



Alberta College of
Speech-Language Pathologists
and Audiologists

2022 Annual Business Plan and Budget

Approved November 20, 2021

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Part I – Introduction and Background

1.1 Message from ACSLPA Council and Registrar & CEO

ACSLPA exists to serve the public interest through the regulation of professional speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists in Alberta. ACSLPA's regulatory work includes but is not limited to:

- setting admission standards for the professions,
- considering applications for regulated membership and issuing practice permits,
- creating and enforcing a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice,
- investigating complaints of unprofessional conduct,
- creating guidelines and practice documents, and
- enforcing continuing competence standards.

ACSLPA is an independent public agency created and empowered by *the Health Professions Act (HPA)*. The College operates under a shared-governance model in which 50% of the governing Council are made up of individuals from the public appointed by Government (vacancies remain) and 50% are made up of regulated members of ACSLPA.

Under shared governance, ACSLPA's members continue to experience many of the privileges of self-regulation, meaning that ACSLPA's regulation is shaped substantially by professional members of the College who are obligated to the public and to each other to uphold the public interest. Features of self-regulation continue to be present through the volunteer work of professional members on the ACSLPA Council, Registration Committee, Hearings Tribunal and Complaints Review roster, Continuing Competence Committee, and various taskforces and working groups who meet throughout the year. Self-regulation is also demonstrated through the individual efforts of members in their practice who uphold the public interest through their work and their commitment to competent, ethical practice each day.

The 2022 Annual Business Plan and Budget is intended to help interested stakeholders learn more about ACSLPA's direction and priorities for the year. The business plan has been prepared by staff and approved and endorsed by ACSLPA Council.

Nicole Baumbach, R.SLP
President

Michael Neth, P. Eng.
Registrar & CEO

1.2 ACLSPA Organizational Overview – November 2021

ACSLPA regulates two distinct but related professions; audiology and speech-language pathology.

The college is a dynamic professional regulatory organization. It deals with duties and obligations of a regulator as well as the challenges and opportunities of a not-for profit organization.

Almost all ACSLPA's operating revenue comes from dues and fees paid by its roughly 1,800 regulated members.

ACSLPA is governed by a Council that consists of

- six (6) regulated SLPs and Audiologists selected by members of the College through an election process, and
- six (6) public members appointed by the Government of Alberta to represent the public (vacancies remain).

The College staff currently consists of

- four (4) full-time employees,
- three (3) part-time employees,
- one (1) casual employee, and
- one (1) casual contractor.

There are five standing committees of volunteer regulated members, which are:

- Registration Committee,
- Competence Committee,
- Hearings Tribunal/Complaints Review Roster,
- Practice Advisory Committee, and
- Nominations Committee (also includes Council member(s)).

Ad-hoc committees, workgroups, and taskforces are called as needed. An active taskforce continuing in 2022 is the *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee* (also referred to as the Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Advisory (ARADA) Committee).

1.3 2022 Business Plan Priorities

In addition to “business as usual” and incremental improvements to our operations, the 2022 Business Plan and Budget supports four priorities. These are:

- Establishing a new Continuing Competence Program under the amended *HPA (Bill 46)*,
- Continuing to support a strong Council and effective governance through Council composition change and development,
- Optimizing our professional conduct processes, and
- Updating the ACSLPA website.

Themes for our 2022 work across all areas are:

- Addressing systemic discrimination and racism within ACSLPA and within the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology,
- Focusing on right touch regulation,
- Adapting to legislative change, and
 - Amendments to the HPA (*Legislature 30, Session 2, Bill 46*)
 - New legislation on labour mobility (*Legislature 30, Session 2, Bill 49*)
- Improving ACSLPA governance.

In delivering on all ACSLPA’s work in 2022, the target for the organization is to work towards outcomes that meet or exceed expectations, ensuring that systems interact efficiently, and that the public is well served.

Many of the projects and plans that ACSLPA works on in 2022 will continue to be developed and implemented through 2023.

