



COLLEGE OF
CHIROPRACTORS
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Radiography Policy Evaluation Registrant Survey

Summary of Results

March 14, 2024

Prepared by:

 PIVOTAL RESEARCH Inc.™



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Project Overview

Project Overview

Project Background

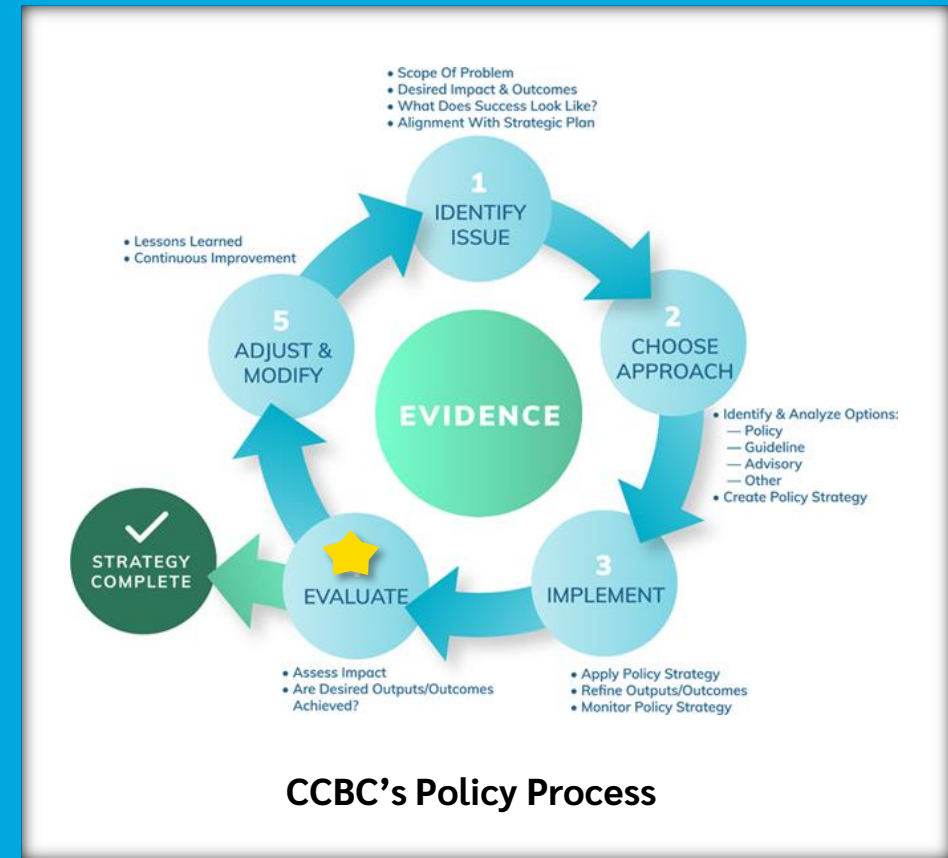
As part of the College of Chiropractors of British Columbia (the College) standardized policy process, registrants were invited to participate in an online survey about their use of the Professional Conduct Handbook (PCH) Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging and Appendix L Imaging Requests. Their survey feedback will be used as a first step in the process of evaluating whether policy outcomes are being achieved.

Methodology and Data Collection

All registrants of the College of Chiropractors of BC were invited to participate in an online survey that was developed in collaboration between the College and Pivotal Research and programmed by the Pivotal Research team. The survey instrument can be found in Appendix A.

The College first notified registrants in December about the upcoming survey in January. The survey began on January 11, 2024, when the College sent out individual survey links to registrants via email. The unique links, provided by Pivotal Research, allowed each registrant to fill out the survey once, with the flexibility to complete it over multiple sessions if desired. Registrants were encouraged to contact the Pivotal Research team if they encountered any technical difficulties. A copy of the survey communications can be found in Appendix B.

The College sent a reminder email on January 18 to encourage more engagement. The survey period ended on February 1, 2024, at 11:59 PM.



Ultimately, 487 registrants completed the survey, constituting a 32% response rate. The margin of error for this study is $\pm 3.7\%$, with a 95% confidence interval.



Respondent Profile



Demographics

In the survey, respondents were prompted to answer several demographic questions to better understand the diversity of perspectives represented. They were given the choice to opt out of any demographic question by selecting “Prefer not to answer”.

In the tables, the “Survey Sample” column reflects respondents who took part in the survey. The “Registrant Population” refers to the overall demographics of all chiropractors registered with the College and is included for comparison.

