

# Professionalism

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## Self-Regulation: an Authority-based Policy Instrument

- Government delegates regulation to non-governmental actors
  - “Self-regulation”
- Principal-agent relationship between government and health care professional
- Principal agent relationship implies an imbalance of knowledge and capital, with one party, the agent, having specialized knowledge over the principle, who is acquiring benefit or services based on this knowledge.

## Self-Regulation: an Authority-based Policy Instrument

- In the delivery of healthcare the patient must delegate to their physician the authority to decide on behalf of the patient, as the patient themselves would decide if they had the same level of knowledge and expertise.
- Due to advantage that the agent has, the agency theory relies on the concept of *professionalism* and *self-regulation* to ensure patient care is put first and the trust underlying the agency agreement is not abused.

## Professionalism & Self-Regulation

- Professionalism has been used as the underlying rationale for Self-Regulation of Healthcare Professionals
- Underlying hypothesis of this study:  
Professionalism is particularly important in areas where measurability is low and delegation of authority is high
- Overarching question: To what extent can you rely on professionalism when there are conflicting pressures?

## The Issue Being Investigated

- There are a number of practice-related factors that have the potential to influence behaviour
- We are focusing on:
  - Workplace setting and corporate structure
  - Remuneration
  - Interprofessional collaboration

## Why?

- Autonomy?
  - Teams? Who is in charge?
- Conflict of Interest?
  - Particularly when revenue is dependent on what treatments professional decides are needed
- Observability?
  - Who else sees what you are doing?
- These may differ systematically across professions

## Phase I

- Survey of Provincial Legislation to determine which health professions granted self-regulation
  - Which professions
  - When most recent legislation passed/tenure
  - Scope of Practice & Controlled Acts
- Consistencies Across Provinces

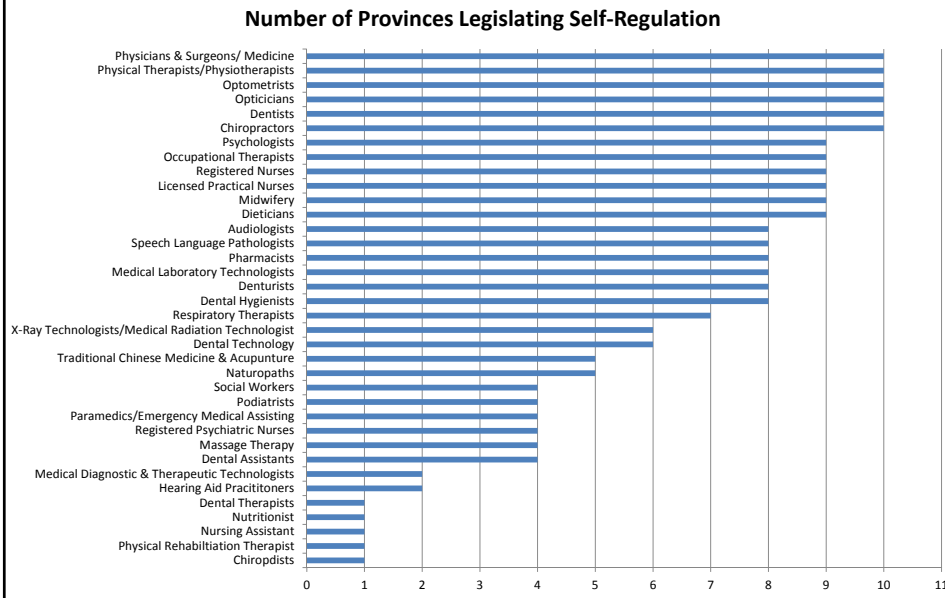
## Summary of Provincial Survey: Results to Date

- 36 Health Professions are regulated across Canada

## Differences in Regulatory Delegation Exist Across Provinces

Province	Number Regulated
British Columbia	25
Alberta	30
Saskatchewan	29
Manitoba	22
Ontario	23
Quebec	28
New Brunswick	18
Nova Scotia	21
PEI	13
Newfoundland & Labrador	15

### Provincial Self-Regulation: Variation Across Professions



## Phase II

- Focus on Three Health Professions in Ontario
  - Physicians, Nurses, Audiologists
- Analyze how RHPA Objects are formalized to address the three potential areas for conflict of interest
  - Workplace setting and corporate structure
  - Remuneration
  - Interprofessional Collaboration

## Understanding the Composition of the Professions

- Document Analysis
- Will see whether regulatory structure takes into account potential issues relating to the Workplace Settings/Corporate Structure
  - Profit, Not for Profit
  - Understand breakdown and mix of settings for each profession
    - Consistency
    - Differences

## Understanding the Composition of the Professions

- Analysis of the Remuneration Structure as a Function of the Health Profession
  - Who pays, for what?
  - Understand breakdown and mix of remuneration structures for each profession
    - Consistency
    - Differences

## Understanding the Composition of the Professions

- Analysis of Interprofessional Collaboration as a Function of the Health Profession
  - Ties into both workplace setting and remuneration
  - Understand extent collaboration exists for each profession
    - Consistency
    - Differences

## Research Questions: Document Analysis

- Practice guidelines, Regulations, Ethics
  - Are there directives which are applicable to all work place settings, and are they explicit or implicit?
    - *Goal: Understand if there are guidelines in place, do they vary according to the work realities and if they do are they specific enough to address potential conflicts that might arise?*