

# New Professional Standard for Skin Pricking

As a result of the 2008 dietetic scope of practice review, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has decided to authorize Registered Dietitians (RDs) to perform a new controlled act:: performing a procedure below the dermis to take blood samples by skin pricking for the purpose of monitoring capillary blood readings. The College has developed a new standard of professional practice to support RDs in the application of this new authority:

Collecting Capillary Blood Samples through Skin Pricking & Monitoring the Blood Readings (Point of Care Testing).

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS STEPS AND PROCESSES

The College's new professional standard outlines the steps and process for collecting capillary blood samples, including:

- Having the required competence – knowledge, skills and judgment;
- Ensuring a client-centered care approach;
- Being responsible and accountable;
- Communicating results, not the diagnosis, to clients;
- Sharing results with other members of the health care team and referrals to other health care providers; and
- Ensuring clear documentation

To access a copy of the new standard, go to:

[www.cdo.on.ca](http://www.cdo.on.ca) > Resources > Practice Standards & Resources: Professional Standards and Ethics

If you have questions about this new standard, contact the College's Practice Advisory Service at:

416-598-1725 / 1-800-688-4990, ext. 397

[practiceadvisor@cdo.on.ca](mailto:practiceadvisor@cdo.on.ca)

## WHAT ARE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE STANDARDS

Professional practice standards are created by colleges for the purpose of public protection. These high-level statements serve a number of purposes:

- They guide the College in decision-making for matters related to professional conduct and competence.
- They provide performance assessment criteria for the College's Quality Assurance Program.
- They serve as a guide for RDs, articulating the minimum expected of them to fulfill their professional responsibility to provide safe, ethical and competent client-centered care.
- They define the required behaviours for which Registered Dietitians are held accountable in their dietetic practice.

## Professional Practice Question

I am an RD currently working in a hospital. Do I still need an order or medical directive to collect and analyze capillary blood samples by skin pricking?

Yes, RDs practising in public hospitals still require an order or medical directive to collect and analyze capillary blood samples. Although amendments to the *Dietetics Act* and the *Laboratory Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act* authorize a select few health professionals to order diagnostic and treatment procedures in hospitals, a regulation under the *Public Hospitals Act* must still be amended before RDs can practice skin pricking and analyze capillary blood samples in public hospitals. Outside of public hospitals, however, RDs are authorized to collect and analyze capillary blood samples.

A medical directive is an order given in advance by physicians or ordering authorizers to enable RDs "to perform

the ordered procedure(s) under specific conditions, for a specified range of patients without a direct assessment by the physician".<sup>1</sup> In this circumstance, the dietitian would not be "ordering" the skin prick, but implementing the physician's order, under the authority of the medical directive.

1. Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario. *An Interprofessional Guide to the Use of Orders, Directives and Delegation for Regulated Health Professionals in Ontario* (2006) at: <http://www.regulatedhealthprofessions.on.ca/EVENTSRESOURCES/medical.asp>