Like the overall population, most survey respondents hold full registration. Regarding primary practice location, the distribution of survey participants is comparable to the overall registrant group, with a marginally higher number based in Vancouver Island and the Interior compared to the lower mainland (Vancouver Coastal).

Current Registration Type	Survey Sample	Registrant Population
Full	96%	95%
Non-practising	3%	4%
Prefer not to answer	1%	-

What is your current registration type? (survey sample n=499; registrant population n=1,525)

Primary Practice Region	Survey Sample	Registrant Population
Vancouver Coastal	46%	54%
Vancouver Island	23%	20%
Interior	25%	22%
Prefer not to answer	6%	4%*

Where in BC do you primarily practice? (survey sample n=499; registrant population n=1,450)

The primary practice regions in the survey sample were aggregated to health authority regions to enable a comparison with the overall registrant population.

* Reflects the portion of the registrant population where the primary practice region could not be assigned

Demographics

The gender distribution of survey respondents mirrors that of the overall registrant group, with a majority identifying as male (59%) and one-third (34%) as female.

When it comes to years in practice, two out of every five respondents have been in practice for 21 years or more (44%). While those in practice 11 to 20 years were the next most represented group (21%), those practicing 5 years or less (18%) closely follows, as does 6 to 10 years (15%).

Gender	Survey Sample	Registrant Population
Female	34%	36%
Male	59%	64%
Two-spirit	<1%	-
Another gender not listed	<1%	-
Prefer not to answer	7%	<1%

Do you identify as: (survey sample n=499; registrant population n=1,525)

Years in Practice	Survey Sample
5 years or less	18%
6 - 10 years	15%
11 - 20 years	21%
21 years or more	44%
Prefer not to answer	2%

How many years have you been in practice? (n=499)

The background of the slide is a light blue-tinted photograph of a young child with braided hair sitting on a white surface, possibly a table, with an adult's hands visible near the child. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid.

Results

Please note that table percentages may not total 100% due to rounding errors, with a possible deviation of $\pm 1\%$.

Application of Radiography (X-Ray) policy

Over the past two years, seven out of every ten respondents had reviewed the College's Radiography (X-Ray) Policy.

When it comes to the use of X-rays in their practice, most chiropractors issue an authorization for another person to apply X-rays (42%). Only 17% apply X-rays using equipment they own.

Nearly a quarter of respondents do not utilize X-rays in their practice (24%) and, as such, were not asked any additional survey questions.

Incidence of Having Reviewed CCBC's Radiology Policy	Frequency	Percent
Yes	347	70%
No	85	17%
Do not recall/unsure	66	13%

In past two years, have you reviewed the CCBC's Radiography (X-Ray) Policy? ([Policy Professional Conduct Handbook – Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging](#))? (n = 498)

Use of X-Ray in Practice	Frequency	Percent
Apply X-rays utilizing equipment I own	84*	17%
Apply X-rays utilizing equipment available to me	25	5%
Issue an authorization or instruction for another person (for example, private provider or physician) to apply X-rays	288	42%
I do not utilize X-rays in my practice	118	24%

How do you utilize X-rays in your practice? Do you: (select all that apply): (n = 496)

*As of March 12, 111 registrants have certificates of ownership of X-ray machines

Part 15

Diagnostic Imaging

15.1

Respondents who utilize X-rays in their practice were then asked to indicate their level of performance on items detailed within CCBC’s Radiography (X-Ray) policy.

Nearly all chiropractors indicate that they perform this way without fail (87%) or most of the time (10%).

15.1	Frequency	Percent	
I rarely perform this way	1	<1%	
I sometimes perform this way	5	1%	
I perform this way about half of the time	3	1%	
I perform this way most of the time	39	10%	97%*
I perform this way without fail	326	87%	

Prior to deciding to apply X-rays, do you review the patient's history or complete a physical examination to identify serious pathology or identify clinical reasons to suspect a serious pathology (n = 374)

* The percentages for the top two categories, 'perform this way most of the time' and 'without fail,' have been combined for illustrative purposes.

15.3a

When it comes to performance on documenting the clinical indication for X-rays in the patient's clinical record, nearly three-quarters (72%) perform this way without fail.

Twenty two percent indicated performing this way most of the time.

