



MEMO

To: President's of Provincial and Territorial Psychology Associations

From: Ian Nicholson, Chair, Professional Affairs
John Service, Executive Director

Date: January 31, 2006

Re: **Support for the Principles and Framework Document on Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care.**

Introduction

CPA is inviting the provincial and territorial psychology associations to consider joining us in officially supporting the attached Principles and Framework (P & F) document of the Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care Initiative (EICP). It is an important step in promoting interprofessional collaboration in primary health care in Canada.

The P & F have been adopted by 9 of the EICP partner organizations and the Canadian Medical Association will be voting on adoption in February, 2006. In addition, a growing number of organizations and associations, including the Association of Newfoundland Psychologists, have officially supported the document. The current list is attached. CPA is the Chair organization of the EICP, a \$6.5 million Initiative.

The funding for EICP came from Health Canada's Primary Health Care Transition Fund (PHCTF). The Fund grew out of a Federal/Provincial/Territorial First Ministers agreement that primary health care renewal was important for the country. The PHCTF was a part of this pan-Canadian strategy as an \$800 million federal transfer to the provinces and territories for primary health care. Each province and territory received a significant amount of money relative to the size of their population. They also agreed to 5 pan-Canadian initiatives, one of which is the EICP. There has been significant level of activity in each jurisdiction, some of which has been inclusive of psychology while some has excluded psychology and other professions.

As you can no doubt appreciate, it has been an important and stimulating process of negotiation and dialogue that has led to agreement by this large and diverse number of

national organizations representing psychology, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, audiology, dietetics, and speech pathology. It is our belief that the agreement reflected in the P & F is an important template for the future development of primary health care in Canada.

The process of collaboration involved Canada wide consultations with professionals, government officials, health policy people, and the public. Provincial and territorial psychology associations and regulatory bodies were involved from the beginning by suggesting names of psychologists to attend meetings and through discussions at the Council of Provincial Associations of Psychologists meetings. CPAP Chair, Jennifer Frain, attended the EICP Leader's Forum in Montreal. Psychology regulators were represented at the EICP meeting on regulation and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Research Papers and Background Documents

The EICP Initiative employed the Conference Board of Canada as the Initiative's Secretariat. Important documents generated by the Initiative along with other information are available on the EICP web site at www.eicp.ca.

The Principles and Framework Document

The Principles and Framework are the collective vision of the 9 professions regarding interprofessional collaboration in primary health care. Governments across Canada are examining ways of delivering primary health care services in more efficient, patient responsive and cost effective ways. Canadians want a more efficient system that better suits their needs.

Too often governments make changes in health care that significantly affect both the public and private delivery of services by psychologists without discussing these changes with the profession. The 9 EICP partner professions wanted to have the opportunity to put their collective vision on the table for governments to consider when contemplating changes to health care in general and primary health care in particular and to lend their collective weight and voice to constructive and continued evolution and change.

Psychologists provide primary psychological health services within both the private and public sectors. They are often the first point of contact for patients with psychological problems. It is imperative for patient access to appropriate, high quality and cost effective care that psychological services have an effective interface with other professions and services. One of the important messages of this Initiative is that Canadians need to be able to access the right practitioner or service at the right time. We know that this is very difficult for many Canadians in regards to psychological services.

The Tool Kit

The Initiative is preparing a Tool Kit to assist practitioners in developing inter-professional relationships. The Tool Kit will be available on the CPA and EICP web sites in the spring or summer of 2006.

A wide range of issues will be addressed that include liability, roles and responsibilities, remuneration models, the interface between public and private practitioners, confidentiality, patient records etc. The intention is to address myths about collaboration, to give psychologists the information they need to make good decisions and to give health policy developers and implementers good information to inform their model development and decisions.

What Does Support for the Principles and Framework Mean

There are a number of reasons to consider supporting the Principles and Framework.

1. There is strength in numbers. The wider the acceptance of the P & F, the higher the likelihood they will help shape primary health care development in a way that is more practitioner positive.
2. The P & F are a commonly agreed upon platform upon which to dialogue with governments in each jurisdiction regarding access, roles and functions or regulatory issues related to collaborative practices in primary health care that should involve psychology.
3. Provincial and territorial government officials are aware of the PHCTF, the EICP Initiative and the P & F. The P & F can be used as a point of reference in discussions with governments, a reference point that has the support of other professions and organizations.
4. Some provincial and territorial governments have effectively excluded psychology from primary health care renewal. Support for the P & F may be another opportunity to try to address this exclusion.
5. Finally, the P & F may be useful when talking to provincial and territorial governments about mental health reform if and when the Canadian Mental Health Commission becomes a reality.

Next Steps

At a minimum, the association can review the P & F and keep it on file for future reference.

A second step is support for the P & F. This involves notifying CPA and being added to the list of supporting organizations.

A low cost advocacy opportunity involves sending a letter to the ministry of health indicating support. This alerts governments to the fact that psychology associations across Canada are in agreement regarding collaborative practice in primary health care and are interested in being involved in discussions that affect access or regulation.

The letter could include a request to meet with the government officials responsible for primary health care in the province or territory to talk about what psychology can offer. A Swiss Cheese sample is included for your consideration.

If the association wishes to support the P & F, please indicate so by email to John Service, CPA Executive Director at jservice@cpa.ca. The name of the association will be added to the list of partner and supporting organizations.

All organizations that have expressed their support by March 31, 2006, will have their names added to the list that will be published by the Initiative and included in the agreement to be officially signed by the partner organizations at a ceremony in Ottawa in April 2006. We hope the official signing will take place with the Co-Chairs of the Council of Ministers of Health. Currently they are the Federal Minister of Health (soon to be announced) and the Minister of Health for New Brunswick. A list of those who have already expressed support is included for your consideration.

Associations that give their support after March 31, 2006 will be added to the list of supporting organizations that will appear on the EICP web site, the CPA web site and in any relevant future publications or communications.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Ian Nicholson, Chair, Professional Affairs at Ian.Nicholson@lhsc.on.ca. or John Service, CPA Executive Director at jservice@cpa.ca. Thank you for considering this important matter.

cc Provincial and territorial regulatory bodies in psychology