

**2010 Annual General Meeting**  
**Complaints Committee Report for 2009**

The Complaints Committee of the Psychological Association of Manitoba (PAM) is composed of PAM members Drs. Daryl Gill, Jule Henderson, Bill Leonhart, Bruce Tefft, and I as Chair, and public representatives Neil Arnason, and Herbert Thompson. Longstanding member Dr. Mary-Jane Robinson left the Committee this year. We have missed her spirited contributions to our deliberations. This year marked the appointment to the Committee of the first Psychological Associate licensed for Independent Practice under the new By-law of 2006. We welcome Sandra Hayhow to the Committee in this capacity. Public member Chris Summerville resigned from the Committee during 2009 due to multiple competing demands. His strong consumer focused perspective will be missed. Blair Graham, Q.C., and Rob Olsen of Thompson Dorfman Sweatman LLP have continued to serve as the Committee's legal counsel with their characteristic generosity and geniality. Lorna Leader remains as the Committee's invaluable assistant and support.

The Complaints Committee met 9 times in 2009, reviewing 16 complaints over this period. Of the sixteen complaints reviewed in 2009, five complaints were closed. All five were dismissed, including one which was formally investigated, with the appointment of an Investigator. Two of the five had been received in 2008, and three in 2009.

<b>Complaint Summary for 2009</b>				
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Carried Forward (from previous year)	7	8	15	12
New Complaints	9	6	6	12
<b>Total Reviewed</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>
Outcome of Committee Review:				
Closed	5	7	13	9
Carried Forward (to next year)	11	7	8	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>

Of the eleven complaints carried into 2010, two dated from 2006, dealing with related matters involving one member, and remain open pending the successful completion of a period of supervision. Five complaints were received late in the year and were not discussed by the Committee during 2009. The remaining four complaints (two from 2008 and two from 2009) are at various stages of deliberation and decision.

Areas of forensic practice, including custody/access and disability/compensation assessments, continue to be contentious matters and common practice areas in which complaints are received. Large volumes of written material are often submitted in support of these complaints.

The committee has continued to focus on efficient resolution of complaints and in ensuring their timely resolution without jeopardizing thoroughness and fairness. Analysis of data about complaints received from 2005 to 2008 shows that the average time from initial review by the Committee to decision is 3.9 months for complaints which are dismissed. The time for decision and closure on other dispositions is considerably longer, averaging 13.4 months, with censure and agreement outcomes taking the most time, often as a result of negotiation of outcomes and remedial outcomes such as supervision agreements. The time from the date of the complaint receipt to first review by the Committee averages 5.4 months. This time is accounted for, in part, by the legislative and practical requirements for procedural fairness in allowing for adequate response times by respondent members and complainants. The Committee is noticing a trend towards complaints which require requests for more detail and information from complainants before the Committee can review them, and delays on the part of both complainants and respondent members in replying to requests for information or in responding in a timely manner.

As Chair, I have maintained ongoing contact with PAM Executive Council throughout the year to discuss broad matters of mutual interest, which have included: procedural matters related to the Complaint Appeal Process; complaint issues arising from the April 2009 mid-term meeting of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards, which I attended on PAM's behalf; the new Regulated Health Professions Act and the implication for the complaints process; and current practices related to cost recovery and publication of complaint findings. I wish to thank Mr. Blair Graham for his ongoing and generous contributions of time and expertise in such discussions with Council.

Committee member Dr. Bill Leonhart has agreed to represent the Complaints Committee on an Ad Hoc committee which is developing a Code of Conduct handbook. The Committee welcomes this opportunity for input in providing and clarifying guidelines in a variety of practice areas.

The Committee is assisted in its work by the members who act as investigators, consultants and supervisors. Without them, we could not carry out our responsibilities. On behalf of the Committee, I thank Drs. Leslie Graff, Jay Brolund, and Jane Bow for their generous assistance to the Committee over the last year.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaye Miles, Ph.D., C. Psych.  
Chair, Complaints Committee