15.3a	Frequency	Percent	
I rarely perform this way	8	2%	
I sometimes perform this way	10	3%	
I perform this way about half of the time	7	2%	
I perform this way most of the time	81	22%	<i>94%</i>
I perform this way without fail	266	72%	

Do you document the clinical indication for X-rays in the patient's clinical record? (n=372)

15.4a

Eighteen percent of survey respondents rarely create a report describing what was imaged and the findings from that imaging.

However, over half (55%) perform this way without fail.

15.4a	Frequency	Percent	
I rarely perform this way	68	18%	
I sometimes perform this way	26	7%	
I perform this way about half of the time	14	4%	
I perform this way most of the time	59	16%	71%
I perform this way without fail	204	55%	

Do you create a report describing what was imaged and the findings from that imaging (n=371)

15.4c

When it comes to advising the patients of the findings from the imaging, 87% perform this way without fail. An additional 11% perform this way most of the time.

15.4c	Frequency	Percent	
I rarely perform this way	2	<1%	
I sometimes perform this way	1	<1%	
I perform this way about half of the time	3	1%	
I perform this way most of the time	41	11%	<i>98%</i>
I perform this way without fail	323	87%	

Do you advise the patient of the findings from the imaging? (n=370)

Routine or Repeat X-rays

15.2

As per 15.2 of the Radiography X-Ray Policy, routine or repeat X-rays are not clinically justified as a regular protocol during the evaluation and diagnosis of patients. However, of those chiropractors who utilize X-Rays in their practice, 15% indicated applying routine or repeat X-rays to a patient in the last 12 months.

Chiropractors who used routine or repeat X-rays (n=55) were asked how often they perform them. The most frequent response was performing this way sometimes (30%), followed by most of the time (24%) or without fail (20%).

Application of routine or repeat X-rays	Frequency	Percent
Yes	55	15%
No	315	85%

In the past 12 months, have you applied routine or repeat X-rays to a patient? (n=370)

	Frequency	Percent	
I rarely perform this way	7	13%	
I sometimes perform this way	16	30%	
I perform this way about half of the time	7	13%	
I perform this way most of the time	13	24%	44%
I perform this way without fail	11	20%	

How often do you use routine or repeat X-rays as a regular protocol during the evaluation and diagnosis of repeat X-rays to a patient? (n=54)

Rationale for Applying Routine or Repeat X-Rays

Those who utilize repeat or routine X-rays were asked to describe their rationale for applying them.

Respondents had varying opinions on the use of routine and repeat X-rays in chiropractic care. While some practitioners argue for the necessity of X-rays for safety protocols, biomechanical analysis, and patient outcomes, others emphasize concerns about overutilization, radiation exposure, and the definition of serious pathology.

There's disagreement over the necessity and frequency of X-rays, with some chiropractors advocating for patient-centered decision-making based on clinical findings, while others point to the need for standardization and guidelines within the profession.

The disagreement extends to regulatory bodies and professional organizations, reflecting broader tensions between safety, patient autonomy, and professional practice standards in chiropractic care.

Four themes or rationales emerged in the open text comments. Sample comments are provided along with the key themes.

1. Patient Safety and Care

- “X-ray imaging is crucial for ensuring patient safety during chiropractic adjustments. Without proper imaging, there is a risk of exacerbating underlying conditions or causing harm.”
- “I prioritize the well-being of my patients by using X-rays to detect serious pathologies and structural abnormalities that may not be evident through history or physical examination alone.”
- “Repeat X-rays are essential for monitoring patient progress and evaluating the effectiveness of treatment interventions. They enable adjustments to care plans to ensure optimal outcomes for patients.”