Part II – Planned Business Activities & Costs by Function and Area

The total budgeted expense for ACSLPA’s operational activities in 2022 is \$1,353,266 (2021 budget: \$1,386,000) against anticipated revenues of \$1,217,240 (2021 budgeted revenue: \$1,151,000). The result will be a budgeted shortfall of \$136,025 which will be drawn from ACSLPA’s invested savings, which on September 30, 2021 were at \$1,779,138.79, which is significantly above our required reserved amount of \$1,100,000.

2.1 Function: Governance

2021 Function Budget: \$77,537

2021 Function Budget: \$101,875

The Governance function encompasses the functional areas of *Council, Rules* (which includes Bylaws, Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, Guidelines, and other related regulatory tools), and *Affiliations*.

I. Functional Area: Council (100)

2022 Area Budget: \$34,625

2021 Area Budget: \$33,875

The Council of ACSLPA fulfills leadership and adjudicative roles. In its leadership role, the Council is the governing body of the College. In its adjudicative role, the Council hears reviews and appeals from the registration and conduct areas of the College.

In 2022, the work of the Council will include:

- Orientation for new and returning council members,
- Nomination and election of Council members,
- Five (5) regular Council meetings (full day) and special meetings as needed,
- Strategic planning sessions,
- Registrar & CEO performance and compensation reviews, and
- Governance and Audit and Risk Management committee meetings as required.

Elected Council members will receive honoraria for attendance at meetings in accordance with policy. The Council has discretionary funds available for consultants, contractors, special training, or facilitators.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Orientation of new Council members and effective Council governance and culture,
- Additional work volume as bylaws, standards of practice, and guidelines are amended to adapt to legislative changes,
- Completing review of nominations and elections process (for implementation in 2022 if changing), and
- Enhanced policies for handling complaints against a council member should any arise.

II. Functional Area: Rules (110)

2022 Area Budget: \$33,413

2021 Area Budget: \$51,000

Rules are the set of directives or principles that govern the conduct of regulated members in their professional practice. ACSLPA has a legislated obligation to make regulations and bylaws, to establish, maintain, and enforce standards of practice and a code of ethics, and to provide direction to regulated members in their practice.

In 2022, the routine work in the Rules functional area will include:

- Ongoing incremental improvements and/or updates to key college documents as required.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Bylaws:
 - Completing review and rewrite of ACSLPA Bylaws will be undertaken, the first since 2015, to ensure cohesive and comprehensive bylaws that reflect current needs/expectations,
 - New Bylaws to comply with Bill 46 amendments to the HPA, including:
 - College officer and employee eligibility (re: associations and unions),
 - Insurance requirements for regulated members,
 - Citizenship requirements for regulated members,
 - Good character and reputation requirements for regulated members,
 - English language proficiency requirements for regulated members,
 - Recognition of registration in other jurisdictions (i.e., mobility) for regulated members, and
 - Information to be provided by applicants and renewing members, and how it is entered in the register.
- New Standards of Practice to comply with Bill 46 amendments to the HPA, including:
 - Restricted activities and supervision of restricted activities and supporting guidelines (development in 2022, implementation in 2023),
 - Mandatory continuing competence program (implementation in 2022 and 2023), and
 - Use of titles by regulated members (development and implementation in 2022).
- Completing review and update of *Standards of Practice* and *Code of Ethics* based on the work of the ARADA taskforce.

III. Functional Area: Affiliations (130)

2022 Area Budget: \$9,500

2021 Area Budget: \$17,000

ACSLPA's effectiveness is enhanced through its affiliations with other organizations that have similar interests and needs. Working in association with others allows for harmonization of requirements, mutual assistance (particularly on complex regulatory matters), and sharing of costs and workload on issues of common concern.

In 2022, the routine work in the Affiliations functional area will include:

- Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions (AFRHP):
 - Legislative Renewal and Action Committee,
 - Continuing Competence Interest Group,
 - Registration Interest Group,
 - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Interest Group,
 - Complaints Process Working Group,
 - Hearings Director Working Group, and
 - Communications Interest Group.

