

COLLEGE OF
MASSAGE THERAPISTS
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
**ANNUAL
REPORT
OF 2021**

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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



2021 was an active and productive year for CMTBC, and I was privileged to be part of it as CMTBC Board Chair.

The second year of the COVID-19 pandemic was extremely impactful for all health professionals, including RMTs. As in 2020, CMTBC continued to support the profession and the public by regularly updating the [Interim Guidelines for Return to Practice \(COVID-19\)](#) and [FAQs](#) to keep up with the evolving guidance from the Provincial Health Officer. When vaccines became available, CMTBC immediately communicated to RMTs about how to book appointments for priority vaccinations designated for BC health professionals, to help keep them and their patients safe. The pandemic has been hard for everyone, in different ways, but I am proud of the role that CMTBC has played to support both the profession and the public.

The College continued to have discussions with fellow

health regulators and the Ministry of Health about the potential amalgamation of colleges in the future. So far, there is no specific timeline for this to happen, but the government has indicated to us that it is still a project that it plans to pursue, so both the Board and senior staff spent time on this issue and looked at what it might mean for the future regulation of RMTs.

Another development that I have found gratifying as Board Chair is the ongoing evolution of CMTBC's relationship with BC's professional association for RMTs, the Registered Massage Therapists Association of BC (RMTBC). When I first sat on CMTBC's Board a number of years ago, this very important relationship was marked by conflict and distrust. It pleases me greatly that the two organizations can now communicate and cooperate in a way that benefits both of us, and that benefits both the public and the profession. CMTBC's role is to protect the public and RMTBC's role is to support RMTs. While

these are different roles, they can work in ways that are complementary rather than conflictual, and everyone benefits when that happens.

Much of Board's time in 2021 was devoted to thinking about the future. What will regulation look like after amalgamation? How will the professional expertise of RMTs be incorporated into a new multi-profession body? What will the makeup of the amalgamated college (or colleges) look like? What will CMTBC specifically bring to the table?

These and other similar questions will continue to pose challenges into 2022 and the years beyond. Having served both as a Board member and as the Chair, I am confident that the College is well-positioned to meet these challenges. In addition to the elected (RMT) members of the Board, all of whom contribute their knowledge of the profession through a clear public interest lens, we are extremely fortunate and grateful to have such highly committed and

qualified publicly-appointed Board members, who bring their own experience and perspective to the Board table. Their vital and informative contribution helps ensure that CMTBC remains focused on its mandate to protect, support, and maintain the public interest at all times.

I look forward to seeing what comes next.

Robin Perry, RMT
Chair, CMTBC Board

MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR



Although professional regulation always has its challenges, 2021 proved to be a particularly challenging and interesting year.

Despite the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CMTBC continued to make progress on the objectives of its current 2020–2022 Strategic Plan. In January 2021, CMTBC introduced both the updated [Code of Ethics](#), and the new [Practice Environment Standard of Practice](#) for RMTs. In the spring, CMTBC introduced a new online course to teach RMTs the requirements of the new code and standard. The Quality Assurance Committee continued its discussions about how to modernize and revamp the quality assurance program, and announcements are expected in 2022. The Inquiry Committee continued to review and deal with an ever-increasing number of complaints, evidence of the increasing willingness of complainants to come forward with concerns.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to occupy CMTBC

in a variety of ways: the College made regular updates to the COVID-19 [Interim Guidelines](#) and [FAQs](#) as public health guidance and orders changed and evolved; CMTBC complied with a Provincial Health Officer (PHO) order to record the COVID-19 vaccination status of all its registrants and disclose to the PHO registrant information regarding vaccination status; and the College was in regular contact with the PHO and other health regulators about other practices and requirements (e.g. mask use). As in 2020, CMTBC remained focused on and committed to providing timely and useful information to RMTs, who continued practicing in exceptionally challenging circumstances.

While the provincial government's regulatory modernization project was perhaps slowed by the impact of the pandemic, it was clear that it had not been abandoned, and work continued in the form of detailed discussions and planning with other health regulators, some of which may become future amalgamation partners of CMTBC.

CMTBC continued to consider the findings and conclusions of the [In Plain Sight](#) report on Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination in BC health care, including how to bring the insights of the report to RMTs in a way that is relevant and meaningful in the context of RMT practice. We have a long journey ahead of us, but it is one that we are committed to taking.

