



From the Desk of the Registrar

December 2022

Dear regulated members,

You have likely noted from the President's emailed message that I will be leaving the College shortly. This is a bittersweet moment for me. On the one hand I am moving on to a new challenge that will be very interesting to me, and I know the College is in really good hands. On the other, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with absolutely wonderful people whom I will certainly miss.

I first came to ACSLPA in the early spring of 2016. The College was sturdy and effective enough but had some limitations in terms of realizing its full mandate and potential. There were 2 full-time employees, including me, along with 5 part-time employees and contractors. We did not have technology to support hybrid or remote work. Our technological and financial management systems, although sound enough, were premised on early 2000's ways of doing and thinking. The legislation that governed the College hadn't received any significant changes in almost 14 years, and government wasn't giving our concerns any attention.

Fast forward to today and we have 5 full-time employees and 4 part-time and casual employees working efficiently in a hybrid work environment. Our technology and financial management systems are fully modernized, secure, and efficient. Our admissions/registration processes, continuing competence program, and professional conduct practices have all been revamped and are now far more sophisticated. Just keeping up with the pace of government-mandated change has actually become a significant preoccupation of the College in recent years, which included divesting of all remaining "association-like" activities and functions last year.

If you have made it this far into my reminiscing, here is a short list of the things I have been the proudest of over the last several years:

- ACSLPA has an amazing team of staff and volunteers. I have said for years to anyone who will listen that I would put ACSLPA's team up against any College anywhere with confidence. While there is always room to improve, in my view ACSLPA is the most reasonable, most efficient, most "customer service" oriented, and best value SLP and Audiology regulator in Canada, all without sacrificing the high standards of competence, safety, and ethics that Alberta's SLPs and Audiologists are known for.
- ACSLPA was quick to form an anti-racism and anti-discrimination working group in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. Made up of regulated members who brought together lived experience, scholarship, and allyship, this group has now grown into a standing committee focused on inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility, and its ongoing efforts have informed a sea-change in the work and culture of the College.

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- ACSLPA far exceeds the requirements of the *Fair Registration Practices Act* (introduced in 2019 to ensure that regulators were treating newcomers to Canada fairly and efficiently), and is poised to exceed the *Labour Mobility Act* requirements when they come into force in 2023. Exceeding these government-mandated requirements provides external validation for how fast, efficient, effective, and fair ACSLPA is as an organization and sets us apart from some other occupations regulators who continue to struggle in these areas.
- Annual member fees are still \$650 per year - same as they were in 2009! Even though ACSLPA has been doing more work at a higher level, the team and Council have been using every available resource to keep annual fees below the Canadian average for as long as possible. While not sustainable over the long-term, I am confident staff and Council will continue to be fiscally prudent.
- Complaints and Discipline, once relegated to the side of the Registrar's desk, is now fully resourced, modernized, and on par with the work being done by some of the larger Colleges.
- ACSLPA is on a great trajectory towards the future. This is laid out in its new Council-approved [2023-2025 Strategic Plan](#). This roadmap is already guiding and challenging staff and you'll start to see changes coming in the New Year.

I would like to especially thank Susan Rafaat, R.SLP, (Deputy Registrar and soon to be Interim Registrar) for welcoming me to the College in 2016, for teaching me about the professions ACSLPA regulates, and for her strong leadership. I would also like to thank the whole ACSLPA staff organization – you truly are a dream team, and no one could ask for a better group of hard-working, innovative and dedicated people. Finally, I would like to thank the Council and the College's many volunteers for their dedication to service and for their commitment to high standards for competent and ethical clinical practice.

I'll leave you with a couple of thoughts from the desk of the (outgoing) Registrar:

- A shortage of Audiologists and SLPs is likely to be an ongoing challenge for your professions and for the College in the coming years. Data shows Alberta is no longer outcompeting other places as a destination for SLPs and Audiologists. Government and other stakeholders will hope the College can fix this, but it is beyond our powers and our mandate. Solutions will likely have to come from elsewhere, although ACSLPA can be a strong stakeholder in that work.
- While I am sure it does not always feel like it to some practitioners, you have a strong hand in how ACSLPA's standards, guidelines, and requirements are created, maintained, and enforced. Your input, feedback, and participation make all the difference in how the College operates and regulates. As a concrete example, our work on anti-racism started with two concerned members reaching out to the College with a very well-considered email. You are the "self" in "self regulation" so please stay engaged with the College and its work.

All the best to the Audiology and SLP colleagues out there with whom I have enjoyed working and interacting so much. Thank you for your wisdom, your skill, your support, and your challenges to the status quo.

Michael Neth

Michael Neth,
Registrar & CEO

