

FAQS ON PROPOSED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY REGULATION AMENDMENTS

February 12, 2024

This FAQ addresses the [proposed amendments to the Occupational Therapists Regulation](#).

Why is the regulation changing?

Professional regulation is undergoing significant change both in terms of the introduction of the new *Health Professions and Occupations Act* (“HPOA”), which is not yet in force, and the scheduled amalgamation of several of the smaller colleges under the *Health Professions Act* before the HPOA coming into effect. The Ministry of Health wishes to ensure that the regulations for four of the colleges, which include amalgamation plans (which regulate Occupational Therapists, Dietitians, Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists, and Physical Therapists), are current and align with the *Health Professions Act* (HPA).

The Ministry has expressed that these [proposed changes](#) intend to better align these four regulations, which have not been substantially updated in many years, with the *Health Professions Act* model of regulation, which is based on a shared scope of practice and restricted activities. The intention of these proposed amendments is not to reduce or increase the scope of practice for these professions.

Pending the bringing into force of the HPOA, further amendments to the profession’s regulations will be required to align the regulations with the HPOA.

- [Learn more about the HPA](#)
- [Learn more about the HPOA](#)
- [Read FAQ on HPOA](#)

- [Learn more about professional regulation](#)

Will the proposed changes to the regulation impact my scope of practice as an occupational therapist?

The Ministry of Health has confirmed that it does not intend to change the scope of practice for Occupational Therapists in British Columbia under the proposed changes to the regulation.

Will the scope of practice of occupational therapists working in mental health be affected if mental health (i.e., psychosocial) is not expressly referenced in the regulation's definition of occupational therapy?

The Ministry of Health does not intend to change or restrict the scope of practice for occupational therapists working in mental health with the proposed regulation. COTBC does not interpret the proposed amendments to the regulation to change how occupational therapists provide services in mental health.

Is COTBC responding to the proposed Regulation?

Yes. The College will provide comments regarding the proposed amendments to the regulation in accordance with the Ministry of Health consultation process via PROREGADMIN@gov.bc.ca.

We deeply appreciate the engagement of registrants and members of the public in the consultation process. The College will include in its submission information that has been shared by registrants and members of the public and will support the inclusion of language that addresses mental health in the definition of occupational therapy and the addition of restricted activities. However, it is important to note that the Ministry is responsible for the content of the regulation – that is not a matter over which the College has any decision-maker authority.

If you have comments on the proposed regulation, we encourage you to respond to the Ministry of Health via PROREGADMIN@gov.bc.ca.

