

Decision Publication Policy

The Health Professions Review Board (the "Review Board") is required to make its decisions in writing, give reasons for those decisions and make them accessible to the public.

Ensuring that the public has easy and full access to all our decisions promotes transparency and openness. It also helps to educate the public about our process and the principles that govern our decision-making. We are committed to these principles of transparency, openness and public accountability.

Publication of our decisions over the Internet by posting them on our website may interfere with the privacy rights of the people who come to us to resolve a dispute or those whose personal health information may be the subject of our review.

Disclosure of sensitive personal information contained in our decisions on the internet can have serious and negative unintended privacy consequences for the people involved. Once personal information is posted online it will be very difficult to remove it or to control its use. We are committed to respecting the personal privacy of identifiable individuals who are involved in our reviews.

This policy explains how the Review Board balances openness and public accountability with protection of personal privacy in the public release of our reasons for decision.

The *Health Professions Act* (the "Act") does not require the Review Board to disclose in our decisions the names or other identifying information of the applicant, complainant, registrant or any witnesses giving evidence at our hearings. We believe that it is not necessary to disclose those names or other identifying information in our decisions.

In coming to this conclusion we note that the public interest is protected by provisions in the Act that require that in certain serious circumstances the colleges must notify the public of the names of, and disciplinary actions taken against, their registrants.

Therefore it is the policy of the Review Board that all its decisions will:

- Be written in a manner that protects the personal privacy of individuals and is suitable for public disclosure in full
- Include the names of the panel members issuing the decision
- Identify the particular college and officials whose decisions are the subject of the review and their legal counsel or representatives
- Identify the legal counsel or representatives of the other parties or any interveners
- Not include the names of the applicant, complainant and registrant, or any witnesses except when they have appeared at a public hearing in an official capacity
- Not include other possible personal identifiers or health care information except where necessary to adequately explain the reasons for the decision
- Be written in plain language
- Be posted on the Review Board website, and
- Be searchable on the website by the name of the college, the issues, key words, date, and type of decision but not by the names of the individual parties.

This policy was passed by the members of the Health Professions Review Board on the 19th day of June, 2009 at Vancouver, BC.