

MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



*Private Career Colleges Act, 2005*

## **Superintendent's Policy Directive #8**

### **Approval of Ultrasound Technology or Medical Sonography Training Programs**

August 31, 2011

## Directive

This policy directive addresses public health and safety concerns around training of ultrasound technologists and medical sonographers in Ontario.

Pursuant to subsection 23 (1) of the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* (“PCCA, 2005”), private career colleges (“PCCs”) that offer program(s) leading to an entry-level position in the sonography (also known as ultrasound technology) field must have the program(s) approved by the Superintendent of Private Career Colleges (“Superintendent”) and pursuant to subsection 23 (4) of the PCCA, 2005 are required to comply with the conditions specified by the Superintendent in this policy directive.

Programs offered at PCCs intended to prepare graduates for an entry-level employment in the sonography field are required to obtain accreditation from Canadian Medical Association (CMA) Conjoint Accreditation Service<sup>1</sup>. To receive a positive program accreditation report an educational program must provide evidence of its compliance with the National Competency Profiles<sup>2</sup> developed and published by the Canadian Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (CSDMS) in partnership with the Canadian Association of Registered Diagnostic Ultrasound Professionals (CARDUP).

## Authority

Clause 53 (1) (a) of the PCCA, 2005 enables the Superintendent to issue policy directives setting out standards for vocational programs or classes of vocational programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on the CMA Conjoint Accreditation process can be found at [www.cma.ca/accredit](http://www.cma.ca/accredit)

<sup>2</sup> A copy of the National Competency Profiles can be found at [www.csdms.com](http://www.csdms.com) and [www.cardup.org](http://www.cardup.org).

According to subsection 53 (2) of the PCCA, 2005, policy directives issued by the Superintendent are legal requirements that are binding on all PCCs and every PCC must comply with and operate in accordance with the policy directive.

## Enforcement

Pursuant to subsection 53 (1.1) of the PCCA, 2005 a policy directive issued by the Superintendent may revoke an approval for a vocational program or a class of vocational programs and an approval for credentials that a PCC may grant. The Superintendent is required to provide a PCC with a minimum period of **six months** following the date the policy directive is issued to comply with the policy directive prior to revoking a program approval.

**However**, clause 53 (1.2) provides the Superintendent with an authority to enforce a policy directive on the date the directive is issued, **if** one of the following applies:

1. The policy directive introduces a new standard related to public health or public safety.
2. The policy directive revoking the approval relates to a vocational program that is regulated by a third party and,
  - i. the third party changes the entry requirements necessary to practise the vocation, and
  - ii. the changes are such that unless the PCC adopts the requirements prescribed by the third party, graduates from the program would not meet the entry requirements to practise the vocation.

This policy directive formalizes a new program standard related to public health and safety. Evidence suggests that the process of accreditation and implementation of the National Competency Profiles may significantly improve the quality and consistency of

sonography programs in Ontario and in turn improve the level of safe care provided to the public.

Under subsection 24 (1) of the PCCA, 2005, the Superintendent may revoke a PCC's approval to provide a specified vocational program if the Superintendent believes that the program fails to meet the conditions of the approval, or the applicable standards or performance objectives set out in the Superintendent's policy directives, or no longer offers the skills and knowledge that would enable graduates to obtain employment in the vocation that is the subject of the program.

## Compliance

A PCC intending to offer a sonography program must pursue, obtain and maintain accreditation with CMA Conjoint Accreditation Service. In order to assess the quality of an educational program, students must be enrolled in the program and the program must be running. A PCC must obtain a probationary program approval from the Superintendent prior to registering for accreditation. To receive probationary program approval, a PCC must:

- Adopt the National Competency Profiles as the basis for its curriculum,
- Demonstrate that it has secured clinical placements for all students through articulation agreements with the clinical placement provider,
- Obtain a favourable third party assessment from CSDMS, and
- Satisfy all program approval requirements under the PCCA, 2005.

Pursuant to the Superintendent's authority under section 23 (4) of the PCCA, 2005, probationary program approval is subject to the following conditions:

- Name of the program to include the term “probationary”, and the full program name must be used in all PCC materials referencing this program.