It continues to be my pleasure and privilege to work with such exceptionally committed Board and Committee members, and such highly competent and dedicated staff. The years ahead will no doubt continue to present challenges, but I look forward to tackling them with the support of the volunteers and staff who ensure that the public interest is always kept first and foremost in all our work.

Eric Wredenhagen
Registrar & CEO

VISION

TO BE INNOVATORS AND LEADERS
IN PUBLIC-FOCUSED HEALTH CARE
REGULATION.

MANDATE

THROUGH REGULATION, WE
PROTECT THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO
SAFE, ETHICAL, AND EFFECTIVE
MASSAGE THERAPY.

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR

Robin Perry, RMT

VICE-CHAIR

Jana Konkin, RMT

MEMBERS

Emily Bissonnette, RMT
(from April 2021)

Kristen Burrows, RMT

Deborah Charrois
Public Representative
(from March 2021)

Joti Dhesi
Public Representative

Laura Dunkley, RMT

Thomas Klie-Cribb, RMT
(to March 2021)

Taylor James Laviolette, RMT
(to May 2021)

Harman Pandher
Public Representative

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Claudia Lee, RMT, Chair
Jane Abbott, RMT
Nicholas Aubin
Joti Dhesi
Thomas Klie-Cribb, RMT
Aisha Ohene-Asante
Winchester Victor, RMT

MANDATE

The Registration Committee oversees entry-level registration, including the entry-to-practice examination, reinstatement of former registrants, and applications for return to Practising status, in accordance with the *Health Professions Act* and CMTBC's Bylaws.

FULFILLING THE MANDATE

Two registration examinations were held in 2021: March and September. Both the March and September examinations were administered within safety guidelines for COVID-19 developed in consultation with CMTBC's medical expert, consistent with orders and guidance provided by BC's Provincial Health Officer. Candidates' results at the 2021 registration examination are listed by stream of entry on page 5 of the Annual Report.

In 2021, the Registration Committee held meetings through electronic means, by teleconference and

videoconference. At those meetings, the Registration Committee reviewed and considered reinstatement requests from former and Non-practising registrants and considered whether applicants met the good character and fitness to practice requirements.

Results of 2021 candidates' first attempt at CMTBC registration examination

Stream of Entry	Number of Participants (First attempt only)	Number of Participants Who Passed Registration Exam ¹ (First attempt only)	Percentage of Participants Who Passed Registration Exam (First attempt only)
OVCMT	55	43	78%
VCMT	92	78	85%
WCCMT – New Westminster	84	72	86%
WCCMT – Victoria	69	63	91%
VaCC – Burnaby	40	27	68%
Langara	41	37	90%
CDI – South Surrey	34	25	74%
KCCIHS	13	10	77%
Camosun	17	8	47%
Total All Streams	453²	364³	80%

OVCMT

Okanagan Valley College of Massage Therapy

VCMT

Vancouver College of Massage Therapy

WCCMT – New Westminster

West Coast College of Massage Therapy – New Westminster

WCCMT – Victoria

West Coast College of Massage Therapy – Victoria

VaCC – Burnaby

Vancouver Career College – Burnaby

Langara

Langara College Continuing Studies, Massage Therapy program

CDI – South Surrey

CDI College – South Surrey

KCCIHS

Kootenay Columbia College of Integrative Health Sciences, Massage Therapy program

Camosun

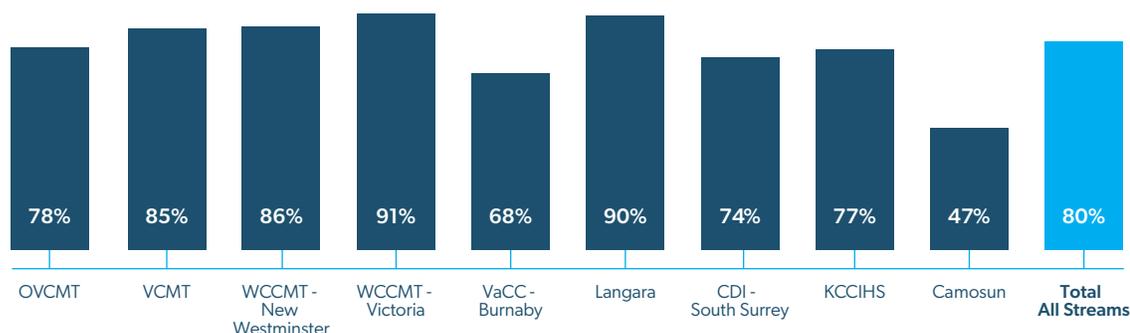
Camosun College of Massage Therapy – Victoria

¹ Successful candidates passed each of four components of the CMTBC registration examination.

