



Governance under the Health Professions Act: An Introduction for Council

Effective governance by Councils ensures that the public interest is protected and promoted in our system of professional regulation. Ineffective governance leads to ineffectiveness and imperils the public interest. Ineffective governance by Councils has been identified as a contributing factor in cases in Canada where there have been regulatory failures. Individuals appointed or elected to Councils may be strong leaders but may have little or no governance experience making governance training essential.

In 2020 the Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions engaged James T. Casey Q.C. to present this videotaped workshop for use by the Councils of ARFHP member colleges. The workshop consists of two videos, each approximately one-hour length. It focuses on the governance responsibilities of Councils and covers the following *12 Key Principles of Good Governance for Council*:

1. Learn to work effectively in a co-governance model
2. Understand Council's statutory authority and role
3. Understand the role of Council members
4. Respect the distinction between governance and operations
5. Work with the CEO to build a strong relationship
6. Establish strategic direction
7. Provide effective financial stewardship
8. Provide oversight of regulatory processes
9. Do not get involved in individual regulatory cases
10. Engage in evaluation of Council effectiveness
11. Identify and manage organizational risk
12. Assess and react to key trends affecting organization and the profession

Each principle of good governance is substantive on its own. To enable the material to be presented in a time-effective manner, *the material is designed at an introductory level focused on the fundamentals of good governance*. Those attending the workshop will gain an understanding of the fundamentals presented in the context of the *Health Professions Act* and can build upon their knowledge. During the workshop Mr. Casey addresses useful resources that can be accessed for more education and development.

James T. Casey Q.C.

Jim Casey is a partner at Field Law working in the firm's Edmonton office. He founded Field Law's Professional Regulatory Group and acts as counsel to numerous professional organizations. In his more than 30 years of experience in professional regulation, Jim has seen first-hand the value of strong governance in protecting and promoting the public interest. Conversely, he has also observed the severe challenges faced by Councils that do not have strong governance practices. Mr. Casey has been a keen student of governance generally with respect to not for profit organizations and has served as chair of the Governance Committees and on the Boards of several large not for profit organizations. He presents the material based on the perspective of having been on both sides of the table.

Mr. Casey noted that there are good governance training programs available for the directors of not for profit organizations, but the best workshops are about 2 days long, are very expensive, and are not focused on the professional regulatory context. He believed there was a critical need for introductory level training on governance for Council members of regulators that could be delivered in a time-efficient and cost-effective manner. As a result, he developed this workshop which has been delivered multiple times in both Alberta and BC. The workshop has had been well received by those who have attended.

The Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions is pleased to make this workshop available for use by our member colleges. We gratefully acknowledge grant funding received from the Government of Alberta development of this resource.