*for example: Ultrasound Technologist (probationary)*

- Pursuant to Superintendent’s authority under subsection 33 (6) of *Ontario Regulation 414/06* (O. Reg 414), PCC’s financial security will be set according to the PCC’s risk level. The risk level will be assessed by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis against a risk criteria framework.<sup>3</sup>
- A PCC must demonstrate to the Superintendent that it has registered for the accreditation.
- The PCC may register and attempt accreditation up to three times. If it is ultimately unsuccessful, the Superintendent will revoke the program’s approval. The Superintendent may revoke the program’s approval before a PCC has completed three attempts at accreditation, if the Superintendent believes that the PCC demonstrated a material inability to address any deficiencies identified during accreditation process.
- All sonography program student contracts must include a Ministry-approved disclaimer advising the student of the conditions of a probationary program approval and possible risks if the Superintendent revokes the PCC’s program approval. This Ministry-approved disclaimer is attached and forms part of this policy directive. Pursuant to subsection 15 (2) of the PCCA, 2005 use of the disclaimer is required as a condition of registration. Its use is required immediately.

Once accreditation is obtained by the PCC:

- The Superintendent will re-approve the program for the duration of accreditation term.

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<sup>3</sup> Probationary program approval may result in an increased risk level and an increase in the PCC’s financial security.

- PCC's financial security requirement will be reassessed as per the guidelines set in section 33 of O. Reg 414.
- Program name will be amended to include "accredited" in the brackets following the name of the program, replacing the word "probationary".

*for example: Ultrasound Technologist (CMA accredited)*

Once the Superintendent approves the program, the approval is valid for the period specified by the Superintendent, subject to PCC's retention of CMA accreditation and to future policy directives.

If at any time a PCC's program is no longer in compliance with this directive, its program approval will be revoked. If a PCC's program approval is revoked by the Superintendent under subsection 24 (1) of the PCCA, 2005, it is the responsibility of the PCC to train-out current students, provide refunds on fees paid, or arrange for training completions at other institutions. Any costs arising from providing train-outs or refunds must be borne by the PCC.

### **Transitional Measures**

Currently there are no approved programs to which this directive would apply. Accordingly, no transitional measures are required and pursuant to the Superintendent's authority under clause 53 (1.2) this directive is in force immediately.

### **Program in Related Field**

A PCC offering a program in a related field that does not intend to adhere to this policy directive must ensure that advertising or other promotional materials in any media and enrolment contracts do not suggest that the program prepares students for an entry-level position as a medical sonographer or ultrasound technologist.

## **Effective Date**

This policy directive is effective as of August 31, 2011.

**This document is a legal document and is binding on all private career colleges. Every private career college shall comply with and be operated in accordance with this policy directive.**

**Need More Information?**

For further information on the CMA Conjoint Accreditation process contact the Canadian Medical Association at:

<http://www.cma.ca/accredit>

A copy of the National Competency Profiles and further information on the CSDMS and contact information can be found at:

<http://www.csdms.com/>

A copy of the National Competency Profiles and further information on the CARDUP can be found at:

<http://www.cardup.org>

For further information on the requirements of the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Private Career College Branch at:

Private Career Colleges Branch  
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor Mowat Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M7A1L2

Telephone: (416) 314-0500 or 1-866-330-3395

Fax: (416) 314-0499, Email: [pcc@ontario.ca](mailto:pcc@ontario.ca)

**OR**

Visit our website at: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/audiences/pcc/>

The full text of the act and regulations can also be downloaded from the Ontario government E-Laws website at:

[www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)



**Disclaimer for a Student in a “Probationary”  
Sonography or Ultrasound Technology Program**

Pursuant to the requirements set in *Superintendent’s Policy Directive #8 - Approval of Ultrasound Technology or Sonography Training Programs*, this program was approved for a probationary period and is subject to the following conditions.

The \_\_\_\_\_  
private career college name  
sonography program must obtain and maintain a Canadian Medical Association (CMA) accreditation.

In order to assess the quality and delivery of an educational program, the CMA Conjoint Accreditation Service requires the program to be running and have students enrolled during the accreditation process. The PCC may attempt up to three times to challenge the accreditation process. If it is not successful, the Superintendent will revoke the program approval. The Superintendent may revoke the program’s approval before a PCC has completed three attempts at accreditation, if the Superintendent believes that the PCC demonstrated a material inability to address any deficiencies identified during the accreditation process.

If a PCC’s program approval is revoked by the Superintendent under subsection 24 (1) of the PCCA, 2005, the PCC is required to train-out current students, provide full refunds on fees paid, or arrange for training completions at other institutions at its expense

Graduates of a PCC program that is in the midst of obtaining CMA accreditation, are required to successfully complete the Canadian Association of Registered Diagnostic Ultrasound Professionals (CARDUP) Clinical Skills Assessment to be eligible to write a registration exam with the CARDUP, a national professional association.

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
student’s name  
acknowledge that I have read the above disclosure and understand the program approval conditions to which this program is subject and the associated risks of enrolling in this program. Further, with this knowledge, I request admission to the

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
program name private career college name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date