

KNOW YOUR COLLEGE

What does CMRITO do? Why doesn't the CMRITO advocate for MRITs? Why do I need to pay CMRITO a registration fee?

A lot of the feedback we received in our recent consultation questioned what CMRITO does, what registrants get from their registration with the College, and why do registrants pay a registration fee. These are understandable questions.

It's evident from your feedback that it's not clear what exactly CMRITO does. Let's try to clear that up here.



What does CMRITO do?

CMRITO is responsible for protecting the public by regulating the profession of medical radiation and imaging technology in Ontario. Simply put, the College exists to hold MRITs accountable to the public. Ontario legislation directs the College to do this in the following ways:

- by setting the standards of practice
- by setting the requirements for becoming an MRIT
- by ensuring that MRITs keep current with their professional competence
- by addressing concerns through a formal complaints, investigation, and discipline process
- by maintaining an online register of MRITs in Ontario

What is regulation?

Regulation is the process of ensuring that professionals meet certain standards of ethics, conduct, and competence in a specific field, to protect the health and safety of the general public.

Medical radiation and imaging technologists in Ontario are self-regulated health professionals. **Self-regulation** allows professionals to set the required qualifications and competencies to practice their profession. In the case of our profession, that comes with the responsibility of delivering safe, effective, and ethical medical radiation and imaging services to Ontarians.

Self-regulation is a privilege granted by government in recognition of the fact that the profession is better suited to oversee the governance of itself than any other group or organization would be. In Ontario, the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA) establishes the 26 health regulators that oversee 29 health professions made up by nearly 400,000 individuals across the province. A list of all the RHPA colleges in Ontario can be found on the Health Profession Regulators of Ontario website.

In addition to the RHPA, each profession is subject to a profession-specific piece of legislation that outlines its role and responsibilities. In our case, the *Medical Radiation and Imaging Technology Act, 2017* (MRIT Act) charges the CMRITO to regulate the practice of radiography, radiation therapy, nuclear medicine, magnetic resonance, and diagnostic medical sonography in Ontario.

Self-regulation entrusts registrants with the responsibility to govern themselves in the interest of protecting the public. CMRITO is funded by registrants and governed by a Board of Directors (CMRITO Council) comprised of elected and appointed professional registrants from each specialty and members of the public appointed by the provincial government.

What does a College do? What does an association do?

The responsibilities of a College are clearly outlined in the legislation that governs it, which limits its role to the core functions and mandates laid out in the profession-specific act. In CMRITO's case, our mandate is public protection. Everything the College does is in support of protecting the public by ensuring that applicants meet the professional standards for registration, ensuring that all registrants continue to be competent and knowledgeable throughout their careers, and by administering professional conduct processes designed to protect the public.

As a result of this very specific purpose set by the RHPA and the MRIT Act, CMRITO **cannot and does not** advocate for registrants. That is the role of the professional associations like the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT), the Ontario Association of Medical Radiation Sciences (OAMRS), and Sonography Canada. Among other responsibilities, these organizations advocate with governments on behalf of their members. During the COVID pandemic, for instance, these professional associations lobbied for the profession to ensure that the issues facing medical radiation and imaging technologists were heard and understood. The associations also develop and deliver educational materials and events and provide services like professional liability insurance. CAMRT and Sonography Canada also administer certification/licensing exams. Because they offer these services, it is often to your advantage as an MRIT to become a member of one or more of these associations. However, membership in these associations is voluntary.

Registration with CMRITO, on the other hand, is mandatory. If you want to practise as a medical radiation and imaging technologist in Ontario, you must complete an educational program in one or more of the five specialties, apply to CMRITO, demonstrate your competence and qualifications to be licensed to practice, and show your continued commitment to your practice through annual participation in the Quality Assurance Program. As a result, only qualified individuals can practice as MRITs in Ontario. Anyone practising without being registered with CMRITO is practising illegally.

Where does the College's funding come from?

Self-regulated colleges are self-funded. They are not funded by the government or supported through the collection of taxes. They are funded by registration fees. The RHPA enables each regulatory college to set their own registration fees to fund their operations. As a result, the registration fees vary from college to college, with an average registration fee for the other 25 colleges of \$1,194.32/year. This amount is influenced by a number of factors including the number of registrants, the volume and complexity of complaints and discipline work, and the administration of other regulatory functions.

The core responsibilities of the CMRITO are to set licencing requirements, process applications for registration (Registration), ensure the continued competence of registrants (Quality Assurance), and administer complaints

and discipline processes (Professional Conduct). The work required to carry out these responsibilities is considerable and has grown as the number of registrants has increased. As a result, an update to the registration fee is needed to provide the College with the sustainable resources required to continue to deliver on its important mandate to regulate the profession in the interest of protecting the public.

We hope this addresses some of the questions raised in your feedback about the College, what we do, how we're different than the national and provincial associations, and why you pay a registration fee to practise as an MRIT in Ontario. We'll be continuing this discussion about the important issues identified in the consultation for greater clarity in future issues of *Insights*.



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