

SUMMARY

Dr. Sanjay Rastogi (CPSO# 65156)

1. Disposition

On August 15, 2017, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (the Committee) required Dr. Rastogi (Family Medicine) to appear before a panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to his inappropriate prescribing and his inadequate documentation. The Committee also accepted an undertaking from Dr. Rastogi.

2. Introduction

The College received information raising concerns that Dr. Rastogi had been prescribing very high dosages of opioids to a patient ("Patient X"), and subsequently, the Committee approved the Registrar's appointment of investigators to conduct a broad review of Dr. Rastogi's practice.

3. Committee Process

As part of this investigation, the Registrar appointed a Medical Inspector (MI) to review a number of Dr. Rastogi's charts and submit a report to the Committee.

A General Panel of the Committee, consisting of both public and physician members, met in order to review the relevant records and documents related to the investigation. The Committee always has before it applicable legislation and regulations, along with policies that the College has developed, which reflect the College's professional expectations for physicians practising in Ontario. Current versions of these documents are available on the College's website at www.cpso.on.ca, under the heading "Policies & Publications."

4. Committee's Analysis

The Committee was concerned about Dr. Rastogi's opioid prescribing to Patient X, including the dosages and quantities prescribed, and the lack of any documented rationale for the prescriptions or any documentation about side effects or the effectiveness of the medication. Also of concern was Dr. Rastogi's failure to use formal assessment tools until he engaged in continuing education (when he began to use the Brief Pain Inventory, but only sporadically), and his provision of early refills without apparent consideration of possible misuse or diversion.

The Committee noted that the MI found Dr. Rastogi's care deficient in other cases reviewed. Specifically, Dr. Rastogi prescribed high dosages of opioids to patients, even in cases of opioid naivety, thereby putting his patients at risk of respiratory depression, and also prescribed patients Adderall XR (which is an extended release stimulant) in excessively high dosages. In one case, Dr. Rastogi prescribed opioids to a patient taking Methadone, risking an overdose; and in another case, he prescribed opioids to a patient who had a negative urine drug screen without considering the possibility that this patient was misusing/diverting their medication. Moreover, Dr. Rastogi tapered dosages too aggressively when taking his patients off of opioids. The MI also noted that Dr. Rastogi often failed to chart a rationale for medications prescribed, or document the medication dosages or objective findings such as side effects or effectiveness. Dr. Rastogi also authorized early refills of opioids for patients without appropriate scrutiny and prescribed narcotics to some patients whom he knew were abusing their medications. Moreover, Dr. Rastogi did not use approved screening tools when prescribing patients opioids.

The Committee carefully reviewed Dr. Rastogi's explanations for his care and documentation in the cases considered; however, it did not find his rationale, as he described, to be acceptable. The Committee also noted, with significant concern, that in the case of one patient, Dr. Rastogi admitted that he issued a prescription simply because he "wanted to make the patient happy".

While Dr. Rastogi has no prior College complaints and has engaged in continuing education with a specific focus on narcotics prescribing, the MI identified continuing deficiencies in his practice.

To address the Committee's concerns, Dr. Rastogi entered into an undertaking, in which he agreed to engage a clinical supervisor, and to complete professional education, after which he would undergo a reassessment of his practice by a College approved assessor. An undertaking is a voluntary, binding promise, which a physician makes to the College, agreeing to do (or not do) certain things, to address the Committee's concerns and protect the public. The College monitors a physician's compliance with his/her undertaking, and requires proof of successful completion. Breaches of an undertaking may result in further action being taken by the College.

The Committee accepted Dr. Rastogi's undertaking, but regarded it as only a partial resolution to this matter in light of the significant deficiencies the MI identified in Dr. Rastogi's practice, which the Committee concurred exposed Dr. Rastogi's patients to a risk of harm and/or injury. The Committee thus also required him to attend the College to be cautioned, as set out above.