

## Practice Advisory #7

### Termination of Services

#### *DRAFT FOR REGISTRANT FEEDBACK*

#### Practice Issue

The College of Psychologists of British Columbia is issuing this advisory in response to the concern raised by registrants about their entitlement to terminate services to a patient who is threatening physical or psychological harm to the registrant.

#### New Amended Section of the Code of Conduct

The *Code of Conduct* has several provisions regarding the termination of services to a client which are consolidated in section 5.20:

##### **5.19 Assistance on termination of services**

When psychological services are to be terminated, a registrant must offer to help locate alternative services or assistance for the client.

##### **5.20 Terminating psychological services**

A registrant

- (a) must not abandon his or her clients,
- (b) must terminate psychological services when it is reasonably clear that
  - (i) the client no longer needs or wants the service, or
  - (ii) the client is not benefitting from the relationship,
- (c) may terminate psychological services when a potential conflict of interest or dual relationship arises, or attempt resolve the situation in some other appropriate manner that preserves client welfare, and
- (d) *may terminate psychological services if threatened or otherwise endangered by the client or another person with whom the client has a relationship.* (emphasis added)

#### Advisory

Registrants are advised, and *Code* section 5.20(d) makes explicit, that a registrant may terminate a professional relationship with a client in extreme circumstances where a client or another relevant person associated with or related to the client is threatening the registrant with physical or psychological harm.