

College of Psychologists of New Brunswick Submission to the Romanow Commission

Abstract

The College of Psychologists of New Brunswick (CPNB) believes that psychologists should be recognized as essential health service providers throughout Canada.

- Psychologists want to be partners with other health professionals in assuring the best health service delivery to Canadians in the most cost-effective way.
- Psychologists are the experts in human behaviour in all its complexity.
- Psychologists are highly trained (6 to 10 years of post secondary studies) and regulated professionals: Training covers the following bases of behaviour: biological-physiological-neurological, cognitive-affective, social, developmental and individual differences.
- Research is also a very important component in their training. Psychologists study how people think, feel and behave from a scientific viewpoint and apply this knowledge to help people understand, explain and change their behaviour. For these reasons, psychologists have an essential role to play in the delivery of a system of integrated health services.
- Psychologists bring significant contributions to various fields of health and health-related services, including education, prevention, health, mental health, rehabilitation and justice.
- Psychologists work with people of all ages with a wide range of disorders, problems, and issues.
- The CPNB has made recommendations regarding
 - psychological services be considered essential health services;
 - recognition of their professional competence;
 - direct access to psychological services, public or private;
 - psychological services be covered by Medicare;
 - psychologist advisor to ensure proper resources for the provision of psychological services within health services.
- These recommendations are similar to those put forward to the N.B. Premier's Health Quality Council last year. The Council in its final report (January 2002) retained the thrust and major recommendations put forward by the College. CPNB believes that these recommendations are applicable across the country. The implementation of the proposed measures would enhance the provision of quality health care while providing to be cost-effective for governments.
- The CPNB strongly supports the recommendations put forth by the Canadian Psychological Association in its brief to your Commission.

CPNB Recommendations

Psychological services can contribute to higher quality health care commensurate with financial gains for governments combined with better quality services for clients.

The College of Psychologists of New Brunswick recommends:

- That the real contribution of psychology be recognized and that psychological services be considered and even declared as essential health services throughout Canada.
- That psychologists be supported and valued for their professional competence, this including proper working environment and salaries that are commensurate with their training and with their expertise.
- That the general public have direct access to psychological services be they offered in the public or in the private sector.
- That health-related psychological services offered in the private sector be included as insured services in the provincial and territorial medicare programmes.
- That provincial and territorial departments responsible for health care have a psychologist on staff as an advisor who will oversee and ensure proper resources for the provision of psychological services