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Over the last two years, we have been exploring ways to make our decisions and processes more transparent to the public. We have collaborated with five other health-care regulators in Ontario who also see the need to make more information available to the public both about their members, and about the effectiveness of professionally-led regulation, in general.

Why have we all chosen to go down this path? Because for the public to trust that the system works, we need to demonstrate that the system works.

The Advisory Group for Regulatory Excellence (AGRE) understands that we must demonstrate accountability to the public which we serve.

At its meeting in December, Council took a big step – perhaps the biggest to date – towards greater transparency. Council members approved the consultation of proposed by-laws that contemplate posting certain information resulting from the investigations process.

Making information about Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC) outcomes available to the public is a fundamental change from how we’ve done things in the past. We did not move lightly toward this decision. Council took a deliberately thoughtful approach, carefully balancing transparency and fairness and using the principles developed by AGRE to bring a strong measure of consistency.

In determining which ICRC outcomes should be made public, AGRE has used the measurement of risk. The greater the potential risk to the public, the more important transparency becomes.

Two ICRC outcomes – a caution-in-person and an order for a Specified Continuing Education or Remediation Program (SCERP) – are reflective of moderate risk. And for that reason, AGRE recommended that they be public.

The proposed by-laws also contemplate posting criminal charges, discipline findings in other jurisdictions and medical licences held elsewhere. This information is already
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT  ... Continued from pg. 6

and the Minister of Health has said he intends to review our governing legislation with a particular focus on the provisions relating to sexual abuse of patients. The College has decided that we must respond to and participate in this important national discussion.

It has been more than 20 years since the Regulated Health Professions Act was passed, together with its provisions for mandatory revocation of a physician’s certificate of registration for certain acts of sexual abuse. In light of the passage of time, we decided we needed to look at our governing legislation with a new lens and decide whether this legislation is still the best way to address physician sexual abuse, or whether changes are required. We will also be reviewing whether there should be guidelines about when and if gender-based restrictions are appropriate.

Also up for review will be an examination of our own processes in supporting patients in sexual abuse investigations and prosecutions.

The College is committed to protecting the public and we will be part of ongoing efforts to advocate for the best practices for protecting patients from sexual abuse. We value your input in this endeavour, and I encourage you to communicate with me or our new President Dr. Carol Leet with your constructive thoughts on this issue. I can be reached at mgabel@cpso.on.ca.

This is my last letter to you as President of the College. It was a year that I hope has helped us move toward conversation and away from confrontation.

In closing, I would like to thank those at the College and in the membership who have been so supportive. I have always felt that you “had my back” and that gave me the confidence to stand tall, be fearless, and mindfully represent the CPSO.

Lux et Veritas,
Marc

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FROM THE REGISTRAR’S DESK

publicly available but can be difficult to find. Recent direction from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has reinforced our path toward greater transparency.

Please read our articles on the Transparency Initiative starting on page 31. I urge you to provide your feedback and thoughts to the by-laws as drafted. Your opinion is important to us. But I need to make it clear that societal expectations have shifted and transparency is here to stay.

The public expects nothing less. Much of the opposition to the proposed by-laws voiced during our earlier consultation appeared to represent an objection to the principle of transparency more generally, as opposed to articulating specific problems with the by-laws as drafted. As a result, the concerns raised did not provide us with the direction to modify the by-laws, as the objection was to the very purpose of the by-laws. So given this context, I ask that you take the time to make your voice heard, and make your concerns count.

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Dr. Carol Leet, Dr. Joel Kirsh elected to lead Council for 2014-15...