



College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

Position Statement

Diagnostic Polysomnography Home Sleep Testing

DETAILS

Department/program: Diagnostic Accreditation Program

Date: September 25, 2018

PURPOSE

Position statements from the College provide background information and express or clarify the College's intent on a particular matter. They are intended as guidance for stakeholders in areas where events are evolving or changing, the implementation of processes and procedures may be premature, the implementation of a guideline or standard may not be necessary, another credible body (for example, a professional association) has already established guidelines or standards or it is timely to communicate the College's broad intent before or as policies and procedures are developed.

This document addresses the Diagnostic Accreditation Program's (DAP) response to inquiries about polysomnography home sleep testing by private sleep disorder facilities, most of which offer continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) equipment.

BACKGROUND

The DAP has been made aware of private sleep disorder facilities providing home sleep testing (Level 3 studies) to patients to assess the need for CPAP machines. These facilities are not accredited by the DAP, and interpretation of the diagnostic results is provided by physicians (credentialed or not credentialed) and respiratory therapists. The results are provided to family physicians, and there is often a recommendation for CPAP equipment.

POSITION

In BC, a physician is not allowed to interpret a diagnostic test, including home sleep testing (level 3 studies) unless the facility providing the test is accredited through the DAP, as per the *Health Professions Act* and the College Bylaws. Furthermore, physicians are not to refer patients to unaccredited facilities for diagnostic testing as per the same legislation.

In addition, unregulated persons should not be performing unsupervised sleep testing or interpreting diagnostic sleep studies. The College will also pursue complaints where this is identified, as it is the unlawful practice of medicine.

Currently, the DAP does not have a process for accrediting these facilities and is in consultation with the Ministry of Health to decide how best to proceed with this issue. Until this consultation is complete, the

College will not be taking any further action other than to make these private facilities aware of the relevant legislation.

REFERENCES

Section 25.5(1)d of the *Health Professions Act*, RSBC 1996, c.183.

Section 5-31 of the Bylaws.

CONTACT

For further information, please contact polysomnography@cpsbc.ca.