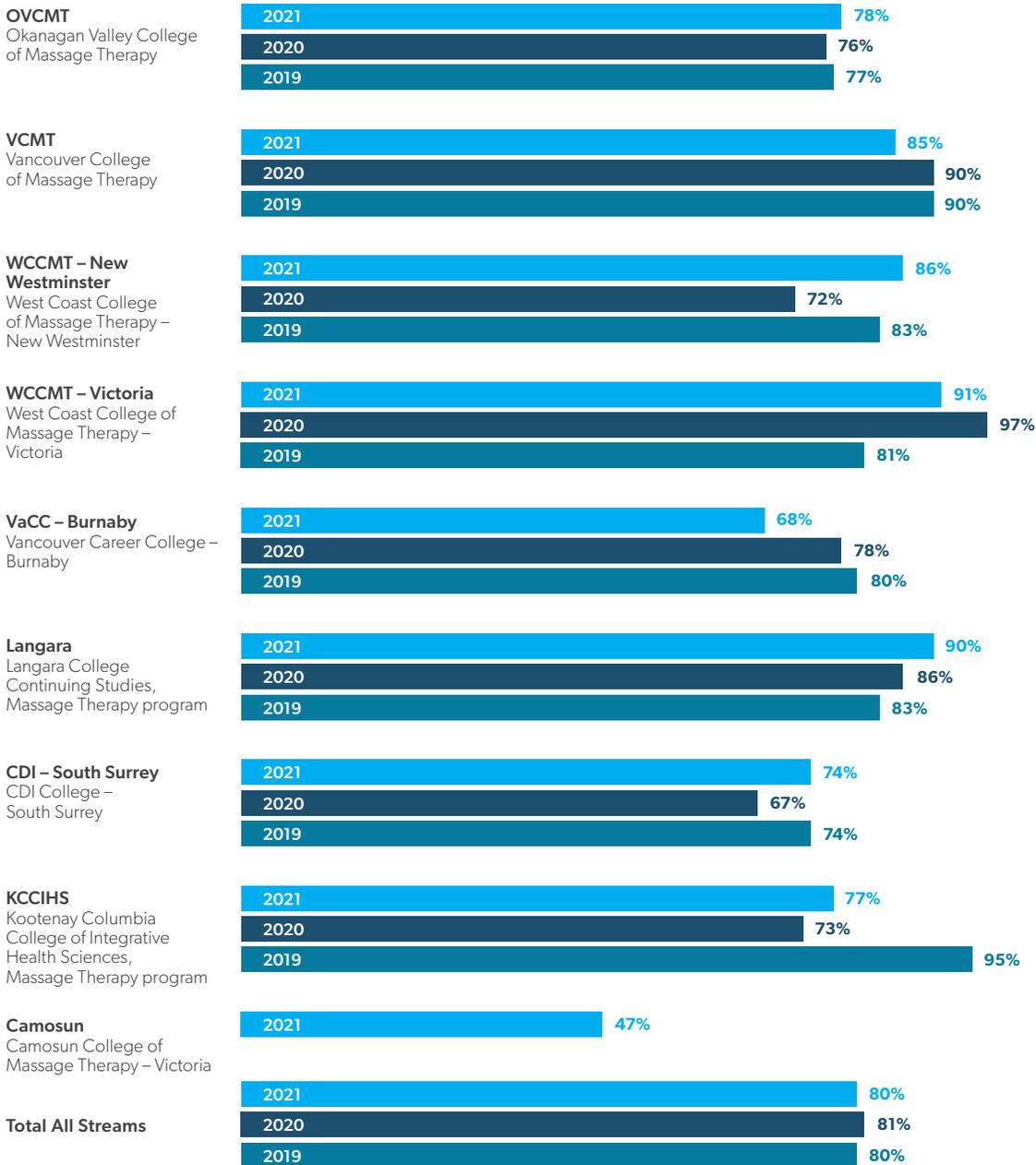
² Represents all candidates who completed the registration examination from all streams of entry. To protect the anonymity of individual candidates, streams of entry with 10 or less participants are not itemized. An arithmetic tally of participants equals 445. An additional eight participants qualified for the examination, and they are represented in the number 453.

³ To protect the anonymity of individual candidates, streams with 10 or less participants are not itemized. An arithmetic tally of participants who passed the registration examination equals 363. The total reported of 364 includes one individual from an anonymized stream.

