

NBASLPA

Regulatory Bulletin

"Keeping registrants informed."

July 2024

New Brunswick Association of Speech-
Language Pathologists & Audiologists

New Registrant Portal

The New Brunswick Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists is pleased to announce the completion of Phase one of the Alinity transition, which includes the implementation of a new registrant portal. This updated portal offers an enhanced user interface and a more streamlined process for registration and renewal. Registrants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the new system by logging in and updating their profile. With Phase I of the transition to Alinity completed, you can now update your profile and make your requests for *Verification of Registration* when applying for registration with another regulatory body.

The following steps will assist you in accessing the new Alinity portal

- Click on this link: [NBASLPA Registrant Portal](#).
- Select the **Forgot your password** link at the bottom of the screen.
- Enter the email address for your account and the verification code.
- You will be sent a password reset email within a few minutes. Be sure to check your spam/junk folders.
- Follow the directions in the email to reset your password to a safe and secure password you will remember.
- Log into the portal with your Alinity email and password.

Upon logging in, please take the time to familiarize yourself with the new system. Verify that all your information is correct. Update your profile as needed, including adding employment records and indicating any registrations with other health regulators or jurisdictions. If you have any concerns about the accuracy of your registration details or history, or have any difficulties logging into the system, please contact us at

info@nbaslpa.ca.

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New Look!

Survey Results

In the April 2024 issue, we included a survey to collect your feedback on the Bulletin's new format and the necessity of its ongoing publication. We have received responses from only three (3) registrants thus far. While we sincerely appreciate their contributions, we require additional feedback to guarantee all registrants remain actively involved in their regulatory responsibilities.

Your input is important for us to refine and customize the Bulletin to foster your engagement effectively. This ensures you receive pertinent information aligned with your regulatory obligations as a health care professional (regardless of work setting). Moreover, it helps us fulfill our legislated mandate of public protection.

Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey:
<https://forms.microsoft.com/r/JzVHTDweMq>

Legislation Update

Our amended Act has been successfully delivered to the King's Printer for preparation and submission to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. Although the Act was not included on the Spring docket, we are optimistic it will be considered in the upcoming Fall 2024 session.



Important Reminder

Rule 14.10 – Guest Lecturer Status

Individuals or organizations who wish to engage a guest lecturer on any subject matter covered under the Act are required to file an application for guest lecturer status in the prescribed form with the Association at least 30 days before the event. Upon approval of the applicant's qualifications (as per Rule 14.10.2) the Registrar will grant the applicant guest lecturer status which entitles the applicant to deliver the lecture or demonstrations described in the application.



An applicant for guest lecturer status who is a member in good standing of: the faculty of an accredited university; a Canadian regulator or professional association of audiology and speech-language pathology; or the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, will be granted guest lecture status free of charge if;

- (a) NBASLPA receives a letter verifying good standing from such organization, or
- (b) NBASLPA can verify good standing online, at no cost.

Failure to comply with rules 14.10 will subject the individual(s) to prosecution under sections 13 and 16 of the Act.

Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Act – Sections 13 – 18

13 Every person other than an individual who engages a person as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist and every agency or registry that procures employment or work for a person as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist shall ensure at the time of engagement or employment that the person is the holder of a current certificate of registration issued pursuant to this Act and the bylaws.

16 Except as provided in this Act, the bylaws or rules, no person other than a person whose name is entered in the register, or the temporary register, shall

- (a) publicly or privately, whether or not for hire, gain or hope of reward hold himself out in any way as being a speech-language pathologist or audiologist;
- (b) assume or use any title, name, designation, initials or description, including those referred to in this Act, that does or could lead the public to believe he is a member of the Association, a speech-language pathologist or an audiologist;
- (c) practice speech-language pathology; or
- (d) practice audiology.

17 Any person who knowingly furnishes false, or misleading information in or in respect of any application made under this Act, the bylaws or rules or in any statement or return required to be furnished under this Act, the bylaws or rules, commits an offence.

18 A person who violates any provision of this Act commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not less than

- (a) \$500 for a first offence;
- (b) \$1000 for a second offence; or
- (c) \$2000 for a third offence or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or both.

Getting Upstream and Mitigating Risk

Recognizing and Managing Professional Boundaries



Professional Conduct and Boundary Violations

Regulatory bodies frequently receive complaints regarding professional misconduct, specifically concerning boundary violations. Such behavior constitutes professional misconduct and can result in severe consequences, including:

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

Understanding Professional Boundaries

Relationships with patients/clients are inherently therapeutic, focusing on their needs and defined by professional boundaries. These boundaries represent the spaces between the clinician's power and the patient/client vulnerability. The patient/client must trust the clinician will act in their best interest at all times. A breach of this trust can be difficult or impossible to re-establish.

When a clinician prioritizes their personal needs over the patient/client needs, they misuse their power and violate boundaries. Such violations can cause distress, which patients/clients might not recognize or feel until harmful consequences occur. This includes betrayal of trust, respect, or intimacy, potentially causing physical or emotional harm.

