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**Ensuring competent and ethical services**

The focus of the new regulatory body must be squarely on ensuring all regulated members are competent to provide the services they are providing to the public, and are doing so ethically.

CSIC's system has not been adequate to ensure that all practitioners are competent and ethical. Several concerns have arisen and several areas need drastic improvement if professional service standards are to be met by all:

- a) By 2007, a Toronto Star investigation revealed 4 out of 33 CSIC members or their staff were willing to fabricate refugee claims for an undercover reporter; CSIC may have investigated these members and disciplined them, but have presented no clear explanations as to the outcome to members or the public;
- b) Media reports from time to time indicate that CSIC members and former members are being charged with offenses related to immigration or citizenship fraud; CSIC may have investigated these members and disciplined them, but have presented no report to members or the public with regard to ANY action taken;
- c) Concerns by many industry observers that CCICs are not sufficiently trained or competent to conduct full hearings at the IRB;
- d) Much more attention is needed to the entry level course curriculum, including working with education providers, engaging agencies (CIC, CBSA, IRB) in identifying key learning objectives and exam areas;
- e) Far more monitoring and support needs be given to new entrants, with a recognition this is critical for consumer protection in light of factors unique to this profession;
- f) A Practice Advisory Unit (not person) is needed at the regulatory body with resources to provide members with start-up retainer and agency agreements, file management advice, business advice; client accounts set-up, ongoing answers to ethical questions, access to educational resources, etc.;
- g) Competency tools dedicated to new practitioners are needed, e.g., possibly a dedicated listserv, accessible articles on broad topics, such as "medical inadmissibility 101"; learning supports;
- h) Facilitation of competency initiatives generally, support for a variety of education approaches and providers, a CPD plan rationally connected to competency in one's areas of practice and which is endorsed by the industry;
- i) Consideration to narrowing the scope of services for first two years to exclude conduct of IRB hearings until additional training/experience obtained or higher level credential earned;
- j) Priority focus on swift resolution of public's complaints;
- k) Zero tolerance for fraud/falsifying information, etc.;
- l) Separate approach to handling complaints giving rise to program integrity issues; focus on correction and mentoring (not payments and penalties) of those who make non-fraudulent mistakes, especially first offenses;
- m) Regular reporting to members and stakeholders from C&D department;

- n) Fees that do not pose a significant deterrent to joining or continuing to be regulated; high fees contrary are to public interest as they drive trained people underground;
- o) Strategic plan for optimal numbers of new entrants that can be absorbed responsibly into the regulatory body.