- Other affiliations to maintain: Alberta Health Services (AHS), Alberta Education, Canadian Council of University Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CCUP-ASLP), Canadian National Alliance of Regulators (CNAR), and individual colleges in Alberta and Canada with common interests/needs.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Ministry of Health on pandemic response and implementation of legislative amendments,
- Colleges in BC, Ontario, and Quebec on accreditation, examination, and general registration requirements,
- Ontario and Manitoba Colleges re: cross provincial practice Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and
- Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CACUP-ASLP) towards a seat at the Accreditation Board.

The Regulatory function encompasses the functional areas of *Registration/Renewal*, *Complaints/Investigations*, *Hearings/Appeals*, *Title Enforcement*, and *Continuing Competence*. Although a major area of focus in 2022, budget is lower due to trimmed legal and investigator budgets.

IV. Functional Area: Registration/Renewal (200)**2022 Area Budget: \$16,186**

2021 Area Budget: \$13,500

One of the key pillars of ACSLPA's regulatory mandate is to establish, maintain, and enforce registration and renewal standards for the professions. Registration includes admissions (applications), renewal, reinstatement, status changes, the public and internal registers, interprovincial mobility, foreign qualification recognition, and currency hours. Effectiveness in this area requires establishing admissions requirements and standards, engaging with pan-Canadian stakeholders, and close adherence to the *Fair Registration Practice Act*.

In 2022, the routine work in the Registration/Renewal functional area will include:

- Registrations, renewals, reinstatements, retirements, and status changes, and
- Ongoing incremental improvements and/or updates to registration processes and policies.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Exams: Work on further improving examination requirements for applicants trained outside of a Canadian accredited university program. Consider adoption of CETP. Consider further validation of PRAXIS exam (e.g., standard setting exercise in partnership with BC). Decision on long-term status of both CETP and PRAXIS beyond pandemic.
- Accreditation: Ongoing collaboration with other provincial regulators and CACUP to develop an effective structure that allows regulatory input into accreditation.
- Implementation of Memorandum of Understanding with Manitoba and Ontario with respect to cross-provincial practice.

V. Functional Area: Complaints/Investigations (210)**2022 Area Budget: \$12,611****And Title Enforcement (formerly 230)**

2021 Area Budget: \$32,500

One of the key pillars of ACSLPA's regulatory mandate is to receive and investigate complaints against members for unprofessional (unskilled or unethical) practice and to investigate inappropriate title use. The Complaints and Investigations functional area requires the legislated authority of the Complaints Director and Investigator(s) at various points. Primary areas of focus include establishing and communicating appropriate processes, conducting investigations, administering fair and impartial processes and decision-making, identifying opportunities for improvement in other regulatory areas and supporting their adoption, and elevating general awareness of professional conduct among members and the public.

In 2022, the routine work in the Complaints/Investigations/Title Enforcement functional area will include:

- Receiving complaints against individuals and companies for inappropriate use of reserved SLP and audiology titles,
- Identifying non-compliance related to title use through self-initiated searches, and
- Contacting individuals and organizations that are suspected of being non-compliant to educate them about the reserved title provisions of the HPA and promote compliance. In some instances, legal action may be required to ensure compliance.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Supporting improvement of information on ACSLPA website for public around making a complaint and complaints process, and
- Optimizing professional conduct processes.

VI. Functional Area: Hearings/Appeals (220)

2022 Area Budget: \$8,600

2021 Area Budget: \$28,100

As part of ACSLPA's key pillar to receive and investigate complaints against members for unprofessional (unskilled or unethical) practice, ACSLPA also administers hearings, appeals, registration reviews, and complaint reviews. Hearings are called for the purpose of determining whether a member has engaged in unprofessional conduct. Appeals, registration reviews, and complaint reviews exist as an accountability measure to ensure decisions are fair and appropriate in the circumstances. The Hearings and Appeals functional area requires the legislated authority of the Hearings Director, Complaints Review Committees, Hearing Tribunals, and Council at various points.

In 2022, the routine work in the Hearings/Appeals functional area will include:

- Receive requests and applications for hearings, appeals, registration reviews, and complaint reviews as needed.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Refresher training for Council and Hearing Tribunal membership list.

