



Changing Scope of Practice to Include Caesarean Section  
Minimum Training Guidelines for Non-Obstetricians

**Background**

Rural and remote communities in Ontario sometimes struggle with coverage for physicians who are able to perform Caesarean sections for their obstetric patients. Many of these communities also have family doctors or general practitioners who are very experienced in obstetrics, including assisting in the performance of Caesarean sections. Additionally many of these communities have general surgeons who may not have been trained in this technique, but who have many transferrable skills that could relatively easily allow the addition of this procedure to their scope of practice with some additional training.

This document outlines the minimum training expectations for Family Physicians and General Surgeons wishing to add caesarean sections to their practice, and will give potential participants and hospitals an understanding of the baseline expectations of this process.

**Common Expectations of the Program for Family Doctors and General Surgeons**

1. Training should be arranged at a high volume centre.
2. Participants are expected to attend the training facility for a period of 1 – 3 weeks.
3. Participants are expected to participate as part of the team in order to gain exposure to many Caesarean sections during their stay. Participants are also expected to be involved in the decision-making processes that go into deciding to perform the procedure, as well as participate in the management of post-operative complications.
4. Prior to participating in the program, participants must have some experience in performing Caesarean sections under high supervision in their own community (details below).

5. Prior to participating in the program, participants are expected to have reviewed a standard text book in Obstetrics, such as Williams Obstetrics, with a focus on reviewing:
  1. Indications
  2. Contraindications
  3. Operative technique
  4. Intra-operative and post-operative complications
6. The number of procedures required (see below) is set at a minimum. Some physicians and surgeons may require more experience than the minimum number in order to be able to be approved to work independently.
7. All physicians must receive a report on their performance and the report must be sent to the CPSO for consideration. *Participants MUST understand that the completion of the minimum number of sections does not guarantee competence to perform the procedure independently.* That determination will be made by the obstetrical team at the training facility, based on objective observation of knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding the procedure.
8. The Quality Assurance Committee of the CPSO will review experience and reports to determine if any further action is required (such as a CPSO-assessment of practice) or to approve the physician's change of scope of practice. For more information about the Changing Scope of Practice policy and requirements, please visit: <http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies-Publications/Policy/Changing-Scope-of-Practice>
9. Physicians are responsible for any costs associated with the program.

#### **Minimum Expectations for Family Doctors and General Practitioners**

1. Minimum of 5 years in family practice with an active obstetrical practice during the past 5 years\*.
2. Extensive experience in assisting in caesarean section during the last 5 years of practice.
3. Successful completion of the ALARM course through the SOGC.

4. Minimum performance of 15 Caesarean sections as primary surgeon under HIGH supervision in home community before attending the training facility. This is to be accompanied by a report from the supervising surgeon(s) indicating that the physician has demonstrated adequate basic skills in performing the technique.
5. Minimum TOTAL number of sections is set at 50 performed as primary surgeon.

### **Minimum Expectations for General Surgeons**

Given that general surgeons have many transferrable surgical skills, the minimum number of sections required is generally less than the needs of a family doctor. The following are minimum expectations, in addition to the Common expectations outlined above:

1. Minimum of 5 Caesarean sections performed under high supervision in home community PRIOR to attending the training facility. This is to be accompanied by a report from the supervising surgeon(s) indicating that the physician has demonstrated adequate basic skills in performing the technique.
2. Minimum TOTAL number of sections is set at 25 performed as primary surgeon.

Finalized: July 9, 2014

Revised: September 8, 2017

\*While difficult to set a minimum number of deliveries, in general a physician should be performing at least 30 – 50 deliveries per year.