



Establishing the Physician Patient Relationship

Standards of Practice of the Yukon Medical Council (“the Council”) are the minimum standards of professional behavior and ethical conduct expected of all physicians registered in the Yukon. Standards of Practice will be referenced in the management of complaints and in discipline.

- (1) A physician-patient relationship ⁱ is established when a physician initiates care that would be reasonably expected to extend beyond a single encounter.
- (2) A physician **must**:
 - (a) provide care to the best of his or her ability to a patient in an urgent medical situation where no other physician is providing care, regardless of whether a physician-patient relationship has been established;
 - (b) inform potential patients of any conditions or restrictions on the physician’s practice permit and/or patient selection criteria established by the physician under section (5); and
 - (c) accept patients on a “first come, first served basis” within any such selection criteria.
- (3) A physician who offers introductory appointments **must**:
 - (a) advise patients in advance when an introductory appointment is not a medical appointment;
 - (b) not bill or charge for such an appointment;
 - (c) comply with all relevant privacy legislation and the [Records Management](#) standard of practice with respect to retaining, disclosing and disposing of information collected during an introductory appointment; and
 - (d) when deciding not to establish a physician-patient relationship, disclose the reason(s) to the patient, unless disclosure of the reasons could reasonably be expected to:
 - i. result in immediate and grave harm to the patient’s mental or physical health or safety;
 - ii. threaten the mental health and physical health or safety of another individual; or
 - iii. pose a threat to public safety.
- (4) A physician **must not** refuse to establish a physician-patient relationship based on:
 - (a) any prohibited ground of discrimination including but not limited to age, gender, marital status, medical complexity, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status;
 - (b) the patient’s care requiring more time than another patient with fewer medical needs; or

Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

- *Physician* means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered under the Medical Profession Act.
- *Must* refers to a mandatory requirement.
- *May* means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- *Patient* includes, where applicable, the patient’s legal guardian or substitute decision maker.

- (c) the circumstances of the patient's injury or medical condition that may require the physician to prepare and provide additional documentation or reports.
- (5) A physician **may** establish patient selection criteria if such criteria are:
- (a) not in contravention of Section (4);
 - (b) based on matters relevant to the physician's scope of medical practice; and
 - (c) available to the Council on request.

ⁱIn an established physician-patient relationship, both the physician and patient have a reasonable expectation the care provided will extend beyond a single encounter. These relationships include but are not limited to:

- (a) longitudinal relationships, based on the identification of a regular attending physician or clinic; and
- (b) sessional relationships for a defined period of time, based on a presenting concern(s), referred consultation or identified medical condition.

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