

NBASLPA

Regulatory Bulletin

"Keeping registrants informed."



December 2024

Get Ahead with 2026 Registration: Sign Up for Pre-Authorized Debit!

We're making it easier to plan for your 2026 registration by offering pre-authorized debit (PAD) payments! Starting in January, you can spread your fees over 10 monthly payments of \$85, processed on the 15th of each month from January to October.

Don't forget: You must sign up for PAD before the 1st of the month to start payments that month. If you miss the deadline, your payments will begin the following month, and the balance will need to be paid at renewal.

Reminder: Employer payroll deductions will no longer be accepted for the 2026 registration.

Sign up today to get started!

Please refer to the PAD user guide on the NBASLPA website:

[How-to-enroll-for-PAD.pdf](#)

Professional Liability Insurance (PLI)

Going forward, please ensure that you upload proof of your personal Professional Liability Insurance (PLI) to the Alinity Portal upon renewal of your policy each year. Do not wait until your registration renewal. Uploading your PLI documentation promptly helps NBASLPA verify that your coverage remains current and in compliance with our requirements.

For information regarding PLI requirements, please follow this link:

[PLI Requirements](#)

Reminder: It is the registrant's responsibility to confirm with their insurance provider that their policy meets NBASLPA requirements.

AGM 2024

Thank you to all registrants who participated in the 2024 Annual General Meeting on November 14. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity to address your questions and, we hope, foster renewed enthusiasm for our ongoing transition from an association to a regulatory college. Once our amended legislation receives Royal Assent, Annual General Meetings will no longer be held. Registrants will continue to receive regulatory bulletins and an annual report to keep them informed.

Renewal Statistics

The first year of registration renewal using Alinity was a success!

- ✓ 97% of registrants completed their renewal before the deadline.
- ✓ 45% of registrants paid their registration renewal by credit card.
- ✓ 9% of registrants have subscribed to the NBASLPA Pre-Authorized Debit program (PAD).
- ✓ 1.5% of registrants incurred a late fee.
- ✓ 1% have not yet renewed.

Code of Ethics

The Rules of Conduct are the NBASLPA Code of Ethics.

Please be advised that NBASLPA now has its own Code of Ethics to which all NBASLPA registrants must abide. The Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC) Code of Ethics is no longer NBASLPA's Rules of Conduct.



Review the new Code of Ethics here:

[NBASLPA Code of Ethics](#)

Bylaw 13.1	(a) The Rules of Conduct shall be the NBASLPA Code of Ethics and incorporated herein as bylaws by reference. (b) In the case of conflict between the Rules of Conduct and the other provisions of the bylaws, the other provisions of the bylaws shall have precedence.
Bylaw 13.2	No member shall act or practice or permit anything to be done on his/her behalf contrary to the Rules of Conduct.
Bylaw 13.3	When any member: (a) fails to do anything required by the Rules of Conduct; (b) does anything or permits anything to be done which is not permitted by the Rules of Conduct; or (c) breaches any provision of the Rules of Conduct; or any combination thereof, the Registrar shall upon becoming aware of such conduct immediately complete, sign and deliver a complaint with respect to the member to the Complaints Committee.

The **Code of Ethics** outlines the values, principles, and minimum expectations for professional conduct that audiologists and speech-language pathologists must uphold in their practices and interactions with patients, the public, and colleagues. It serves as a guide for ethical behavior, a reference for decision-making, and a benchmark for evaluating conduct in both routine and complex situations. It also informs the public of the ethical standards they can expect from professionals in New Brunswick. Registrants are encouraged to seek additional advice when ethical decisions are unclear. The **Code of Ethics** serves as a companion document that should be applied in consideration of relevant legislation, regulations, standards, and guidelines. Audiologists and speech-language pathologists must be able to articulate their rationale for all ethical decisions and must take responsibility for their decision-making and actions.

Any breach of the **Code of Ethics** may constitute unprofessional conduct and result in a referral to the Complaints Committee, with the potential for disciplinary action, as defined in the Act Respecting the New Brunswick Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists.

Please take the time to thoroughly review the updated Code of Ethics, which all registrants are required to follow. Regularly referencing the Code will help ensure your ongoing compliance with Bylaw 13.

Cross Provincial Practice Courtesy Registration

NBASLPA would like to remind all registrants that several provinces have agreed to allow audiologists and speech-language pathologists to provide a limited amount of care across provincial boundaries through a Cross Provincial Practice Registration to enhance access to care for clients/patients.



