

SUMMARY

DR. WILLIAM BLAKE BOWLER (CPSO# 50188)

1. Disposition

On January 18, 2018, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (the Committee) required general practitioner Dr. Bowler to appear before a panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to his failure to transfer records in a timely manner upon patients' request and with respect to inappropriate, multiple OHIP billings for any adult patient who was accompanying children to appointments.

2. Introduction

A patient complained to the College that Dr. Bowler failed to transfer her and her family's records to their new family physician despite repeated requests. The patient also had concerns about Dr. Bowler's OHIP billing practices, noting that billed OHIP for her or her husband whenever they accompanied their children to an appointment.

Dr. Bowler eventually provided the patient and her husband's charts to the College, but only after the College also made repeated requests. The College requested on several occasions that Dr. Bowler provide his records for the patient's two children. Dr. Bowler failed to respond to the College's request.

3. Committee Process

A Family Practice Panel of the Committee, consisting of public and physician members, met to review the relevant records and documents related to the complaint. 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.cpsso.on.ca, under the heading "Policies & Publications."

4. Committee's Analysis

The Committee was dismayed by Dr. Bowler's continued failure to respond in a timely fashion to reasonable patient requests for a transfer of records and to cooperate with the College by providing requested information.

The Committee found Dr. Bowler's billing practices, with respect to the patient or her husband when they accompanied their children to appointments, to be unacceptable and unethical. The Committee noted that conversation with parents of minor patients are expected as part of the care of children and are an included element of the payment for pediatric care. Further, separate billing for adult mental health requires adequate documentation that there has been a significant, different assessment and care provided. Dr. Bowler's charts do not meet that standard.

In ordinary circumstances, the Committee would consider a broader review of Dr. Bowler's billing practices. Given that at present Dr. Bowler is not practising, this was not possible. Nevertheless, the Committee remained troubled by Dr. Bowler's billing practices with respect to the patient and her family, as well as Dr. Bowler's failure to cooperate with the College. The Committee also noted Dr. Bowler's history of failing to cooperate with the College's requests, which in its view demonstrated an ungovernable attitude.

For these reasons the Committee cautioned Dr. Bowler and also referred this matter to the General Manager of OHIP with respect to billing concerns.