



# CONDUCT COUNTS!

## Professional Practice

### SCENARIO

Quinn was a newly Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) with the CRTO. Quinn was rightfully very proud of their achievement and excited! Quinn was planning to first complete a project for their family's business which would take them a year, so Quinn decided to switch to the inactive class for their first year of registration.

As part of any new registration with the CRTO, Quinn received notice via e-mail from the Quality Practice department of the CRTO that his Launch RT Jurisprudence Assessment (the "Assessment") start date had been set and was ready for Quinn to access. The e-mail also stated the deadline date for Quinn to complete the Assessment. The e-mail further stated that Quinn would receive reminder emails up until the deadline date, reminding Quinn of the obligation to complete the Assessment. The Assessment access would remain open until midnight on the date of the deadline. Quinn did not provide a response to the CRTO regarding the Assessment notification email. Quinn thought the Assessment wasn't a big deal, so Quinn put it off, and then forgot all about it.

The deadline for the Assessment fast approached, and Quinn had not completed the Assessment. Quinn received a reminder e-mail that the Assessment deadline was approaching, and was provided with instructions on how to complete the assessment. Quinn again did not provide a response to the CRTO regarding the reminder.

The deadline date came and went, and Quinn had not submitted the Assessment. After the deadline, Quinn received further notification via e-mail and mail from the Quality Practice department that the Assessment was past due. Quinn subsequently received a second past due notice that the Assessment was overdue, and that failure to complete this assessment could result in a referral to the CRTO Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) with an allegation of professional misconduct. Again, Quinn did not provide a response to the CRTO regarding this notice.

After exhaustively notifying Quinn of the obligation to complete the Assessment, a final notification was sent to Quinn that they were being referred to the QAC for the Panels consideration, and Quinn was given an opportunity to provide the QAC with any additional information to consider when making their decision. Quinn received the notification but did not respond.

### RESULTS

After considering the information before them, the QAC decided to refer Quinn to the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC) of the CRTO. The QAC reasoned that the Quality Practice department had provided Quinn lots of reminders of their professional obligations to complete the Assessment and provided Quinn extensions to the deadline. Quinn ignored all of the notifications. The QAC requested that the ICRC appoint an investigator to determine if Quinn had committed an act of professional misconduct or was incompetent. The ICRC approved the appointment of the investigator, and an investigation was conducted. Quinn was notified of the investigation.

During the course of the investigation into Quinn's conduct, Quinn finally responded. In the response, Quinn acknowledged receiving the notification, meant to do the assessment, then some personal circumstances came up, which took a majority of their time and attention. Further, Quinn believed that because they were in the inactive class of registration, Quinn was not required to complete the Assessment.



### PROFESSIONALISM

"Professionalism" or professional conduct is a term often used to describe the behaviours that are expected of individuals who hold a certain role in society. A "professional" is typically someone who has obtained skills that are recognized as requiring specific, intensive training and who applies those skills in a position impacting others (e.g., engineer, lawyer, RT, PT, MD, etc.). Professionals are often held to moral, ethical and legal standards because of this potential impact.



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### RESULTS (continued)

At the conclusion of the investigation, the ICRC reviewed the findings of the investigation and Quinn's response. After careful deliberations, the ICRC rendered their decision and provided Quinn with a letter of warning and recommendations. The letter will now be a part of Quinn's record with the CRTO. The ICRC reasoned that, as a regulated health professional, Quinn is solely responsible for understanding their requirements to the profession/public and participating in those requirements. The CRTO is there to provide information and clarify any possible misunderstandings. There are statements, guidelines, standards of practice and other publications on the CRTO website to assist a member in understanding their obligations. In addition, staff are always ready to answer any questions a member may have.

Further, the CRTO understands life happens, and personal obligations may get in the way of completing your professional obligations. As such, the CRTO (through the QAC) has a deferral process in place. Quinn had many opportunities to respond to any of the notifications and request a deferral. Quinn did not.

Quinn's lack of responses and failure to complete the Assessment demonstrated to the ICRC that Quinn was not taking their professional responsibilities seriously. The mandate of the CRTO is to regulate the profession in the public interest. As part of that, the expectation is that a member of the CRTO (regardless of registration class) will be up to date with all Quality Practice requirements. These requirements are put in place to ensure that a member of the CRTO has the current knowledge, skill and experience to provide professional respiratory therapy care. By failing to do so, Quinn not only risks the public having a negative view of their ability to practice, but risks undermining the public's confidence in the profession in general.

### EXPECTATION

A primary objective of the CRTO is to support the continuous professional development of its Members. Ongoing growth through professional development enhance a RTs ability to provide safe, competent and ethical patient/client care. The CRTO's Professional Development Program (PDP), which is mandated by the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*, and overseen by the QAC, is designed to support the ongoing continuous quality improvement of all its Members.

It is a requirement under the *RHPA* that all Members of the CRTO complete their Professional Development Program by the deadline stated. Failure to complete the PDP is in contravention of the CRTO's Standards of Practice.

#### **Standard 4:** Competence/ Ongoing Competence

Respiratory Therapists (RTs) must provide **competence patient/client care** and ensure their knowledge, skills and judgement/abilities remain current on an ongoing basis.

- Comply with applicable regulatory requirements for professional development/continuing education (e.g. CRTO Professional Development Program Policy).

#### **Standard 13:** Professional Responsibilities

Respiratory Therapists (RTs) must ensure their **professional** practice complies with all applicable regulatory requirements.

- Assume responsibility for their own individual ongoing competence and participate in the CRTO's professional development/continuing education program

### BOTTOM LINE

If you are a Member with the CRTO you must complete the CRTOs Professional Development Program as required under the *RHPA*.

### RESOURCES

[CRTO Standards of Practice](#)