To apply for a Cross Provincial Practice Registration, you must be a fully practicing registrant in one of the participating provinces:

1. Alberta
2. Manitoba
3. Ontario
4. Saskatchewan
5. New Brunswick

Registrants must abide by rules, bylaws and legislation in primary and secondary provinces. Click here to access a chart outlining notable differences in rules across provinces:

Practice Difference Across Provinces: Key Links

Applicants who hold full registration status in one of the regulated jurisdictions listed above, may be granted a Cross Provincial Practice Registration not to exceed a maximum of 200 direct client/patient care hours over a 12-month period. The care can be delivered in person or virtually. The number of direct client/patient care hours in New Brunswick must not exceed the number of direct client/patient care hours in your primary province.

Please refer to the Cross Provincial Practice Registration Guide for further details and to ensure that you meet the criteria for this registration prior to requesting an application form.

Cross Provincial Practice Registration Guide



Getting Upstream and Mitigating Risk

Boundary Violations – Scenario Responses

As highlighted in the July and September 2024 *Regulatory Bulletins*, crossing or violating the boundaries of a clinical relationship can have serious consequences. These may include complaints, findings of professional misconduct, and, in severe cases, allegations of sexual abuse or harassment. The impact of such boundary crossings or violations is profound and can result in:

- Harm to the patient/client.
- Loss of the clinician's reputation, employment, registration, and/or career.
- Legal actions against the clinician.

To encourage self-reflection and professional dialogue, registrants were presented with three scenarios exploring the boundaries of a clinical relationship. In this edition of *Getting Upstream and Mitigating Risk*, we offer possible responses to the scenario questions to further guide your self-reflection and ongoing collegial dialogue.

Scenario 1 – Requesting Personal Favours

John, a Speech-Language Pathologist, has been working with Mr. Sanchez, a client with aphasia, for several months. During a session, John mentions that he is moving to a new apartment and is feeling overwhelmed by the process. He casually asks Mr. Sanchez if he knows anyone who could help him move, as he could really use a hand. Mr. Sanchez, wanting to be helpful and feeling a sense of gratitude towards John for his support during therapy, offers to assist him personally. John, grateful for the offer, accepts and arranges for Mr. Sanchez to come by on the weekend to help with the move.

Response to Scenario 1 – Requesting Personal Favours

1. Were John's actions in this case appropriate? Why or why not?

John's actions were **not appropriate**. As a regulated professional, John has a responsibility to maintain clear professional boundaries with his clients. By accepting Mr. Sanchez's offer to help with the move, John shifted the nature of their relationship from professional to personal, which can compromise the therapeutic relationship and the client's perception of the professional's role.

2. Would you consider this to be a boundary crossing or a violation? If so, which? Why?

This scenario represents a **boundary violation** rather than just a crossing. Boundary violations occur when professional boundaries are not just blurred but breached, causing potential harm to the therapeutic relationship. By involving Mr. Sanchez in a personal matter, John has exploited the power imbalance inherent in their relationship, even if unintentionally. This could create an obligation or discomfort for Mr. Sanchez, as clients often feel indebted to their therapists for the care and support they receive.



3. How might John's actions influence how Mr. Sanchez views him as a speech-language pathologist?

John's actions may:

- Erode Mr. Sanchez's trust in John as a professional, as the dynamic shifts from therapeutic to personal.
- Cause confusion about the boundaries of their relationship, leading Mr. Sanchez to feel unsure of what is expected of him.
- Impact the therapy process, as Mr. Sanchez might feel pressure to please John or hesitate to share personal concerns, worrying about the possibility of more personal obligations.



4. How can John re-establish professional boundaries with Mr. Sanchez?

John can take the following steps to re-establish boundaries:

1. **Acknowledge the Mistake:** Apologize to Mr. Sanchez and explain that it was inappropriate to accept his offer. For example, John might say:

"Mr. Sanchez, I realize it was unprofessional of me to accept your offer to help me move. Our relationship should remain focused on your therapy, and I deeply regret any discomfort this may have caused."
2. **Decline Further Assistance:** Politely and firmly decline any further offers of personal help. Reassure Mr. Sanchez that his role as a client is valuable and sufficient.
3. **Consult a Supervisor or Colleague:** Seek advice on how to handle the situation professionally and document the steps taken to address the issue.
4. **Reinforce Professional Boundaries:** During future sessions, ensure that interactions are focused solely on the therapeutic relationship and avoid discussing personal matters.
5. **Reflect on Actions:** Use this experience as an opportunity to better understand professional boundaries and incorporate this learning into future practice.

