



ALBERTA
HEALTH

*Deputy Premier
Office of the Minister
MLA, Edmonton-Glenora*

Dr. Alison M. Clarke
12230 106 Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 3Z1

Dear Dr. Clarke:

Thank you for your letter regarding Bill 21: *An Act to Protect Patients*. I have had the honour of working with the Alberta Medical Association (AMA) and its members, as well as other healthcare workers, for more than three years now and I know that protecting patients while providing the best care is your number one priority. This bill is an extension of the work that we have been doing together and I appreciate the AMA's support for this new legislation. I am pleased to report that the legislation was passed on November 8, 2018.

Your letter commented on the importance of self-regulation of health professionals. You also noted provisions in Bill 21 that will give me, as Minister of Health, authority to approve the standards of practice required under Bill 21. These standards of practice will enable each regulatory college to define patient and outline when regulated professionals may have sexual relationships with patients. These standards of practice are crucial for effective implementation of Bill 21, and therefore it is appropriate for me to approve them in this rare occasion. While Ontario defined patient in statute, we gave Alberta's regulatory colleges the opportunity to define patient in standards of practice. This will enable colleges to develop definitions that best reflect the practice settings of the professionals they regulate. Regulatory colleges will be responsible for developing the standards of practice, and the Ministry will consult with stakeholders, including the AMA and other representative bodies, before they are approved.

Your letter also shared concerns about information sharing provisions in Bill 21. Section 21 of the Bill enables the Minister to disclose health information or personal information to a college to protect public safety. Any information disclosed under this provision will be in accordance with provincial statutes and regulations in our province, including the *Health Information Act*.

I appreciate the AMA's willingness to assist with implementation of Bill 21. While regulatory colleges will lead on implementation activities, including the development of standards of practice, stakeholders will be asked to share feedback on the standards of practice before I approve them in March 2019. I look forward to receiving your feedback through this process.

.../2

Dr. Alison M. Clarke
Page 2

Thank you again for writing and for supporting Bill 21.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Hoffman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Sarah Hoffman
Deputy Premier
Minister of Health

cc: Michael A. Gormley, Executive Director, Alberta Medical Association