

Licensing Newly Graduated, Canadian-trained, Post-Graduate Trainees during the Pandemic

With the cancellation of all certification and licensing examinations due to COVID-19, newly graduated, Canadian-trained, post-graduate trainees (PGT) face unexpected challenges. The College recognizes the added stress and strain that each physician faces during the months ahead.

The College is evoking measures available under the Medical Act, to ensure graduating PGTs receive licensure. The College can issue provisional licensure also referred to as a Defined licence to graduating PGTs. This licence type requires sponsorship and supervision. However, the physician under supervision is considered the Most Responsible Physician (MRP).

The 'Review of Qualifications' fee of \$350, collected by the Medical Council of Canada through physiciansapply.ca, will be refunded to Canadian-trained, newly graduated post-graduate trainees applying for licensure in Nova Scotia.

This document sets out the following:

PART A

- [Criteria for Defined licensure due to the postponement of certification and licensing exams](#)

PART B

- [Required Elements of Supervision](#)
- [Supervisor Criteria and Reporting Obligations](#)

PART C

- [Sponsorship Criteria and obligations](#)

PART A:

Criteria for Defined licensure for Canadian-trained, newly graduated PGT without the certification examination due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Criteria for Defined licensure due to the postponement of certification and licensing exams

1. Meet the following criteria for Defined licence in the [Medical Practitioner's Regulations](#):
 - a. Graduated from a Medical School in the World Directory of Medical Schools
 - b. Passed MCCQE1 and 2 (or eligible to challenge the MCCQE2 if previously unsuccessful)
 - c. Have a MINC (Medical Identification Number for Canada)

- d. Have demonstrated proficiency in English Language (applicants whose first and native language is English and Canadian-trained)
 - e. Are Canadian citizens or legally entitled to work in Canada
 - f. Have liability insurance (such as CMPA)
 - g. Participating satisfactorily in Continuing Professional Development
 - h. Have the character, capacity and competence to safely and ethically practise medicine noted through Certificates of Professional Conduct and references
2. Confirmation of recent completion of postgraduate training program within Canada
 3. Confirmation of eligibility to challenge the next available certification examination (from the College of Family Physicians of Canada or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada)
 4. Confirmation of LMCC or confirmation of eligibility and registration for the next available MCCQE2 examination
 5. Confirmation of a sponsor and supervisor
 6. Signed Licensing Agreement that indicates the physicians will:
 - a. Challenge the certification and/or licensing examination at the next available sitting
 - b. Must provide the College with confirmation of examination results as soon as they become available
 - c. If successful and fulfill all the criteria for a Full licence, will be converted to a Full licence
 - d. If unsuccessful in certification examination, will remain on Defined licence (with a maximum of 60 months from the issuance of initial Defined licence to completion of certification and/or licensing examinations. And, will be switched to Standard level supervision with ensuing fees in consultation with their supervisor at that time

PART B:

Supervision requirements for Defined licensure for newly graduated, Canadian-trained PGT without the certification examination due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

According to available data, 90% of Canadian PGTs pass their certification examinations on their first attempt. Given the need for medical staff during the pandemic, only short-term supervision of these graduating PGT-Defined licensees is required. It is reasonable to implement basic supervision.

Supervision fees will be waived for the first 6 months of licensure or longer if examination schedules are further postponed.

Required Elements of Supervision:

1. The supervisor will have an introductory meeting with the Defined licence physician, to ensure that they are aware of and understand the scope of practice for which the Defined licence physician will be practicing
2. The supervisor will ensure that the appropriate supports have been put in place to ensure the Defined licence physician has been appropriately orientated to their new workplace and that appropriate support systems have been established
3. The Defined licence physician is the most responsible physician (MRP) for the care they provide

4. It is the Defined licence physician's responsibility to only practice within a scope for which they are appropriately trained and currently competent
5. In usual circumstances, direct oversight by the supervisor is not expected or required. The supervisory responsibility is required more as an available support resource to the Defined licence physician
6. There is no expectation that the supervisor engages in formal teaching
7. It is the Defined licence physician's responsibility to request assistance from the supervisor if they encounter a situation for which they are not yet competent or require assistance
8. It is also possible that, failing the above, hospital staff might request input or assistance from the supervising physician
9. The supervisor cannot reasonably be expected to participate in care unless their assistance has been requested
10. The supervisor may provide feedback to the Defined licence physician or College at their discretion
11. The College expects that the supervisor be available in a timely manner to assist the Defined licence physician, if requested
12. The exact manner and timeframe under which the supervisor is available is to be determined in discussion between the supervisor and the Defined licenced physician, but must be appropriate to the nature of care being provided (i.e., shorter response time for a critical care environment than for an outpatient clinic)
13. If called to assist in patient care, the supervisor should engage in care at a level necessary to ensure patient safety. This will range from offering advice to assuming the role of MRP (most responsible physician) and is left to the supervisor's professional judgment
14. Should the supervisor feel they cannot safely supervise a Defined licence physician under the above circumstances, they should decline to accept the role

Supervisor Criteria and Reporting Obligations:

A supervisor of a Defined licence holder must meet all of the following criteria:

1. They must hold 1 of the following licences – Full licence, Academic licence, or Defined licence no longer requiring supervision (on sponsor-only oversight)
2. They must be engaged in the same scope of practice similar to supervised licensee
3. They must practise medicine in the same geographic area as the supervised licensee unless approved by the Registrar

A supervisor of this type of Defined licence holder must do all of the following:

1. Must report to the sponsor as required by the sponsor
2. Must report to the Registrar as required by the Registrar:
 - a. In reporting a supervision plan to the College, it is sufficient for the supervisor to review and sign the designated, Terms of Supervision agreement provided by the College.

- i. The intended scope of practice for which they will be supervising
 - ii. The manner (telephone, on-site) and timeframe under which they will be available to provide oversight and assistance
3. Must notify the Registrar immediately if there are concerns about the supervised licensee's practice or if the supervised licensee ceases to practice within the Health Authority

A supervisor of a defined licence holder may not withdraw as their supervisor without consulting the Registrar and giving adequate notice, as determined by the Registrar, to both the Registrar and the licensee.

PART C:

Sponsorship Criteria and Obligations for newly-graduated, Canadian-trained PGTs without the certification examination due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

Sponsorship Criteria and obligations

A sponsor of a Defined licence holder must meet the following criteria:

1. Hold a Full licence
2. Must be in a Senior Leadership position in the Health Authority in which the supervised licensee will be practising (unless otherwise approved by the Registrar)
3. Must be approved by the Registrar

A sponsor of a Defined licence holder must do the following:

1. Arrange for and approve, in writing, a supervisor
2. Report to the Registrar in writing on the supervised licensee's performance on a yearly basis, or as considered necessary by the Registrar
3. Notify the Registrar immediately if there are concerns about the supervised licensee's practice or if they cease to practise within the Health Authority

A sponsor of a defined licence holder may not withdraw as their sponsor without consulting the Registrar and giving adequate notice, as determined by the Registrar, to both the Registrar and the licensee.

If you have any questions, please contact the Registration Department at registration@cpsns.ns.ca.