

Trust in Regulation: Strengthening Confidence, Compliance, & Collaboration

Trust in regulatory bodies is both a critical asset and an ongoing challenge. Regulators must navigate complex landscapes where public confidence, stakeholder engagement, and compliance outcomes are shaped by perceptions of fairness, transparency, and accountability.

This one-day symposium will explore the role of trust in regulatory processes and its impact on relationships between regulators, licensees, and the public. Participants will gain insights into how increased trust in regulators can drive greater voluntary compliance and improve public protection. Sessions will highlight best practices for fostering trust through meaningful engagement with registrants, the public, and government, as well as strategies for addressing skepticism and rebuilding confidence. The symposium will also examine the broader contexts in which regulators operate, including the unique challenges of the Canadian regulatory landscape. Discussions will address pressures from political and legislative shifts, workforce shortages, emerging technologies, and growing public expectations for more inclusive and responsive regulation.

Join fellow regulators and regulatory stakeholders for a day of critical discussions and practical insights into strengthening trust in professional and occupational regulation.

Program Agenda

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| 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. | Registration & Breakfast |
| 9:00 – 9:15 a.m. | Welcome & Introductions
Tammy Kohut <i>CEO/Registrar, College of Opticians of Alberta</i> |
| 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. | Trust Is Not Given but Earned
Harry Cayton <i>Professional Regulation and Governance</i> |
| 9:45 – 10:00 a.m. | <i>Break</i> |
| 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. | Trust Through Transition: Building Confidence Amid Structural Change
Moderator: Harry Cayton <i>Professional Regulation and Governance</i>
Chris Hacker <i>Registrar/CEO, BC College of Oral Health Professionals</i>
Dianne Millette <i>CEO/Registrar, College of Health and Care Professionals of BC</i> |
| | Structural change in regulation, whether through amalgamation, modernization, or shifting mandates, presents a critical opportunity to either build or erode public trust. This panel brings together two of British Columbia's most senior regulatory leaders to reflect on what it means to establish trust as a new organization formed from legacy bodies. Drawing on their experience leading some of the country's most complex regulatory transitions, panelists will share how they've navigated stakeholder expectations, honored organizational histories, and made deliberate choices to position their colleges as credible, responsive, and accountable public institutions. This session will explore both the strategic and relational work required to earn trust in a time of transformation. |
| 11:00 – 11:15 a.m. | <i>Break</i> |
| 11:15 – 12:00 p.m. | Fostering an Ecosystem of Trust
Carla Rhyant <i>Executive Director and Registrar, Association of AB Forest Management Professionals</i> |

Regulators must clearly discern and balance individual stakeholder expectations within broader regulatory environments. Through forestry-based stories, this session traces how regulators cultivate legitimacy, extend engagement to a broader canopy of voices, and adapt to changing social and environmental conditions. Special attention will be given to the distinctive position of smaller regulators in niche professions—their agility, close community ties, and heightened resource pressures—and how these factors can both nourish and challenge credibility. Practical examples and evidence-informed insights will illuminate the conditions that allow trust to sucker, grow, and persist through change when regulatory decisions are firmly rooted in public interest and responsive to diverse stakeholder expectations.

12:00 – 1:15 p.m.

Lunch (provided) & Networking

1:15 – 2:15 p.m.

Embedding Trust and Reconciliation in Regulatory Practice

Dave Bhauruth | *Executive Director – Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, BC College of Nurses and Midwives*

Johanna Ward | *Senior Communications Strategist, BC College of Nurses and Midwives*

Anne Sommerfeld | *Regulatory Learning Consultant, BC College of Nurses and Midwives*

The In Plain Sight report (2020) showed the devastating impact Indigenous-specific racism has on health outcomes for Indigenous people in B.C. and underscored the urgent need for all partners in the health-care system to take swift and decisive action to dismantle the systemic racism that has led to such poor health outcomes for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (Indigenous) Peoples.

BCCNM has committed to eradicating Indigenous-specific racism in the health-care system—but what does that look like in practice? This panel will delve into our work of diversifying our board and committees, with 50% of our board members now identifying as Indigenous; to build a community of practice for Indigenous members, and our work with the new Superintendent's office to ensure we are compliant with new overarching legislation, the Health Professions & Occupations Act.

The panel will share how our work to engage our staff and support them on their learning journeys has many challenges and differs from traditional communications approaches. Finally, we'll delve into our registrant engagement, how we're supporting nurses and midwives to understand and apply the Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility, and Anti-racism practice standard while working in an overstretched system.

2:15 – 2:30 p.m.

Break

2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Trust the (Compliance) Process: Balancing Transparency, Accountability, and Compassion

Moderator: Jennifer Garrett | *Deputy Secretary, Wisconsin Dept. of Safety & Professional Services*

Kirk Huxley | *Manager, Investigations, Professional Conduct, Insurance Council of BC*

Michelle Stimac | *Legal Counsel, College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC*

Trust in regulation is often tested through the compliance and discipline process where transparency, fairness, and sensitivity must be carefully balanced. This panel will explore how regulatory bodies are working to uphold public protection while embedding equity, empathy, and clarity into their investigative and enforcement procedures. Panelists will reflect on how procedural design, communication choices, and public expectations shape trust in regulatory outcomes. Panelists will also share strategies for managing frivolous complaints, respecting registrant dignity, and communicating complex decisions clearly and respectfully.

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Concluding Remarks

Tammy Kohut | *CEO/Registrar, College of Opticians of Alberta*