VII. Functional Area: Continuing Competence (240)

2022 Area Budget: \$20,924

2021 Area Budget: \$8,500

One of the key pillars of ACSLPA's regulatory mandate is to establish, maintain and enforce a continuing competence program. Primary areas of focus include establishing and communicating the requirements of the continuing competence program, administering fair and impartial processes and decision-making, conducting an annual audit of participation by members in the program, addressing competence concerns, and elevating general awareness of the importance of continuing competence among members and the public.

Previously established in policy, ACSLPA's continuing competence program must be established in Standards of Practice in accordance with Bill 46.

In 2022, the routine work in Continuing Competence will include:

- Assisting regulated members to participate in the Continuing Competence Program by responding to inquiries and facilitating access to the online tools.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Implementing a new enhanced continuing competence program for regulated members that is effective (achieves what it sets out to do), efficient (requires effort from members and the college that is proportionate to the outcomes), and compliant with the amended HPA,
- Orienting and educating members regarding the new enhanced continuing competence program,
- Completion of a competence assessment (practice visit) policy and process that supports the public interest and complies with the HPA; to be implemented in 2023-2024, and
- Developing an operational framework of policies, processes, and tools to support and maintain the continuing competence program, which includes development in the database/member portal.

The Professional Practice function encompasses the functional areas of *Professional Development and Practice Support*. These efforts are directed towards proactively supporting members in their professional practice to ensure they are informed about and able to comply with practice requirements including the Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, Advisory Statements, and Guidelines.

VIII. Functional Area: Professional Development (300)**2022 Area Budget: \$4,000**

2021 Area Budget: \$7,000

The purpose of Professional Development is to support members in their professional practice so that they can protect and serve the public interest. Professional development aims to provide opportunities for members to increase their competence and awareness of professional practice issues. Topics are selected based on their current relevance, particularly in relation to possible issues that may present a risk to the public.

In 2022, the work in Professional Development will include:

- Virtual PD sessions throughout the year.

IX. Functional Area: Practice Support (310)**2022 Area Budget: \$24,375**

2021 Area Budget: \$9,000

Practice support includes providing proactive information to members on professional practice issues and topics including Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, Advisory Statements, and Practice Guidelines. Some information is pushed out to members and some is provided in response to individual or group inquiries.

In 2022, the work in Practice Support will include:

- Practice support to members via telephone, email, website, social media and written articles,
- Members' forum (or similar event), and
- Participation in student training in the University of Alberta Communication Sciences and Disorders Department in a range of professional topics to better equip them for success as practicing professionals and to better familiarize them with the role of ACSLPA as a public agency.

Areas of special focus for 2022 will include:

- Addressing systemic racism and discrimination.

The Corporate Services function encompasses the functional areas of *Administration*, and *Salaries, Wages, and Benefits*. These functions are necessary to support the organizational mission and ensure the effective and efficient delivery of work that serves the public interest.

X. Functional Area: Administration (400) 2022 Area Budget: \$292,075
Includes Volunteer Recognition (formerly 330) 2021 Area Budget: \$285,900

The Administration functional area encompasses all the overhead costs required to support ACSLPA except salaries and wages. This includes everything from paper and postage to contract professional services and information technology (IT) security.

In 2022, the routine work in Administration will include:

- Providing operational support and resources for all regulatory, governance, and member support/outreach activities,
- Accounting, year-end audit, and annual reporting,
- Management and stewardship of investments and accounts,
- Maintenance and support of IT infrastructure and security,
- Website and digital communications, and
- Ongoing incremental improvements and/or updates to finance, human resources, IT, occupational health and safety, and communications processes and policies.

XI. Functional Area: Salaries, Wages & Benefits (410) 2022 Area Budget: \$896,957
2021 Area Budget: \$899,955

Salaries, wages & benefits are by far ACSLPA’s largest cost center. The reason for this is that we provide services to people (members, the public, stakeholders, etc.) and the bulk of those services are provided by staff. ACSLPA does not have significant materials, facilities, or product costs because, unlike some other businesses, our materials and products are mainly ideas and words (written, spoken, or otherwise). ACSLPA will complete a reorganization at the end of 2021. A general cost of living increase for employees and some individual adjustments recognizing changes in scopes of responsibility will result from the reorganization.