Discussion Prompts:

- How can professionals identify early signs of boundary crossings to prevent them from escalating into violations?
- What tools or training could help clinicians better navigate these situations?
- How might cultural factors or the client/patient's perspective influence boundary-related issues?

Scenario 2 – Offering Personal Support

Kumiko, an audiologist, has been working with Mrs. Adebayo, a long-time client who has been struggling with the adjustment to her new hearing aids. During a routine follow-up appointment, Mrs. Adebayo becomes emotional, expressing frustration about her recent hearing loss and its impact on her social life. Feeling empathetic, Kumiko shares that she also went through a difficult time when her grandfather lost his hearing, and that she became his primary source of emotional support. Kumiko offers to be there for Mrs. Adebayo in the same way, suggesting that she could call or text her anytime she feels lonely or needs someone to talk to, even outside of office hours.



Response to Scenario 2 – Offering Personal Support

1. Were Kumiko's actions in this case appropriate? Why or why not?

Kumiko's actions were **not appropriate**. While her empathy is commendable, her offer to provide personal emotional support outside of professional boundaries risks blurring the lines of the therapeutic relationship. Audiologists should focus on addressing client/patient needs within the scope of their professional role and avoid establishing a personal connection that could compromise objectivity or create dependency.

2. Would you consider this to be a boundary crossing or a violation? If so, which? Why?

This scenario represents a **boundary crossing**, which, if not corrected, could escalate into a violation. Boundary crossings are actions that deviate from typical professional conduct but may not immediately harm the client. By offering personal emotional support, Kumiko risks creating an inappropriate dynamic where her role as an audiologist becomes conflated with that of a personal confidant.

3. How might Kumiko's actions influence how Mrs. Adebayo views her as an audiologist?

Kumiko's actions might:

- Cause Mrs. Adebayo to rely on Kumiko for personal support rather than addressing her emotional concerns through appropriate channels, such as counseling or support groups.
- Create confusion about Kumiko's role, making it harder for Mrs. Adebayo to see her as a professional audiologist focused on hearing care.
- Potentially harm Mrs. Adebayo if Kumiko is unable to provide the emotional support she promised, leading to feelings of abandonment or disappointment.

4. How can Kumiko re-establish professional boundaries with Mrs. Adebayo?

Kumiko can take the following steps to re-establish boundaries:

1. **Acknowledge the Overstep:** Kumiko should clarify her professional role and gently explain that her earlier offer was inappropriate. For instance:

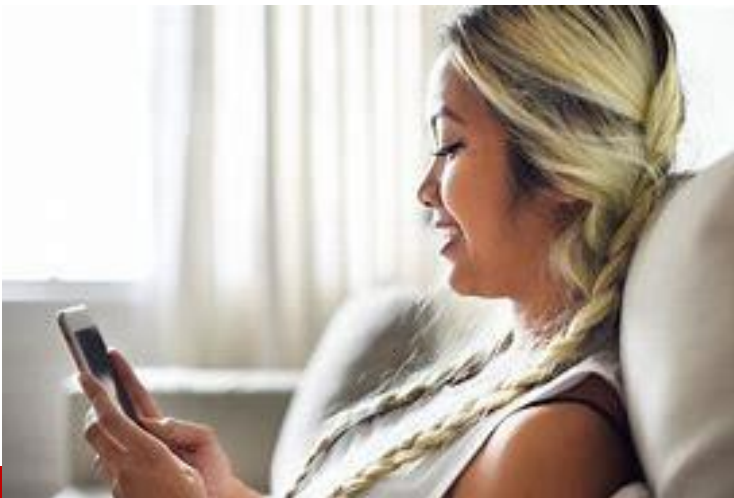
"Mrs. Adebayo, I care deeply about supporting you as you adjust to your hearing aids, but I realize I stepped outside my role by offering personal emotional support. My goal is to help you within the scope of my expertise as an audiologist."



2. **Redirect to Appropriate Resources:** Suggest resources or referrals for emotional support, such as support groups for individuals with hearing loss or counseling services.
3. **Maintain Professional Focus:** In future sessions, ensure conversations remain focused on Mrs. Adebayo's hearing health and strategies to address her adjustment challenges.
4. **Reflect and Learn:** Use this situation as an opportunity for self-reflection and to seek training or mentorship on maintaining professional boundaries.