Rationale for Applying Routine or Repeat X-Rays

2. Professional Autonomy and Scope of Practice

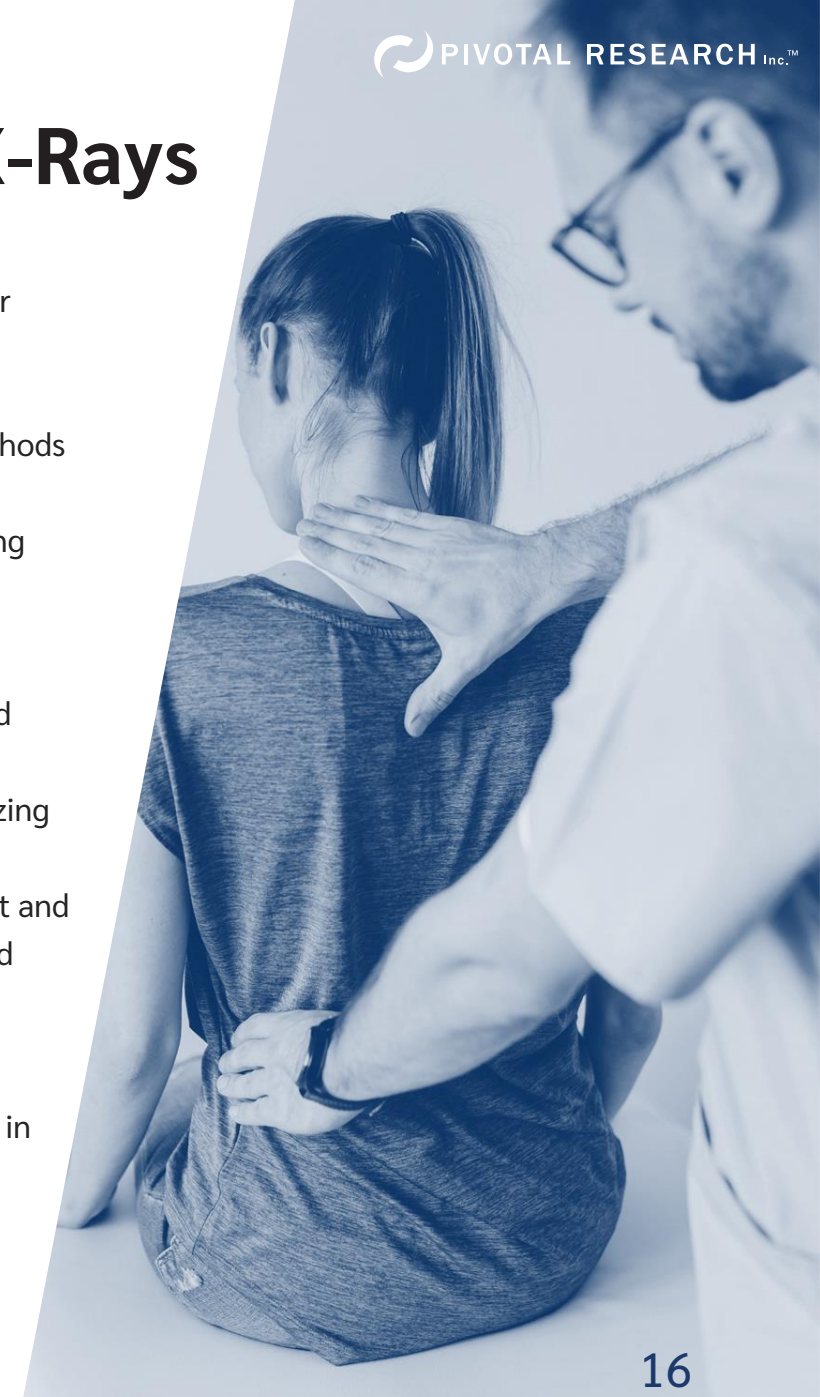
- “Chiropractors should have the autonomy to determine when X-rays are clinically indicated based on their training, experience, and patient needs. It is essential not to limit the scope of chiropractic practice by imposing rigid guidelines.”
- “The diversity of chiropractic techniques and approaches warrants flexibility in X-ray usage. Different methods may require varying levels of imaging to provide personalized and effective care for patients.”
- “Regulatory bodies should recognize the expertise of chiropractors and trust their judgment in determining the necessity of X-rays based on individual patient assessments and clinical findings.”

3. Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent

- “Informed consent is paramount in chiropractic care, especially concerning X-ray imaging. Patients should fully understand the risks, benefits, and alternatives before undergoing any radiographic procedures.”
- “Chiropractors have an ethical obligation to prioritize patient well-being and safety. This includes minimizing radiation exposure while maximizing diagnostic accuracy through judicious use of X-rays.”
- “Clear communication and transparency regarding the reasons for X-ray imaging are crucial to foster trust and collaboration between chiropractors and their patients. Patients should feel empowered to make informed decisions about their healthcare.”

4. Regulatory Oversight and Professional Standards

- “Regulatory bodies should provide clear guidelines and standards regarding the appropriate use of X-rays in chiropractic practice. Consistent guidelines can help ensure patient safety and maintain professional accountability.”
- “There is a need for greater clarity and specificity in defining terms such as 'routine' and 'repeat' X-rays to avoid confusion and ensure adherence to professional standards.”





Appendix A: Survey instrument



CCBC Radiography Policy Evaluation Registrant Survey

Introduction

You may recall that in February 2021, the College Board approved [amendments](#) to the Professional Conduct Handbook (PCH) Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging and Appendix L Imaging Requests.

