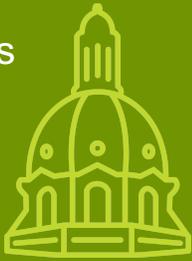


# Mental Health Services Protection Act



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June 7, 2019

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## Public Commitments

- March 2018: Speech from the Throne:
  - Government committed to protecting vulnerable Albertans accessing addiction and mental health facilities, services and practitioners by improving care safety and quality, and consumer protections
- MHSPA supports recommendations from:
  - December 2015: Mental Health Review report
  - February 2018: the Minister's Opioid Emergency Response Commission

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## Alberta's Addiction & Mental Health System

- **1 in 5** Albertans will access addiction and mental health services in their lifetime
- Up until now, there have been limited protections for vulnerable Albertans accessing residential addiction treatment facilities and services

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### Issues

- Government has heard concerns from members of the public, media and experts on:
  - Safety and quality of care
  - Consumer protections
  - Practitioner qualifications and accountability
- Government had limited ability to address concerns due to a lack of regulatory authority

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### Stakeholder and Public Engagement

- Engagement took place from July to September 2018
- Stakeholders and the public generally supportive of developing standards and quality assurance for AMH care as a critical step towards improving these services.
- Consultations took place between Health and regulatory colleges. Regulation of counselling therapy was broadly supported.

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### Objectives for MHSPA

- Improve care safety, quality and consumer protections through licensing and/or standards
- Enable establishing a professional college for counselling therapists, addiction counsellors and child and youth care counsellors in regulation

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### Applicability of the Act

- Sets the framework to license and requirements for further regulation of addiction and mental health services
  - Initially applies to all public and private residential addiction treatment facilities
  - Phased approach: balances establishing protections for Albertans while not disrupting services
- Enables creation of the College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta

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### Residential Addiction Treatment Services

As defined in MHSPA s.1(k):

*“Services provided to individuals who have an addiction in which overnight accommodation is provided for all or part of the duration of the services and includes, without limitation, withdrawal management services, but does not include services provided in an approved hospital as defined in the Hospitals Act or services provided by a person or service provider exempted by the regulations.”*

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### Licensing

- Similar to continuing care facilities
- Residential addiction treatment service providers must have a licence to operate
- Phased approach:
  - Government will start accepting applications **July 1, 2019**
  - Licences required by **November 1, 2019**

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### Licensing: Public information

- To help people find licensed service providers in Alberta:
  - Licensed service providers will be published on government website
  - Licence must be posted in a public place in the facility and on the service provider website

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### Core Standards for Licensing

1. Policy and procedures for consent and service contracts
2. Critical incident reporting, and policy and procedures for incident prevention and response
3. Record creation, maintenance and retention

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### Enforcement of Licensing and Standards

- Inspections or investigations may occur to ensure compliance
- An inspector may:
  - Order a service provider to take specific measures
  - Issue a stop order
  - Apply to the court if there is a failure to comply
  - Issue an administrative penalty
- Following inspection and investigation, a licence may be amended, suspended or cancelled
  - Government will work collaboratively with licensees to prevent measures such as cancellations

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### Licensing Implementation Activities

- Development of tools for residential addiction treatment service providers (e.g. service provider licensing guide, templates)
- Service provider information sessions
- Implementation Advisory Committee

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### College of Counselling Therapy

- Amended the *Health Professions Act* to enable creation of the College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta
- Outlines general scopes of practice for counselling therapists, addiction counsellors and child and youth care counsellors
- Protects professional titles

**Next Step:** Develop draft policy work to support regulation and consult with impacted stakeholders

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### College of Counselling Therapy

- The proposed regulation will establish:
  - Registration requirements
  - Substantial equivalence
  - Use of protected professional titles
  - Continuing competence program requirements
  - Restricted activity authorizations
  - Etc...
- The regulation will require Lieutenant Governor in Council approval.

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## Timeline for Implementation of MHSPA

### July 1, 2019

- Residential Addiction Treatment Service Providers can begin applying for licences

### November 1, 2019

- Residential Addiction Treatment Service Providers will be required to have licences to operate.

### Upon Proclamation

- The College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta will become the professional regulatory organization for counselling therapists, addiction counsellors and child and youth care counsellors.

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Questions?



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