Discussion Prompts:

- How can professionals balance empathy with the need to maintain clear boundaries in therapeutic relationships?
- What strategies can clinicians use to redirect personal concerns to appropriate resources while still showing empathy?
- How might cultural factors or the client's specific needs influence boundary-related challenges?



Scenario 3 – Accepting a Personal Gift

Christine, an audiologist, has been working with Mrs. LeBlanc for several years, helping her manage her hearing loss with various treatments and devices. Mrs. LeBlanc, who feels very grateful for Christine's care, brings her a handmade quilt as a thank-you gift during one of her appointments. Touched by the gesture, Christine accepts the quilt and even agrees to have lunch with Mrs. LeBlanc after the appointment to show her appreciation. During lunch, their conversation shifts from professional topics to personal matters, and Mrs. LeBlanc begins to view Christine more as a friend than as her healthcare provider.



Response to Scenario 3 – Accepting a Personal Gift

1. Were Christine's actions in this case appropriate? Why or why not?

Christine's actions were likely **not appropriate** because they blurred the lines between a professional relationship and a personal friendship. Accepting a personal gift of significant value (a handmade quilt) and engaging in a social activity (lunch) outside of the professional context can compromise the objectivity and professionalism required in a healthcare provider-client/patient relationship. While Christine's intention to express gratitude was well-meaning, her actions may unintentionally foster dual relationships, which can lead to complications in maintaining the necessary professional boundaries.

2. Would you consider this to be a boundary crossing or a violation? If so, which? Why?

This scenario likely represents a **boundary crossing**, as Christine's actions (accepting the quilt and having lunch) veer away from the professional relationship without necessarily causing harm. However, if such actions continue or escalate, they could develop into a **boundary violation**, especially if Mrs. LeBlanc's perception of the relationship influences her expectations of care. The shift in their conversation to personal matters and Mrs. LeBlanc viewing Christine as more of a friend is a red flag that suggests the boundary crossing is impacting the professional dynamic.

3. How might Christine's actions influence how Mrs. LeBlanc views her as an audiologist?

Christine's actions might:

- Mrs. LeBlanc may begin to see Christine as a friend rather than a professional, which could lead to unrealistic expectations, such as special treatment or leniency in care decisions.
- This change in perception could also lead Mrs. LeBlanc to feel entitled to Christine's time or resources outside the professional setting, creating challenges in maintaining an equitable relationship.
- Conversely, if Christine later attempts to re-establish boundaries, Mrs. LeBlanc may feel rejected or confused, potentially harming the therapeutic relationship.

4. How can Christine re-establish professional boundaries with Mrs. LeBlanc?

- **Decline further personal gestures:** Christine should politely but firmly explain that while she deeply appreciates Mrs. LeBlanc’s thoughtfulness, professional guidelines prevent her from accepting personal gifts of significant value or engaging in social activities with patients.
- **Shift interactions to professional topics:** During appointments, Christine should guide the conversation back to topics related to Mrs. LeBlanc’s hearing care, avoiding personal discussions.
- **Communicate clearly:** Christine could explain the importance of maintaining a professional relationship to ensure unbiased, high-quality care. She might say, “I value the professional relationship we’ve built over the years, and it’s important to maintain that focus to provide the best care.”
- **Seek supervision or guidance:** If Christine feels uncertain about how to navigate this situation, she could consult a supervisor, mentor, or her professional Code of Ethics for advice.
- **Document interactions:** Christine should document the receipt of the gift and any steps taken to address the situation to demonstrate transparency and adherence to ethical standards.



Stay tuned for the March 2025 edition of
Getting Upstream and Mitigating Risk:
Developing Cultural Competence and Humility

Reach out with any questions!

We are here to help all registrants meet their regulatory requirements, mitigate risk, and protect the public.

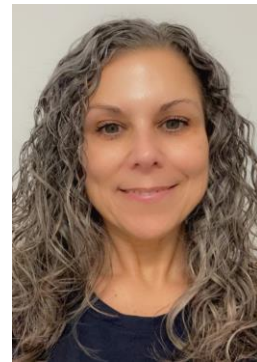
"NBASLPA ensures public safety by regulating, supporting, and ensuring the competent, safe and ethical practice of audiologists and speech-language pathologists in New Brunswick. All registrants of NBASLPA must practice in compliance with the Act, the Bylaws and Rules."



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Next edition of the Regulatory Bulletin March 2025

Please contact the office at info@nbaslpa.ca if there are any regulatory topics you would like addressed in future editions.