Percentage of 2021 participants who passed registration exam



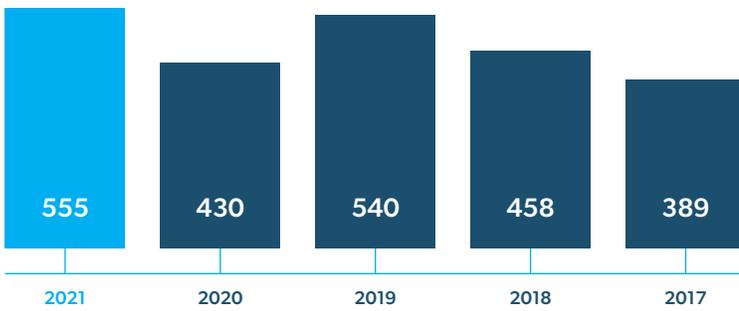
Percentage of 2019-2021 participants who passed registration exam



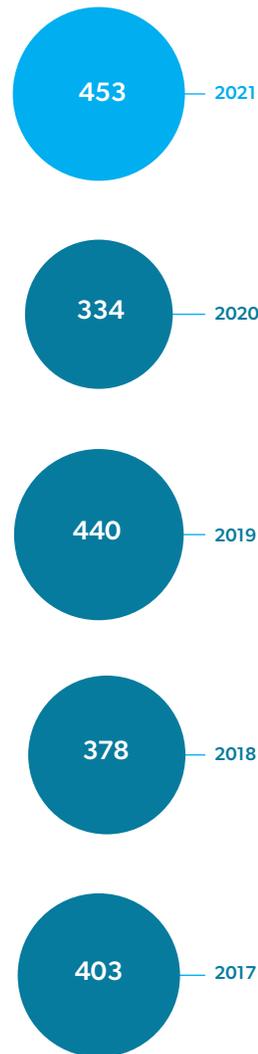
Results from 2019-2021 registration examinations are on CMTBC's [Registration Examination Results](#) webpage.

2021 REGISTRATION STATISTICS

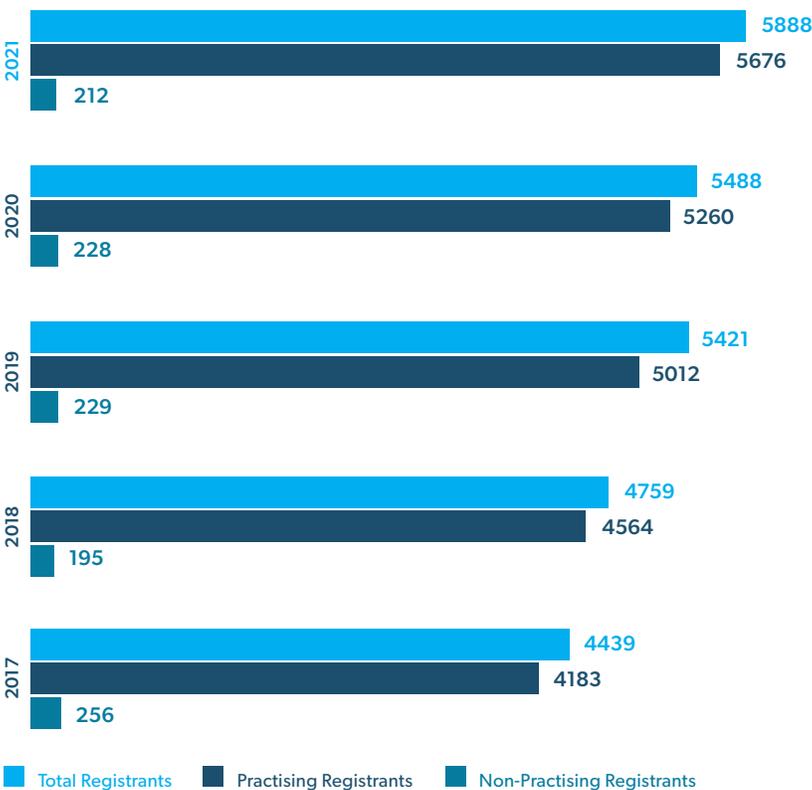
New registrants



Registration examination candidates



Status and total number of registrants



First-time registration examination candidates only. Retakes of the registration examination are not included.

