



Proposed Creation of a Net-New Restricted Activity

In July 2024, the profession of psychotherapy was designated for future regulation as a health profession in British Columbia. Psychotherapy will be regulated under the [Health Professions and Occupations Act](#) (HPOA) by the College of Health and Care Professionals of British Columbia (CHCPBC) in November 2027.

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is seeking public feedback on the proposed creation of a net-new restricted activity to assist in the regulation of psychotherapy and improve public protection for health professions providing higher-risk mental health services. Restricted activities are a narrowly defined list of higher-risk activities that can only be performed by authorized and qualified practitioners, to enhance public safety. To learn more about BC's shared scope of practice and restricted activities model of health professional regulation, visit the Ministry's [HPOA webpage](#).

The proposed new restricted activity is not intended to capture the full scope of practice of psychotherapists, only the highest-risk psychotherapeutic care interventions used in the treatment of persons experiencing significant mental health disorders or conditions and associated impairment. **Additionally, the Ministry is not intending to limit the practice of other clinicians (regulated and unregulated) who support patients using counselling modalities** - including those who may not meet the eligibility criteria for regulation as a psychotherapist.

The Ministry has initiated a process of engaging with key partners to assess potential impacts on regulated and unregulated providers who may currently be performing the highest-risk psychotherapeutic care activities. This may result in required amendments to several other health profession regulations under the HPOA. As social workers are regulated under the [Social Workers Act](#), the Ministry has engaged with the Ministry of Children and Family Development regarding any potential linkages to social worker practice.

The new restricted activity would be added to the existing list of restricted activities in the [Regulated Health Practitioners Regulation](#) under the HPOA. Additional details about what is being proposed, and the rationale, are provided in the table below.

The public consultation period aims to gather input from interested individuals and organizations on the proposed new restricted activity for the regulation of psychotherapy.

Input is not being sought on the eligibility requirements for psychotherapy regulation (which is the responsibility of the CHCPBC) or the broader scope of practice of psychotherapy. There will be additional opportunity to submit feedback to the CHCPBC once the college posts its bylaws on the eligibility requirements for licensure.

Comments on the proposal may be submitted by email or ordinary mail by August 5, 2026. All submissions will be reviewed and given full consideration. However, due to the volume of submissions we receive, we cannot respond to all submissions individually.

Contact Information:

Professional Regulation and Oversight

Ministry of Health

3rd Floor, 1515 Blanshard Street

PO BOX 9649 STN Prov Govt Victoria BC V8W 9P4

Email: PROREGADMIN@gov.bc.ca

Note: The HPOA Regulated Health Practitioners Regulation, and health professions regulations, are available to view on the Ministry's [HPOA webpage](#).

Table on Proposed Change

| Current State | Proposed Change | Policy Intent/Rationale |
|---|---|--|
| <p>The provision of psychotherapeutic care interventions is not currently a restricted activity in British Columbia (BC).</p> | <p>Create a new restricted activity for the highest-risk psychotherapeutic care interventions used when treating persons experiencing significant mental health disorders or conditions and associated impairment.</p> <p>Add the new restricted activity to the Schedule of Restricted Activities in the Regulated Health Practitioners Regulation under the HPOA.</p> <p>Add this restricted activity to the psychotherapists' regulation and potentially to the regulations of other regulated health professions who may meet the criteria to provide this activity. The new restricted activity would be intended to cover the application of psychotherapeutic interventions, through a therapeutic relationship, to treat mental health disorders or conditions that are associated with significant impairment in a person's judgement, behaviour, or ability to meet the ordinary demands of life.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> The Ministry will consider all information resulting from partner engagement and public feedback to confirm and finalize the restricted activity.</p> | <p>The proposed new restricted activity would restrict the highest risk psychotherapeutic care interventions to be performed only by authorized practitioners, to enhance public safety.</p> <p>Creating a restricted activity in BC is a key component for regulating the profession of psychotherapy.</p> <p>The restricted activity will help differentiate this higher-risk health service from other counselling related services and modalities.</p> <p>High-risk psychotherapeutic care interventions are restricted in several other Canadian jurisdictions (e.g., Ontario).</p> <p><u>Note:</u> in other provinces where psychotherapy is regulated, psychotherapeutic interventions include certain cognitive and behavioural therapies and exclude activities such as general counselling, guidance or advising. Adjunct therapies are also often excluded.</p> |