

This pamphlet is produced for your information by:
The College of Alberta Psychologists 2100 SunLife Place 10123 - 99 Street Edmonton AB T5J 3H1 Phone:
424-5070 (Edmonton) 1-800-659-0857 (Outside Edmonton)

e-mail: psych@cap.ab.ca website: www.cap.ab.ca
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November, 2001 Revised May 2005

Receiving Services From a Registered Psychologist:

An Introduction to Important Professional Considerations Your Psychologist will Follow in Working With You

Please feel free to ask questions or discuss the contents of this brochure with your psychologist.

Regulated professional psychologists and provisional psychologists must meet rigorous professional entry requirements, and adhere to a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

The College of Alberta Psychologists is the regulatory body for the profession of psychology in Alberta. The College sets the standards for the provision of psychological services by psychologists and provisional psychologists. The College is not a university, community college or a school. Its role is to monitor and regulate the practice of psychology in the best interests of the public.

You are wise to choose a professional who is regulated by a College, whether it is the College of Alberta Psychologists or another regulatory college. Service providers who are not registered with a college may have no requirement to meet formalized standards.

In accordance with the *Health Professions Act and Regulation*, psychologists and provisional psychologists must be registered with the College to practice psychology in Alberta. Only a member of the College may use the title "psychologist" or "provisional psychologist." "Provisional psychologists" must work under the supervision of a Registered Psychologist.

Your psychologist is required to break confidentiality if a child or dependent adult is in need of protective services, by reporting the need to the appropriate authority.

Your psychologist must act in whatever way is required if someone's life is in imminent danger through suicide or the intentional actions of others.

Your psychologist must comply in providing information to the courts if ordered to do so.

Where a client is a minor or dependent adult, the guardian has the right to impose a limit on the client's right to confidentiality.

If you lodge a formal complaint against your psychologist, your psychologist will be informed and questioned and your file may be examined.

Your psychologist will provide you with enough information, in language you can understand, so that you are able to give informed consent for the services she/he will provide to you.

Your psychologist will keep confidential your discussions with her/him. This confidentiality may be limited in very specific circumstances.

Your psychologist is required to keep records documenting the professional services provided to you. You have the right to access your psychologist's records relating to you.

Your psychologist will request your written permission before she/he releases information to another professional or agency on your behalf.

Your psychologist will inform you of the purpose and extent of the information to be released.

In certain circumstances a third party may be involved in the relationship between a psychologist and client, e.g., someone who is paying for the service may require reports. If such an additional party is involved, your psychologist will help you to understand the implications this additional relationship may have for you.

Your psychologist will only practice in areas in which she/he is competent as established through professional training and experience. If you require assistance that is outside your psychologist's range of competence, she/he will refer you to someone qualified to help you.

Your psychologist will maintain a professional relationship with you at all times.

Your psychologist will avoid other relationships with you that could compromise the professional relationship, such as friendship, romantic or sexual relationships, business or financial relationships, and collegial or student relationships.

You have recourse if you feel that your psychologist has not properly fulfilled her/his professional and ethical obligations to you.

The *College of Alberta Psychologists* encourages you to discuss your concerns directly with your psychologist. Often misunderstandings can be corrected and better ways of working together can be found. If you are unable to resolve your concerns with your psychologist, you can contact the *College of Alberta Psychologists* directly. Staff can review your concerns with you and determine if some way can be found to resolve them. You may also file a formal complaint.

If you want to know more about the professional standards for psychologists, you can ask your psychologist or contact the *College of Alberta Psychologists*. (Standards, Codes and guidelines are posted on the College website at www.cap.ab.ca).