



## Withdrawal of Physician Services Directive

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### *Policy Statement of the Yukon Medical Council on Withdrawal of Physician Services during Job Action*

#### **Preamble:**

The Yukon Medical Council is concerned about the quality and accessibility of health care.

The Council acknowledges the right of physicians to withdraw services under specific circumstances.

The Council reaffirms that discontinuing required services to existing patients without arranging alternative services or providing reasonable notice is unacceptable and may constitute professional misconduct.

The Council acknowledges its obligation to communicate clearly to all parties what it expects from the medical profession in Yukon during any withdrawal of services.



**What does the Council expect from physicians who wish to withdraw services?**

The Council expects that individual physicians will adhere to their ethical obligation and avoid placing their patients at undue risk.

The Council expects and is confident that physicians in Yukon will act responsibly toward patients during any withdrawal of services.

The Council expects and is confident that physicians in Yukon will provide appropriate emergency care and will ensure that patients are not abandoned.

The Council expects that physicians will put in place a plan that will ensure patient access to emergency and other required services in circumstances where groups of physicians decide to withdraw services at the same time.

The Council expects that physicians choosing to withdraw services will inform patients of their decision and assure that patients are informed of the availability of emergency services.

The Council expects that physicians will recognize the need for ongoing monitoring of their patients with conditions that could deteriorate during a delay in treatment resulting from a withdrawal of services.



The Council expects and is confident that physicians will make appropriate arrangements for the treatment of patients under their care who remain hospitalized or who are receiving or completing a course of treatment and who may suffer if the course of treatment is not continued or completed.

**What does the Council expect from the physician members of its Council and Committees?**

The Council recommends that physician members of the Council will refrain from participating in a service withdrawal related to a job action in order to avoid a potential conflict of interest.

**What can the Public expect from the Council during a withdrawal of physician services?**

The Council will monitor the situation in Yukon Communities by communicating with individual physicians, with the Yukon Medical Association and with health authority directors and administrators to address concerns regarding patient access to medical care and to resolve difficulties where possible.

If the Council receives written complaints arising from a withdrawal of physician services, it will apply its investigative process to these complaints.

*The Yukon Medical Council acknowledges the assistance of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia in preparing this document.*