

Glossary of Terms

Adult interdependent partner – A person is the adult interdependent partner of another person if the person has lived with the other person in a relationship of interdependence for a continuous period of not less than 3 years; or of some permanence, if there is a child of the relationship by birth or adoption; or if the person has entered into an adult interdependent partner agreement with another person but does not include a former adult interdependent partner.

Adult interdependent partner relationship – A relationship outside of marriage in which two people: share one another's lives; are emotionally committed to one another; and, function as an economic and domestic unit. A person who is a spouse cannot be part of an adult interdependent relationship.

Boundary crossings – These occur when the behaviour of the regulated member deviates from the accepted boundaries of a therapeutic relationship. Normally, behaviours such as giving or receiving gifts, and self-disclosure are generally inappropriate behaviours in a therapeutic relationship.

Child sexual abuse – This is the improper exposure of a child to sexual contact, activity or behaviour. This includes all forms of sexual contact, forced oral contact (kissing), groping, grabbing, vaginal or anal penetration, and oral genital contact (oral sex) as well as exposure to pornography and exhibitionism. Child sexual abuse also includes asking the child to sexually touch another person, even if contact does not occur. (*Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton*)

Client – Refers to an individual, family, substitute decision maker, group, agency, government, employer, employee, business, organization or community who is the direct or indirect recipient(s) of the regulated member's expertise.

Code of ethics – The ACSLPA Code of Ethics as adopted by Council.

Coercion – Coercion is when someone uses manipulation, pressure, force or threats of force to make someone do something they don't want to do. Using coercive tactics to force someone else into sexual contact is sexual assault because it is not voluntary consent.

Complaints director – The person appointed by Council to receive and act upon any complaints received from patients, employers or the public related to sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or other unprofessional conduct.

Conduct – Includes an act or omission. For example, failure by a regulated health professional in Alberta to report sexual abuse or sexual misconduct is unprofessional conduct.

Consent – Consent is a voluntary agreement to engage in sexual contact. However, it is NOT consent if: a) it is given by someone else; b) there is an abuse of power, trust or authority; c) a person has said "no", or implied no, through words or actions; d) a person is incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs; or e) a person withdraws consent or changes their mind.

Document – Includes recorded information in written, photographic, magnetic, electronic or other form.

Episodic care – An isolated, short-duration, and minor health service provided to a patient where there is no expectation of continuing care by the regulated member.

Former patient – A person to whom one of the following apply:

- for *episodic care*, no health service has been provided for at least 7 days and there is no expectation of an ongoing professional relationship between the regulated member and the patient,
- the patient and/or regulated member has terminated the professional relationship, the termination has been acknowledged by both parties, and at least 30 days has passed since the termination, or
- if neither of the above apply, there has been no health service provided by the regulated member to the patient for one year (365 days).

Health service – A service provided to people to: a) protect, promote or maintain their health, b) prevent illness, c) to diagnose, treat or rehabilitate, or d) to take care of the health needs of the ill, disabled, injured or dying.

Incapacitated – Suffering from a physical, mental or emotional condition or disorder or an addiction to alcohol or drugs or other chemicals that impairs the ability to provide professional services in a safe and competent manner.

Informed consent – A patient’s voluntary decision about health care that is made with the knowledge and understanding of the benefits, risks and options.

Patient – Any individual to whom a regulated member provides a health service in their capacity as a speech-language pathologist or audiologist, but does not include: a) a patient’s substitute decision-maker, legal guardian, or parent, or b) the regulated member’s spouse, adult interdependent partner, or c) other person with whom the regulated member is in an existing sexual relationship if the health service is provided in accordance with the standards.

Power imbalance – In the provider-patient relationship, the SLP or audiologist holds the balance of power due to his/her position as a health care provider, specific knowledge and training, and the patient’s dependence on them to provide the care needed. SLPs and audiologists have access to personal information about the patient and have influence over the treatment provided adding to the imbalance.

Professional boundaries – The limitations around relationships between clients / patients and health care providers to ensure the delivery of safe, ethical client-centred care. Professional boundaries are characterized by respectful, trusting and ethical interactions with clients / patients that are free of abuse, sexual and/or romantic encounters.

Professional services – All actions and activities of an ACSLPA regulated member in the context of professional practice.

Regulated member – A person who is a regulated speech-language pathologist or audiologist in accordance with the *Health Professions Act*.

Self-care – An array of actions that a person can take to promote general health and/or as a component in the management of health problems. These activities range from eating well and exercising to adhering to medication and treatment plans.

Sexual abuse – Any threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a regulated member towards a patient that is of a sexual nature and includes any of the following conduct:

- Sexual intercourse between regulated member and a patient of that regulated member;
- Genital to genital, genital to anal, oral to genital, or oral to anal contact between a regulated member and a patient of that regulated member;
- Masturbation of a regulated member's patient by that regulated member;
- Encouraging a regulated member's patient to masturbate in the presence of that regulated member;
- Touching of a sexual nature of a patient's genitals, anus, breasts or buttocks by a regulated member.

Sexual assault – Any type of sexual contact without voluntary consent. This includes forced oral contact (kissing), groping, grabbing, oral-genital contact (oral sex), vaginal and anal penetration. Consent is defined as a voluntary agreement of the complainant to engage in the sexual activity in question. (*Section 273.1, Criminal Code of Canada*).

Sexual misconduct – Any incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by a regulated member towards a patient that the regulated member knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offense or humiliation to the patient or adversely affect the patient's health and well-being but does not include sexual abuse.

Sexual nature – Behaviour or language related to sex, but does not include any conduct, behaviour or remarks that are appropriate to the service provided.

Sexual relationship – A relationship involving sexual intimacy, including communications of a sexual nature, and engaging in conduct of a sexual nature, including masturbation, genital to genital, genital to anal, oral to genital, or oral to anal contact and sexual intercourse. (*SOP 5.0*)

Spouse – A person who is married to another or a common-law partner.

Standards of practice – The ACSLPA Standards of Practice as adopted by the College Council laying out the required standards for professional practice of regulated speech-language pathologists and audiologists

Survivor – A term frequently used when referring to persons who have experienced sexual abuse. Survivor acknowledges the strength and resourcefulness of individuals who have lived through the experience.

Trauma-informed practice – Providing treatment for patients who may have experienced sexual, physical, psychological, and/or emotional abuse in a manner that is sensitive to their needs without inadvertently re-traumatizing them.

Unprofessional conduct – Conduct of one or more of the following, whether or not it is disgraceful or dishonourable:

- Displaying a lack of knowledge, skill or judgment in the provision of professional services;
- Contravention of the *HPA*, college's code of ethics or standards of practice;
- Claiming to be a member in good standing while registration or practice permit is suspended, cancelled or subject to conditions;
- Failure or refusal to comply with a request of, or co-operate with, an investigator;
- Failure or refusal to comply with a notice to attend or a notice to produce;
- Conduct that harms the integrity of the regulated profession.

Victim – This term often refers to a person who has been sexually abused or harassed.