CAUTION		DANGER		OUT OF BOUNDS	
Boundary Crossings	Examples	Boundary Violations	Examples	Professional Misconduct	Examples
Boundary crossings are deviations from standard professional behavior which may be inadvertent, thoughtless, or even intentional, especially when done to address a specific therapeutic need of the patient/client, or clinician.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information with a patient/client's family against their wishes • Driving a patient/client to the bank because it's on your route • Socializing outside of the clinical setting • Inappropriately sharing personal information 	Boundary violations can occur when a health professional confuses their needs with those of the patient/client. These violations can cause distress for the patient/client, which may not be recognized or felt until harmful consequences arise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting a patient/client outside of work hours • Asking your patient/client, who is an accountant, for financial investment advice • Referring your patient/client for hearing aids but only providing your own business card. 	Professional misconduct is an extreme boundary violation. It can include seductive, sexually demeaning, or harassing behaviors; sexual assault; and taking advantage of vulnerable patients/clients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in a sexual relationship with a current patient/client or their family member • Engaging in a sexual relationship with a vulnerable former patient/client • Defrauding a patient/client

Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Healthcare providers must adhere to strict boundaries to maintain professionalism and ethical standards. The following guidelines help ensure appropriate conduct:

Monitor Time Spent with Patients/Clients

Avoid spending disproportionate time with attractive patients/clients versus others, and refrain from scheduling outside regular hours or offering unnecessary follow-ups.

Ensure Consultations Occur in Appropriate Settings

Conduct meetings within the work setting only and during designated hours

Avoid Giving or Receiving Gifts

Recognize that gifts, whether consumer goods or subtler forms, can be inappropriate. Refuse to accept gifts or favors from patients/clients.

Prohibit Business Relationships with Current Patients/Clients

Allow exceptions only in unavoidable small community settings.

Warnings Signs of Boundary Violations

As professionals, it's essential to maintain clear boundaries to ensure the integrity of our roles and the safety of our patients/clients. Here are key warning signs indicating you might be crossing a boundary:

Showing Favoritism

Treating one patient/client more favorably than others can undermine trust and impartiality.

Excessive Physical Contact

Engaging in more physical contact than necessary or appropriate can make patients/clients uncomfortable and may be misconstrued.

Spending Personal Time Together

Using breaks or time off to spend with a patient/client can blur the lines between professional and personal relationships.

Discussing Personal Issues

Sharing personal or intimate information not relevant to the patient/client's care or your clinical role can shift the focus away from professional responsibilities.

Sharing Personal Information

Providing personal contact details such as your email address or phone number can lead to inappropriate interactions.

Secrecy About Relationships

Hiding your relationship with a patient/client from colleagues or supervisors indicates a boundary issue that needs to be addressed.

Feedback on Over-Familiarity

If colleagues or others remark that your behavior is overly familiar or intrusive, it's crucial to reassess and correct your interactions.

Exchanging Gifts

Buying or accepting gifts from a patient/client can create a sense of obligation and compromise professional judgment.

Involvement with Family Members

Developing relationships with a patient/client's family members outside the professional context can complicate and compromise your professional role.

Re-establishing Professional Boundaries in Patient/Client Relationships

Maintaining professional boundaries is crucial for effective and ethical care. Here are steps to help you re-establish boundaries in a professional relationship:

Reflect on Your Actions and Intentions

Take time to evaluate your relationship with your patient/client, considering your actions and underlying intentions.

Seek Feedback from Colleagues

Discuss the situation with trusted colleagues and seek their feedback to gain perspective and advice.

Re-establish Appropriate Boundaries

Take deliberate steps to re-establish professional boundaries with your patient/client.

Communicate with the Patient/Client

Explain in a patient/client-focused manner that your previous actions have shifted the relationship away from focusing on their healthcare needs.

Clarify Your Role

Clearly outline your professional role and the appropriate boundaries moving forward.

Avoid Personal Interactions

Stop spending break or personal time with the patient/client to reinforce professional limits.

Focus on the Patient/Client's Needs

If you are assigned to the patient/client, remain friendly but prioritize their needs and care plan.

Stay Professional in Conversations

If the patient/client brings up topics unrelated to their care, consider whose needs you are addressing before responding.

Consider Withdrawing or Terminating the Relationship

If necessary, take steps to withdraw from or terminate the professional relationship, ensuring care is transferred to another appropriate provider.



The Appropriate Use of Touch

Touch is a profoundly powerful tool in healthcare, essential for assessment and intervention in audiology and speech-language pathology. However, it must be used judiciously and with clear intent to avoid misunderstandings.

Touch, when used appropriately, is a vital part of certain aspects of healthcare. It is crucial for health professionals to:



Communicate Clearly

Always explain to patients/clients why touch is necessary for their care to ensure understanding and comfort. Always obtain and document consent before employing touch within the context of assessment and intervention.

Maintain Professionalism

Use touch solely within the context of assessment and intervention.



Managing Dual Relationships

Health professionals must avoid engaging in dual or multiple relationships with patients/clients or former patients/clients where there is a risk of exploitation or harm. A dual relationship occurs when a professional assumes a secondary role with a patient/client, such as:

Friend **Babysitter** **Employer** **Business Associate** **Family Member** **Sex Partner**

The inherent power imbalance in professional relationships can lead to exploitation. Dual relationships can blur boundaries, leading to confusion and potential emotional or psychological harm to the patient/client.

Avoid Dual Roles

- Refrain from taking on multiple roles that could compromise the professional relationship.
- Maintain Boundaries
- Keep clear, consistent boundaries to protect the integrity of the therapeutic relationship.
- Focus on Patient/Client Welfare
- Always prioritize the patient/client's well-being and professional care.

Reach out with any questions!

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

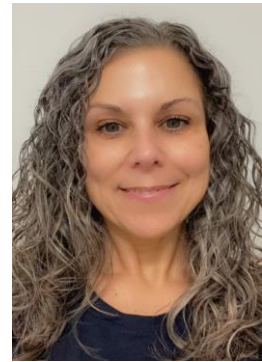
"NBASLPA ensures public safety by regulating, supporting, and ensuring the competent, safe and ethical practice of audiologists and speech-language pathologists in New Brunswick. All members of NBASLPA must practice in compliance with the Act, the Bylaws and Rules."



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