As part of the College's standardized [policy process](#), we ask for your participation in an online survey about your use of the PCH Part 15 and Appendix L. The survey will serve as a first step in the process of evaluating whether policy outcomes are being achieved. All registrants of the College of Chiropractors of BC are being invited to provide their valuable input.

The survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete and will be open until February 1, 2024 at 11:59 pm PST.

Your responses to this survey are kept confidential by Pivotal Research and will not be reported or shared at the individual level with the College. All reporting will be in aggregate, and the College will not be advised of your participation. All survey data will be destroyed upon completion of the policy evaluation.

The collection of personal information in the survey is permitted under sections 26(c) and (e) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For technical support with the survey or if you have questions about how this information is being collected, used, or protected, please contact feedback@pivotalresearch.ca

Demographics

To better understand the diversity of perspectives and experiences being shared, we are asking a few questions about your identity and career. You may select prefer not to answer to any of the following questions.

1. What is your current registration type? (Choose one):

- Full
- Non-practicing
- Student
- Temporary
- Prefer not to [answer](#)

2. How many years have you been in practice? (Choose one):

- 5 years or less
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21 years or more
- Prefer not to answer

3. Where in BC do you primarily practice? (Choose one):

- Vancouver Coastal
- Vancouver Island
- Thompson Okanagan
- Cariboo Chilcotin
- Rockies Kootenays
- Northern
- Prefer not to [answer](#)

4. Do you identify as: (Choose one):

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Two-spirit
- Another gender not listed [above](#)
- Prefer not to [answer](#)

Application of Radiography (X-ray) Policy

The following questions ask about how you apply the X-ray policy in your practice.

5. In past two years, have you reviewed the CCBC's Radiography (X-Ray) Policy? ([Policy Professional Conduct Handbook – Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging](#))?

- Yes
- No
- Do not recall/[unsure](#)

6. How do you utilize X-rays in your practice? Do you: (select all that apply):

- Apply X-rays utilizing equipment I [own](#)
- Apply X-rays utilizing equipment available to [me](#)
- Issue an authorization or instruction for another person (for example, private provider or physician) to apply [X-rays](#)
- I do not utilize X-rays in my practice [[exclusive - if selected exit survey](#)]

[Exit Script: We are sorry. You do not meet the criteria to complete this survey. We are currently looking for the perspectives of those who currently utilize x-rays in their practice. Thank you for your time.]

7. Prior to deciding to apply X-rays, do you review the patient's history or complete a physical examination to identify serious pathology or identify clinical reasons to suspect a serious pathology?

I rarely perform this way	I sometimes perform this way	I perform this way about half of the time	I perform this way most of the time	I perform this way without fail
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Sliding scale will allow for a 5-point rating

8. Do you document the clinical indication for X-rays in the patient's clinical record?

I rarely perform this way	I sometimes perform this way	I perform this way about half of the time	I perform this way most of the time	I perform this way without fail
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9. Do you create a report describing what was imaged and the findings from that imaging?

I rarely perform this way	I sometimes perform this way	I perform this way about half of the time	I perform this way most of the time	I perform this way without fail
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10. Do you advise the patient of the findings from the imaging?

I rarely perform this way	I sometimes perform this way	I perform this way about half of the time	I perform this way most of the time	I perform this way without fail
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11. In the past 12 months, have you applied routine or repeat X-rays to a patient?

- Yes [Go to 12]
 No [Skip to end]

12. [Show if yes to Q11] Using the scale below, how often do you use routine or repeat X-rays as a regular protocol during the evaluation and diagnosis of repeat X-rays to a patient?

I rarely perform this way	I sometimes perform this way	I perform this way about half of the time	I perform this way most of the time	I perform this way without fail
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13. [Show if yes to Q11] Briefly describe your rationale for applying routine or repeat X-rays (Approximately 100 words or less):

Thank you for providing your valuable feedback.



Appendix B: Communications



Survey Communications

[CCBC to send:](#)

Communication 1: Advanced Communication (week of Dec 4th)

Subject: Coming Soon: Registrant Survey to Inform CCBC Radiography (X-ray) Policy Evaluation

Our College is committed to developing, implementing and evaluating evidence-informed policies in a culture of continuous improvement.

You may recall that in February, 2021, the College Board approved [amendments](#) to the Professional Conduct Handbook (PCH) Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging and Appendix L Imaging Requests.

