



Right to Refuse Treatment Policy

Date created: September 14, 2010

Date approved by the Board: March 25, 2011, June 20, 2014, June 23, 2020

Date last reviewed by the Board: June 23, 2020

Authority

BC Human Rights Code; CHCPBC Dietetic Code of Ethics and Dietetic Standards of Practice.

Background

Registered Dietitians are legally entitled to use discretion when accepting or refusing clients. Refusal cannot be based on reasons that contravene the *BC Human Rights Code* (age, gender, race, ancestry, religion, marital/family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation, etc.).

Policy

Registered Dietitians may encounter circumstances where they find themselves unable to provide competent, safe and ethical dietetic services because of stress or discomfort, threatening or inappropriate client behaviour, or non-compliance of a client with treatment or payment of services.

When a dietitian is unable to provide safe, competent and ethical treatment, the dietitian has an obligation to:

- inform the client of his or her concerns
- give reasonable notice of termination of treatment and,
- offer alternative options to ensure that the client's nutritional care needs are met.

A dietitian has an ethical duty to provide treatment if refusal to treat or delaying care might result in serious harm to that client.

NOTE: The general principles of this policy are covered in Chapter 4 of the Dietetic Jurisprudence Guide and Examination.

References

- BC Laws. BC Human Rights Code:
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96210_01.
- College of Dental Hygienists of BC, Interpretation Guidelines. Refusal to Treat: archived.
- CCHPBC. Chiropractic Professional Conduct Handbook. Appendix A. Withdrawing from Patient Care: <https://cchpbc.ca/for-professionals/chiropractic-doctors/resources/>.



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- CHCPBC. Dietitians Resources. <https://chcpbc.org/for-professions/Dietitians/resources/>.
 - Dietetic Code of Ethics
 - Dietetic Standards of Practice
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC. Public Information. FAQs – Patient/Physician Relationship. <https://www.cpsbc.ca/for-public/faqs/patient-physician-relationships>.