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Lie, RMT, Chair

Emily Bissonnette, RMT

Laura Dunkley, RMT

Richard Ingram, RMT

Thomas Klie-Cribb, RMT
(until October 2021)

Sue Murphy

Harman Pandher

Marilynne Waithman
(from April 2021)

MANDATE

Section 16(2)(e) of the *Health Professions Act* requires that CMTBC maintain a continuing competency program to promote high practice standards amongst registrants. The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for developing and maintaining this program and reviewing standards of professional practice.

FULFILLING THE MANDATE

In 2021, registrants navigated the completion of Cycle 12 continuing education electives and the start of Cycle 13. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CMTBC provided a one-year grace period to meet Cycle 12 requirements and a new model of continuing education delivery by webinar. These measures enabled registrants to have more opportunities to complete Cycle 12 required continuing education electives during ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

For Cycle 13, the addition of evidence-informed practice (EIP) criteria for continuing education electives supported the Committee's commitment to providing

credits for evidence-informed education electives. Beginning in fall 2021, course providers and registrants could apply for approval of continuing education activities under the new EIP criteria for continuing education activities based on evidence-informed work, supported by recent published research, and taught by an approved instructor.

All registrants, Practising and Non-practising, completed the College-authored online course "Code of Ethics and Practice Environment Standard" as a requirement for 2022 registration renewal. The revised [Code of Ethics](#), which outlines expectations for ethical massage therapy practice, and the new

[Practice Environment Standard of Practice](#), which outlines requirements for the physical environment where RMTs provide care to patients, are key resources that support both patients and RMTs. While course completion was required in 2021 as a requirement for registration renewal, registrants were given continuing education credits for course completion towards Cycle 13.

In 2020, the Quality Assurance Committee met with a consultant to discuss career span competencies and to explore a quality improvement model that involves assessing and building on competencies throughout the span of a registrant's career. The Committee decided at that time to implement career

span competencies as the quality improvement aspect of CMTBC's quality assurance program. In 2021, the Committee continued its work on the future of the quality improvement component. Work on the quality improvement program, which will be known to registrants as the Practice Development Program, will continue throughout 2022. Once launched, the Practice Development Program will take a supportive approach that assists registrants in ongoing career development.

INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Teresa Budd, Chair
Pamela Nonis, RMT, Vice Chair
Sheila Cessford
Cary Cowan, RMT
Lynne Harris
Jana Konkin, RMT
Robin Perry, RMT
Wendy Sanders, RMT

MANDATE

The Inquiry Committee is established under section 19(1)(t) of the *Health Professions Act* and is made up of RMTs and public representatives. The Inquiry Committee responds to public complaints about the conduct and competence of registered massage therapists, in accordance with CMTBC's mandate to protect the public and Part 3 of the *Health Professions Act*. The Inquiry Committee is specifically tasked in the *Health Professions Act* with employing complaint and investigation processes that are transparent, objective, impartial, and fair.

FULFILLING THE MANDATE

The Inquiry Committee fulfills its mandate and duties under the *Health Professions Act* by:

- investigating the complaints and other matters on its caseload;
- reviewing complaint dispositions (decisions) made by the Registrar, and exercising its authority to either approve the dispositions made by the Registrar or to direct the Registrar to refer the files to the Inquiry Committee for further investigation;
- disposing of complaints and other matters; and
- when necessary to protect the public pending the

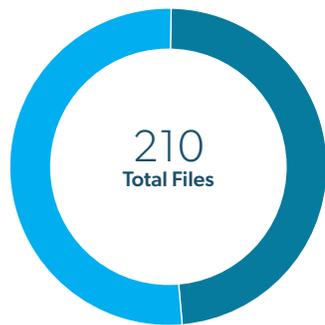
conclusion of an investigation or a hearing, imposing extraordinary action on a registrant under section 35 of the *Health Professions Act*.

In 2021, the Inquiry Committee's caseload increased substantially compared to 2020. In 2021, the Inquiry Committee had a total caseload of 210 files (101 open files were carried over from 2020 and 109 new files opened in 2021) compared to a caseload of 181 files in 2020. Of the files opened in 2021, 82 were complaints from members of the public, health professionals, or other entities, representing a significant increase from the 62 complaints received in 2020.

The statistics accompanying this report (see next page) provide more detail about files opened in 2021, including the types of complaints submitted and the dispositions (decisions) made by the Registrar and Inquiry Committee.

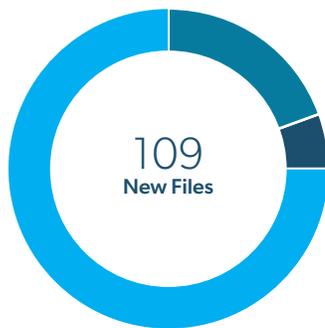
2021 INQUIRY STATISTICS

2021 inquiry caseload



109
New files

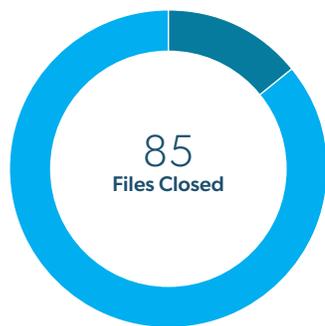
101
Files carried over from 2020



82
Complaints

21
Inquiry Committee-initiated investigations

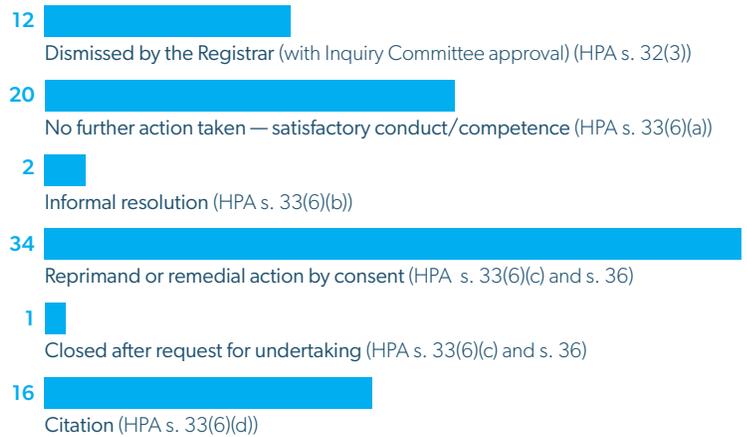
6
Under the *Health Professions Act* "Duty to Report"



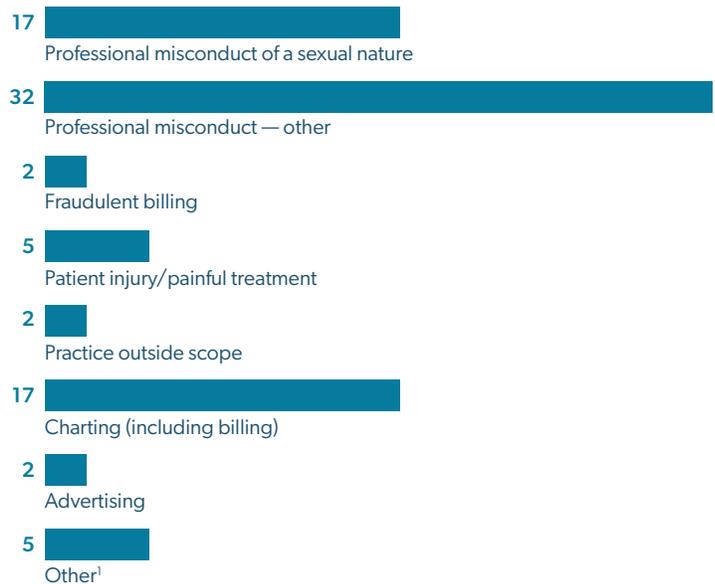
71
Disposed of by Inquiry Committee

14
Disposed of by Registrar (with Inquiry Committee approval)

85 inquiry dispositions



82 new complaints by primary allegation type



¹ Complaints involving conduct that is not professional misconduct, e.g. conduct unbecoming or allegations outside CMTBC's regulatory jurisdiction.

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Jennifer Lie, RMT, Chair
Arny Abramson
Nicholas Aubin
Emily Bissonette, RMT
 (from April 2021)
Deborah Charrois
 (from April 2021)
Audra Coton
Evan Jeary, RMT

Elisa Peterson, RMT
Rachel Shiu, RMT
Marilynne Waithman
 (from April 2021)
Michael Wiebe, RMT
Carol Williams
 (until May 2021)
Stefanie Wong

MANDATE

The Discipline Committee is established under section 19(1)(t) of the *Health Professions Act*. The Committee hears and determines matters that have been forwarded to it by the Inquiry Committee.

Matters are forwarded when the Inquiry Committee directs the Registrar to issue a citation to a registered massage therapist who has been the subject of a complaint or an investigation initiated by the Inquiry Committee. A citation is a formal charging document that sets an inquiry matter over to a discipline hearing. Most complaints are resolved without a citation being issued.

FULFILLING THE MANDATE

In 2021, members of the committee attended training sessions on subjects that included fundamental skills for Discipline Committee members, drafting adequate reasons, trauma-informed practices, and assessing credibility in a virtual hearing.

Three discipline hearings were held in 2021. The first discipline hearing was held virtually on March 8-12, 15-19, and 22-23, April 26-30, September 29-30, and October 1, 28, and 29, 2021. The second discipline hearing was held virtually on June 14-18 and 21-25, 2021. The third hearing was held virtually and commenced on December 15, 2021; it

concluded in 2022. As at the time of writing, decisions from those hearings are pending.

Additionally, in 2021, Discipline Committee panels issued reasons in respect of two discipline hearings held in 2020:

1. In the first, the RMT who was the subject of the discipline hearing (and who was by then a former registrant) was found by the Discipline Committee to have engaged in the following conduct:

a. he failed to adequately communicate the treatment plan to treat a patient's pectoral muscles, including that he would treat at or near the patient's breasts;

b. he failed to obtain informed consent to treat at or near the patient's breasts;

c. he failed to communicate the intended depth of pressure used;

d. he stated words to the effect of "pain is good" and "it will fix it", after the patient said words to the effect of "it is really sore, can we go lighter?";

e. he failed to adequately adjust treatment and communicate with the patient after she expressed that she was experiencing pain; and

f. he failed to keep adequate clinical records in relation to the treatment delivered to the patient.

The panel determined that by engaging in this conduct, the former registrant failed to comply with a number of requirements set out in CMTBC's Bylaws and Code of Ethics, and engaged in unprofessional conduct. CMTBC and the former registrant made a joint submission on penalty and costs, which the Discipline Committee considered to be appropriate and to adequately address CMTBC's mandate to protect the public. The Discipline Committee panel ordered that the former registrant be prohibited from seeking reinstatement with CMTBC until the later of: a) the completion of a 7 day suspension, or b) completion of remedial education on clinical record-keeping,

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE report continued

professionalism, and ethics.

[Read more about this case.](#)

2. In the second, the RMT who was the subject of the discipline hearing (and who was by then a former registrant) was found by the Discipline Committee to have engaged in the following conduct:

- a. in the course of providing massage therapy services to patient 1, he massaged patient 1's breasts for a non-therapeutic purpose, and failed to provide appropriate draping (by lifting the drape and exposing patient 1's breasts as she turned from a prone to an upward facing position);
- b. in the course of providing massage therapy services to patient 2, the former registrant:
 - i. failed, in his communications with patient 2 prior to treatment, to describe appropriate disrobing and/or draping options and stated words to the effect that "it is a full body massage so clothes will get in the way";
 - ii. massaged or otherwise touched patient 2's buttocks for a non-therapeutic purpose;
 - iii. massaged or otherwise touched patient 2's breasts for a non-therapeutic purpose;
 - iv. touched patient 2's nipples; and
 - v. failed to provide appropriate draping, by leaving patient 2's breasts and buttocks exposed when he was not treating that area of her body; and
- c. in the course of providing massage therapy services to patient 3, he:
 - i. told patient 3 that it was necessary to expose her breast to provide treatment, when this was untrue;
 - ii. massaged or otherwise touched patient 3's breast for a non-therapeutic purpose; and
 - iii. failed to provide appropriate draping, by exposing patient 3's breast when there was no therapeutic reason to do so.

The panel found that by engaging in this conduct, the former registrant committed professional misconduct, and breached provisions of CMTBC's standards of practice and Code of Ethics. As part of its order on penalty and costs, the Discipline Committee panel ordered that the former registrant be prohibited from applying for reinstatement of registration with CMTBC for five years and until he has completed remedial education. The Discipline Committee panel stated in its decision that the former registrant's conduct was at the most serious end of the spectrum because it was sexual, there were multiple instances of the conduct over a prolonged period of time, the former registrant abused his position of power, authority and trust, and he misled his patients. The panel stated that a strong message must be sent to both the profession and the public that this conduct will not be tolerated in the massage therapy profession. [Read more about this case.](#)

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

MANDATE

The Finance & Audit Committee supports the Board by providing ongoing detailed review and scrutiny of the College's finances. While the Board bears the ultimate responsibility for financial oversight, the Committee's support permits the Board to devote more of its time and attention to policymaking and professional governance issues.

The Committee reviews and oversees all material aspects of the College's financial reporting, including:

- Approving and monitoring CMTBC's annual budget and financial results
- Recommending and appointing an independent auditor
- Receiving and acting upon results of the annual audit report
- Reporting to the Board on results of the annual audit
- Monitoring implementation of the auditor's recommendations

FULFILLING THE MANDATE

The Committee met and reported to the Board regularly throughout the year. 2021 continued to pose forecasting and budgeting challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in part due to higher costs in key areas, exam administration in particular. Despite these challenges, CMTBC finished the year in a positive financial position.

Grant Thornton LLP performed CMTBC's financial audit. The audited financial statements are presented in condensed form on pages 14-16 of the annual report and are posted in full on [CMTBC's website](#).

Nicholas Aubin, Chair
(to December 2021)

Deborah Charrois
(from April 2021;
Chair from December 2021)

Bianca Ashe, RMT
(to December 2021)

Emily Bissonnette, RMT
(from April 2021)

Conrad Chevalier, CPA, CA, CBV

Ashley Leighton, RMT

Catherine Ryan, RMT

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AT A GLANCE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	\$ 1,162,290	\$4,870,729
Short-term investments	5,500,000	1,000,000
Accounts receivable	6,349	24,156
Prepaid expenses	84,481	185,110
	6,753,120	6,079,995
Intangible assets (Note 3)	-	12,835
Property and equipment (Note 3)	59,370	58,928
	\$6,812,490	\$ 6,151,758
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Accounts payable (Note 5)	\$ 136,216	\$ 302,477
Deferred revenue	3,627,750	3,428,260
	3,763,966	3,730,737
Deferred lease inducements	1,625	4,876
Deferred rent	542	1,625
	3,766,133	3,737,238
Net assets Unrestricted	1,046,357	1,414,520
Internally restricted (Note 6)	2,000,000	1,000,000
	3,046,357	2,414,520
	\$6,812,490	\$ 6,151,758

Complete audited financial statements and accompanying notes are available on CMTBC's [Annual Reports & Financial Statements](#) webpage.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AT A GLANCE

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2021	2020
INCOME		
Registration fees	\$3,412,925	\$ 3,182,898
Examination fees	817,950	426,305
CMTBC courses	591,560	250,230
Registration application fees	81,625	59,225
Other income	68,965	42,260
Fines and assessment fees	27,600	28,550
Interest	8,790	54,237
	5,009,415	4,043,705
EXPENSES		
Office and administration	1,730,649	1,710,577
Discipline	991,417	429,535
Examinations	616,804	458,970
Complaints and inquiry	323,947	401,016
Quality assurance	317,119	269,447
Registration and entry to practice	300,944	293,816
Governance	39,035	28,833
Communication and publications	37,025	38,872
Title protection	20,638	6,639
	4,377,578	3,637,705
Excess of income over expenses	\$ 631,837	\$ 406,000

Complete audited financial statements and accompanying notes are available on CMTBC's [Annual Reports & Financial Statements](#) webpage.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AT A GLANCE

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

	Unrestricted	Internally restricted financial reserve (Note 6)	TOTAL
Balance, December 31, 2019	\$ 1,008,520	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,008,520
Excess of income over expenses	406,000	-	406,000
Balance, December 31, 2020	1,414,520	1,000,000	2,414,520
Excess of income over expenses	631,837	-	631,837
Transfer	(1,000,000)	1,000,000	-
Balance, December 31, 2021	\$1,046,357	\$ 2,000,000	\$3,046,357

Complete audited financial statements and accompanying notes are available on CMTBC's [Annual Reports & Financial Statements](#) webpage.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Jana Konkin, RMT, Chair

Joti Dhesi

Robin Perry, RMT

MANDATE

The Governance Committee develops and recommends to the Board best practices and effective approaches to strategic planning, organizational renewal, organizational conduct, and risk management. Since 2018, the Governance Committee also reviews the composition of, and makes appointments to, other CMTBC committees.

FULFILLING THE MANDATE

In addition to reviewing committee composition and making appointments as necessary, the Committee continued its work on creating a new process for reviewing and evaluating the Registrar/CEO, using feedback from Board members, staff, and external stakeholders. Working with an external consultant, the Committee brought this project to fruition in 2021, and conducted a full review of the Registrar/CEO. The new review framework will allow for continuing annual reviews,

with a more in-depth review conducted every second year. The Committee also gave consideration as to how best to incorporate the principles of regulatory modernization into CMTBC's overall governance practices, and reviewed succession, continuity, and staff structures together with the Registrar/CEO.

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