As part of the College's standardized [policy process](#), we are asking for your participation in an online survey about your use of the PCH Part 15 and Appendix L. The survey will serve as a first step in the process of evaluating whether policy outcomes are being achieved.

The survey will take **5-10 minutes** to complete and will provide the College with important information on your self-reported performance on :

- Decision making around applying X-rays;
- Documenting clinical indications for X-rays in the patient's clinical record;
- Creating a report describing what was imaged and the findings from the imaging; and
- Advising the patient of the findings from the imaging.

In addition to these performance areas outlined in the PCH Part 15 and Appendix L, you will be asked whether you use routine or repeat X-rays as a regular protocol during the evaluation and diagnosis of patients and you will have the opportunity to describe your rationale for applying routine or repeat X-rays.

Pivotal Research Inc., an independent research firm, has been commissioned to conduct this work. Your responses to this survey are kept confidential by Pivotal Research and will not be reported or shared at the individual level with the College. All reporting will be in aggregate, and we will not be advised of your participation.

We will provide a detailed summary of the results to the Board following receipt of the results from Pivotal; the survey results will form part of the overall policy review, which will be completed through 2024.

You will receive an email from the College on **January 11th** with a secure link to complete the survey online.

For technical support with the survey or if you have questions about how this information is being collected, used, or protected, please contact Jessica DeVries, Director of Program Development, at feedback@pivotalresearch.ca or toll-free at 1-877-421-1199.

If you have further questions about the evaluation of PCH Part 15 and Appendix L, please contact consultation@chirobc.com.

(e-Signature of Registrar)

Communication 2: Survey Communication (Jan 4th)

From: [CCBC](#)

RE: Survey Participation Request: Registrant Survey to Inform CCBC Radiography (X-ray) Policy Evaluation

You may recall receiving an email in December about an online survey that seeks your participation in an online survey about how you apply Professional Conduct Handbook (PCH) Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging and Appendix L Imaging Requests in your practice. As part of the review of PCH Part 15 and Appendix L, registrant feedback is an initial step in the evaluation process.

The survey takes **5-10 minutes** and is open from **January 11, 2024 to February 1, 2024 at 11:59pm PST**.

[Click here to access the survey.](#)

Pivotal Research Inc., an independent research firm, has been commissioned to conduct this work. Your responses to this survey are kept confidential by Pivotal Research and will not be reported or shared at the individual level with the College. All reporting will be in aggregate, and we will not be advised of your participation.

Your feedback will provide the College with important information to evaluate the policy and determine if the desired policy outcomes are being achieved.

For technical support with the survey or if you have questions about how this information is being collected, used, or protected, please contact Jessica DeVries, Director of Program Development, at feedback@pivotalresearch.ca or toll-free at 1-877-421-1199.

If you have further questions about the Radiography Policy evaluation, please contact consultation@chirobc.com.

Thank you,

Pivotal Research Inc.
[full contact details]

[unsubscribe link]

Communication 3: Survey Reminder (TBD – tentative Jan 18th)

From: [CCBC](#)

RE: Reminder - Registrant Survey to Inform CCBC Radiography (X-ray) Policy Evaluation

This email is a friendly reminder that your feedback is requested about your understanding of Professional Conduct Handbook Part 15 Diagnostic Imaging and Appendix L Imaging Requests.

Your feedback will provide the College with important information to evaluate the policy and determine if the desired policy outcomes are being achieved.

[Click here to access the survey.](#)

The survey takes **5-10 minutes** and is open from **January 11, 2024 to February 1, 2024 at 11:59pm PST.**

Pivotal Research Inc., an independent research firm, has been commissioned to conduct this work. Your responses to this survey are kept confidential by Pivotal Research and will not be reported or shared at the individual level with the College. All reporting will be in aggregate, and we will not be advised of your participation.

For technical support with the survey or if you have questions about how this information is being collected, used, or protected, please contact Jessica DeVries, Director of Program Development, at feedback@pivotalresearch.ca or toll-free at 1-877-421-1199.

If you have further questions about the Radiography Policy evaluation, please contact consultation@chirobc.com.

Thank you,

Pivotal Research Inc.
[full contact details]

[unsubscribe link]



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Pivotal Research respectfully acknowledges that our office is headquartered on the traditional and ancestral land of the Nêhiyawak, Anishinaabe, Niitsitapi, Métis, Dene and Iyāhé Nakoda in Treaty 6 Territory and Métis Region 4.