@collegept.org)

Contact us with any feedback on this report or questions about our EDI work:  
[cpo@collegept.org](mailto:cpo@collegept.org)

Social Media

Follow us on social media for more information about our EDI initiatives:

