

## 2023 Annual Summative Report

### **Overview**

CRPO launched the Quality Assurance Enhancement Project in 2021 to ensure all elements of the Quality Assurance Program employed a right-touch, risk-based approach.

The project's objectives were to ensure that CRPO's mandatory Quality Assurance Program was administered in a way that would meet the following objectives without creating an undue burden on the profession:

- mitigate risk of harm to the public
- use the College's resources responsibly
- implement best practices in quality assurance assessment and professional development
- support professional growth, reflective practice and life-long learning

Through the QA Enhancement Project, and in collaboration with Martek Assessments, CRPO developed an open-book, online, risk assessment tool, known as the case-based assessment or CBA. In 2023, CRPO assessed 1732 registrants.

### **Achievements**

How did we get here?

#### **Engaging with the profession**

Over a two-year period, the College recruited and trained over 50 RPs, who contributed to writing, developing, and validating more than 100 situational judgment items ("cases").

#### **Conducting a pilot**

178 registrants volunteered to complete a CBA pilot in November 2022.

#### **Launching the program**

CRPO conducted the first two CBA administrations in 2023

- 794 registrants completed the 2023 Spring CBA
- 938 registrants completed the 2023 Fall CBA

#### **Listening to feedback**

At each stage of the project, CRPO asked for input and feedback from the profession and other system partners. Main adjustments made during project included

- reducing the number of situational judgment cases from 40 to 30 cases (pre-pilot)
- making the assessment accessible for 10 days, including two weekends
- increasing the assessment time from 3 to 4 hours (post-pilot)
- releasing sample cases from the case library so registrants can practice

### **How does the CBA support safe practice?**

With the introduction of the CBA, CRPO is eliminating the random selection process for registrants to participate in peer and practice reviews. Instead, all registrants are now required to complete an online, “open-book” case-based assessment (CBA) on a regular and recurring basis, approximately every five years. The assessment is comprised of 30 situational-judgement cases wherein participants are asked to evaluate a situation then rank a series of potential courses of action from most to least aligned with the standards of practice.

As the cornerstone of CRPO’s Quality Assurance Program, the CBA provides evidence-based feedback that registrants can use to think critically about their practice, their professional growth, and their obligations as regulated health professionals.

Additionally, the CBA helps the College identify risks in practice and direct resources where they are most needed to help registrants provide safe and effective care.

All registrants receive information about their CBA performance in a feedback report. The information often confirms and reinforces what a registrant already knows about their practice. However, the information also identifies where a registrant might have potential gaps in their knowledge, skill, and judgement. Registrants can use this information to direct their own learning and make informed decisions about their professional development.

In cases where a registrant has significant gaps in their CBA results, the College provides trained peer coaches, who provide support in developing an appropriate learning plan to address those gaps.

### **Case development**

The cases used in the CBA were written, reviewed, and tested by members of the profession. CRPO aims to include and represent multiple perspectives and communities of practice. To date, over 50 RPs have been involved in various stages of the Quality Assurance Enhancement Project.

CRPO takes an iterative approach to case development. This means each case goes through several stages including writing, revising, and testing before being finalized and added to the CBA.

### **Reliability and Validity of the CBA**

To ensure the validity of decisions made by CRPO, with the assessment tools and processes must demonstrate both the psychometric qualities of reliability and validity. When carefully designed, Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs) have historically demonstrated robust reliability and validity as a tool for evaluating candidates in a variety of settings. Their contextual nature makes them particularly valuable for assessing practical skills, soft competencies, decision making processes with their clients.

As a starting point, reliability is enhanced when the scenarios and answer options used in the CBA are clear and have been vetted to minimize ambiguity. As a part of the CBA process, two independent groups review the cases and answer options not only for clarity but for authenticity and relevancy to practice. The writers of the scenarios (case developers) offer a pattern of scoring they believe best reflects the optimal ranking in terms of "appropriateness." That the ranking of the options from most appropriate to least appropriate is reviewed by independent reviewers for confirmation. Finally, a second independent group of case validators pilot the cases in a simulated computer delivery, as actual candidates would take the assessment to establish an overall difficulty of each scenario and the order sequence for the case before confirmation of the case content and ranking is made.

The scoring of a registrant's responses is based on how closely their responses align with the ranking established by the panel of practising Ontario peers. The closer the respondent ranking is to the panel's ranking, the higher the score the registrant achieves.

Together, this approach enhances consistent scoring and ultimately the assessment's reliability. These activities have resulted in the CBA obtaining acceptable levels of reliability for each administration to date. As an added note, the specific scoring algorithm used for the CBA is the same method commonly used in the assessment community for this approach.

Validity assesses whether a test accurately measures what it claims to measure and predicts real-world performance. There are several forms of validity relevant to SJTs. For the purposes of the CBA, content validity is of particular importance. In this context, SJTs are typically designed with practitioners to reflect realistic practice settings and decision-making scenarios.

Each scenario is linked to a relevant Practice Standard to enhance content validity and to link it directly to the decisions and processes that follow. CRPO makes use of independent

case validators drawn from a pool of experienced practitioners to ensure that the scenario and response options clearly reflect real world practice and address the corresponding Practice Standard. As a final step, the scenarios are piloted online with a sample of individuals representing the target population. Any issues related to the scenario are addressed by the case development team before using the scenario in an upcoming administration.

### **CBA Pilot**

Prior to undertaking a formal pilot test to assess the process and the content of the cases, CRPO undertook case validation to gather initial insights into the project's activities.

The case validation process includes shaping assumptions about how participants would perform and what likely outcomes would be. The pilot was designed to test these assumptions. The pilot results were aligned with our projections, therefore affirming the strength and accuracy of both our case validation and our overall assessment design.

The results of the CBA pilot provided valuable evidence that supported our expectations concerning participant outcomes. Not only did they demonstrate that the assessment was measuring performance effectively, but they also confirmed that the cases were fair, balanced, and appropriate for the level of thoroughness we aimed to achieve.

Two changes were instituted from these activities. First, the initial plan to administer 40 cases was reduced to 30 cases. This decision was informed from the mini field-testing activities that indicated that 40 cases would be too onerous for registrants to complete.

Post-pilot, a second change was adopted as the time limit was increased from three hours to four hours to complete the assessment. Again, comments from participants involved in the mini field tests provided support for the change. Both changes were incorporated with no adverse effect on the assessment process. More importantly, moving from a three-hour time limit to a four-hour time limit ensures that registrants had sufficient time to complete the assessment and eliminating the feeling of being rushed or the use of guessing. These changes all together provide response data that is more reflective of the registrant's true ability and helps ensure a greater reliability of the assessment.

The CRPO pilot of the CBA recruited 178 registrants to take the CBA. The CBA portal was available 24-hours a day from November 22 to 26, 2022. Participants completed 30 situational judgment cases over three hours.

**Table 1: 2023 Spring CBA Results**

794 registrants completed the CBA between May 26 and June 5, 2023.

Result	# of RP's	% of total RPs (n=794)
Successful	668	84.10%
Self-directed review	113	14.20%
Peer-assisted review	13	1.60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>794</b>	

**Table 2: 2023 Fall CBA Results**

938 registrants completed the CBA between October 27 and November 5, 2023.

Result	# RPs	% of total RPs (n=938)
Successful	790	84.20%
Self-directed review	119	12.70%
Peer-assisted review	29	3.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>938</b>	

The results from both the Spring and Fall CBA demonstrate a strong alignment with the projections established during the pilot. The results closely mirror the expectations set during the pilot, thus reinforcing the reliability of our assessment design and our confidence that the CBA process is both fair and effective. This alignment also provides a strong foundation for future administrations and ensuring that any improvements we make to the process will be built on solid, evidence-based principles.

This alignment is particularly reassuring as it demonstrates the robustness of the CBA framework. The fact that the results consistently meet our projections is a clear indication that the assessment design is performing as intended, and the case scenarios are effectively distinguishing between different levels of competency. This evidence supports the credibility of the CBA as a reliable measure of professional readiness and provides confidence that future iterations will continue to yield dependable and accurate outcomes.

### Statistical data and trends

The data presented provides valuable insights into the outcomes of registrants based on registration category, route of entry, years in practice, accommodation need, and language choice. However, it is important to note that the fluctuations in these outcomes are generally minor. While the trends identified offer useful information, they may not fully capture the broader picture of registrant performance or the various factors that can influence outcomes.

In particular:

- Small sample sizes in certain groups (e.g., French-speaking participants or those from specific registration routes) may limit the relevance of the results.
- Slight variations in successful outcomes and review outcomes (self-directed or peer-assisted) should be viewed with caution, as they may not necessarily indicate significant differences in competency or preparedness.
- Additional factors such as individual preparation, which are not reflected in the data, may also impact outcomes.

As the cornerstone of the College, the CBA is not only a tool for registrants to reflect critically on their practice, but it also plays a critical role in identifying potential risks in practice. By analyzing CBA outcomes, the CRPO is able to detect patterns and trends that may signal areas of practice requiring additional support or resources to mitigate risks and support safe and effective care.

The data, while showing minor fluctuations, serves a vital function in helping the CRPO direct resources where they are most needed. Whether it's creating tailored professional development opportunities, offering peer coaching, or providing registrants with enhanced tools for self-reflection and practice improvement, the CBA enables the College to address emerging risks in the profession proactively.

These findings will guide the development of tools, professional development opportunities, and targeted support aimed at strengthening registrants' ability to meet professional standards and respond to identified risks. By promoting continuous competence through ongoing self-reflection, assessment, and professional development, the College not only supports registrants in their professional growth but also plays a pivotal role in enhancing public protection. CRPO strives to ensure that registered psychotherapists provide safe, ethical, and effective care by identifying and addressing potential risks in practice, ultimately safeguarding the public.

	Count	Successful	Self-Directed Review	Peer Assisted Review
All	1724	84.30%	13.30%	2.40%
2023 Spring	794	84.10%	14.20%	1.60%
2023 Fall	930	84.40%	12.60%	3.00%

Registration category	Count	Successful	Self-Directed Review	Peer Assisted Review
Registered Psychotherapist	1314	85.40%	12.10%	2.50%
Registered Psychotherapist(Qualifying)	409	80.70%	17.40%	2.00%

Registered Psychotherapist(Inactive)	1	100%	0%	0%
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Registration route	Count	Successful	Self-Directed Review	Peer Assisted Review
CRPO accepted bridging program	29	75.90%	24.10%	0.00%
CRPO recognized program	841	85.50%	12.70%	1.80%
Grandparenting process	707	81.80%	14.90%	3.40%
Labour mobility	1	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Non-recognized program	145	91.00%	7.60%	1.40%
Not Available	1	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Years in Practice	Count	Successful	Self-Directed Review	Peer Assisted Review
0-4 years	650	86.00%	12.60%	1.40%
5-9 years	333	88.00%	10.80%	1.20%
10-14 years	267	82.80%	13.50%	3.70%
15-19 years	193	82.90%	13.50%	3.60%
20+ years	280	78.20%	17.90%	3.90%
Not available	1	100%	0%	0%

Accommodation	Count	Successful	Self-Directed Review	Peer Assisted Review
None	1614	84.30%	13.30%	2.40%
Accommodation provided	110	84.50%	13.60%	1.80%

Language	Count	Successful	Self-Directed Review	Peer Assisted Review
English	1714	84.50%	13.10%	2.40%
French	10	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%

### System Partner Feedback

CRPO used info session and participant feedback surveys to assess a registrant's experience in preparing for the CBA, completing the CBA, and their experience reviewing their results, while providing important information to registrants ahead of future administrations.

The actionable feedback we received plays a critical role in our continuous improvement efforts and provides us with valuable insights into the experiences of registrants throughout the assessment process. By administering surveys at different stages—during the

preparation stage, the completion of the assessment, and after the results are shared—we can gather comprehensive feedback that helps us enhance the overall experience. This feedback allows us to identify areas where improvements can be made to increase clarity, accessibility, and overall participant satisfaction.

Positive feedback we received from registrants reinforced our goals and confirms that the CBA is making an impact in protecting the public. Registrants have expressed appreciation for the clarity of the assessment process and the opportunities for practice reflection.

However, we also faced challenges such as registrants not completing the CBA as required, non-compliance with requests from CRPO, undisclosed accommodation needs, and inadequate preparation. To address these issues, we are refining our communication strategies to ensure registrants fully understand the CBA requirements and expectations. By addressing these challenges head-on, we aim to create a more streamlined and supportive process for future administrations.

While we strive to refine processes and respond to registrants' needs, it is essential that these improvements do not compromise the standards required for quality assurance. Our goal is to strike a balance where registrants are supported in their engagement with the standards, while also ensuring the assessment remains challenging and reflective of the competencies being measured. This ensures that our processes evolve without losing the integrity of the assessment.

### **Future plans and goals – Where are we going?**

The outcomes and feedback we received provided valuable insights that will guide our strategies for future administrations.

We will be reviewing a universal design for time to reflect our commitment to inclusivity and ensuring that every registrant can complete the CBA under conditions that support their success. This will extend the time available for all registrants to complete the CBA, without the need for a specific accommodation request. In addition, we will continue to offer info sessions and enhance resources to better prepare and support registrants in applying the standards of practice and practice guidelines applicable to their practice.

We are planning to expand our case bank and enhance case development to better support registrants. By increasing the number of available cases and providing more opportunities for practice cases, we aim to ensure that participants have access to a diverse range of scenarios that reflect real practice challenges. This will help registrants better prepare for the CBA and offer them additional practice while improving their readiness and confidence,



ultimately contributing to a more robust and effective assessment process.

We also see this as a valuable opportunity to hold ourselves accountable to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) standards. In reviewing the learning records of participants in the self-directed review category, we can identify specific areas where additional support is needed and tailor our resources accordingly. This review process will provide insights into common challenges and preparation gaps and allow us to refine our support materials and better address registrants' needs.

These initiatives will enhance the quality of our resources but also ensure that we are consistently evaluating and improving our processes in alignment with CQI principles.