

ONTARIO PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS DISCIPLINE TRIBUNAL

Citation: *College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario v. Polemidiotis*, 2025 ONPSDT 19

Date: June 23, 2025

Tribunal File No.: 21-017

BETWEEN:

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

College

- and -

George John Polemidiotis

Registrants

FINDING AND PENALTY REASONS

Heard: June 3, 2025, by videoconference

Panel:

Raj Anand (panel chair)

Jose Cordeiro (public)

Markus de Domenico (public)

Joanne Nicholson (physician)

Rupa Patel (physician)

Appearances:

Elisabeth Widner, for the College

Ian MacLeod, for the registrant

RESTRICTION ON PUBLICATION

Pursuant to Rule 2.2.2 of the OPSDT Rules of Procedure and ss. 45–47 of the Health Professions Procedural Code, no one shall publish or broadcast the names of patients or any information that could identify patients or disclose patients' personal health information or health records referred to at a hearing or in any documents filed with the Tribunal. There may be significant fines for breaching this restriction.

Introduction

[1] The registrant, Dr. George John Polemidiotis, carried on an independent medical practice in Ontario following his registration by the College in 1996.

[2] Dr. Polemidiotis sexually assaulted three patients, TC, AF and Patient A, on multiple occasions between 2012 and 2017. In 2023, he was found guilty under the *Criminal Code*, RSC 1985 c. C-46 and sentenced to three-and-a-half years of incarceration. In 2024, the Court of Appeal upheld the findings of the trial judge and dismissed the registrant's appeal.

[3] In 2019, the registrant made a remark of a sexual nature to Patient B.

[4] Based on the judicial findings in the criminal case, and a statement of uncontested facts (SUF) with respect to Patients A and B, the Tribunal accepted the uncontested position of the College that Dr. Polemidiotis engaged in professional misconduct on several grounds:

- sexual abuse of Patients A and B;
- finding of guilt of an offence relevant to his suitability to practise - sexual assault - with respect to three patients;
- disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional conduct with respect to all four patients; and
- conduct unbecoming a physician with respect to all four patients.

[5] At the hearing, the Tribunal imposed the mandatory penalty of a reprimand, which we delivered, and the revocation of Dr. Polemidiotis' certificate of registration.

[6] These are our reasons.

Professional misconduct

The evidence

[7] The College relied on the following uncontested evidence of Dr. Polemidiotis' sexual misconduct in relation to the four patients: TC, AF, Patient A and Patient B.

[8] In its reasons (*R. v. Polemidiotis*, 2024 ONCA 905, at paras 3-6), referring to Dr. Polemidiotis as “the appellant,” the Court of Appeal summarized the evidence of the registrant’s patients TC and AF:

[3] T.C. was first referred to the appellant in July 2012. She testified to four incidents of sexual assault between September 29, 2016 and September 13, 2017. Each incident occurred in an examination room with the door locked.

[4] The first incident occurred in September 2016. The appellant locked the door to an examination room and positioned T.C. in front of the mirror behind the door. He approached her from behind, put his arms under her arms, lifted her shirt, pulled down her bra, and grabbed her breasts. On the second occasion, in October 2016, T.C. re-attended the clinic attempting to see another doctor, but was directed to see the appellant again. The appellant again stood T.C. in front of the mirror and grabbed her breasts. He also put his tongue in her ear. In the third incident, in January 2017, the appellant unzipped his pants, held T.C.’s hand, and put his erect penis in her hand. In the fourth incident, in September 2017, T.C. was in the examination room sitting on the examination table. The appellant entered, unzipped his pants, held her wrist, and put his erect penis in her hand. He then tried to put his penis in her vagina, but T.C. screamed and left the examination room. T.C. testified that during each incident the appellant made explicit sexual comments as he touched her, which she detailed in her evidence.

....

[5] The appellant had been A.F.’s doctor since 2009. A.F. testified to two incidents of sexual assault between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014.

[6] A.F. testified that the appellant began complimenting her about her looks about one month before the first sexual incident, which occurred in 2012 or 2013. At the end of a medical visit, the appellant held A.F., told her he liked her, and kissed her on the mouth. A.F. struggled to recall how long the kiss lasted, but she testified that he asked to kiss her, and she agreed. A.F. testified that on another occasion in the same time period, the appellant stood behind her, held her breasts over her clothing, and said he was feeling good and happy. A.F. testified that she could feel his erection.

[9] The testimony of TC and AF was accepted by the trial judge, and formed the underlying basis of Dr. Polemidiotis’ conviction on two counts of sexual assault.

[10] The trial judge also accepted the evidence of Patient A (referred to in the criminal law proceedings as YC). She was also the registrant's employee at all relevant times. Patient A was a complainant in the criminal charges, and her evidence formed the underlying basis of Dr. Polemidiotis' conviction on the third count of sexual assault.

[11] In the Tribunal proceeding, the College relied on the SUF regarding Patient A to support its allegation of sexual abuse. The uncontested evidence in the SUF, which was similar in substance to the trial judge's findings that were upheld by the Court of Appeal, was as follows:

Beginning in approximately 2017, Patient A was the manager at one of the clinics and worked often with Dr. Polemidiotis. While at first, Dr. Polemidiotis behaved in a friendly manner towards Patient A, over time, his behaviour became more intrusive and sexual.

Dr. Polemidiotis would approach Patient A from behind, hug her and touch her breasts. He would also press himself into Patient A saying he had an erection. On occasion, Patient A could feel his erection. Patient A tried to push him away and complained to him about his behaviour. Dr. Polemidiotis would promise to change but nonetheless persisted in his conduct.

Once, he pulled down his pants to show Patient A his erection under his boxer shorts. He also tried to put Patient A's hand on his erect penis, succeeding once.

Patient A was upset and angry about Dr. Polemidiotis' conduct.

At the end of October 2019, Patient A decided to resign after one last interaction with Dr. Polemidiotis at the clinic. On that day, Dr. Polemidiotis pulled her aside and tried to hug and kiss her. She pushed him away and subsequently resigned.

[12] With respect to Patient B, the uncontested evidence was the following:

During an office visit in June 2019, while Patient B was being assessed by Dr. Polemidiotis for a presumed spider bite, Dr. Polemidiotis made a remark of a sexual nature in that he asked Patient B if she wanted him to sign her vagina with the pen he was using to circle the spider bite area on Patient B's thigh.

Findings

[13] The College submitted, and we accept, that Dr. Polemidiotis engaged in sexual abuse of Patients A and B.

[14] In the case of Patient A, the registrant's egregious and persistent verbal and physical conduct included "physical sexual relations," "touching of a sexual nature," and "behaviour or remarks" by Dr. Polemidiotis toward her, all of which fall within the definition of "sexual abuse" in s. 1(3) and constitute professional misconduct under s. 51(1)(b.1) of the Health Professions Procedural Code (Code), Schedule 2 to the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, SO 1991, c. 18.

[15] The registrant made a remark of a sexual nature to Patient B, which constitutes sexual abuse under s. 1(3)(c) of the Code.

[16] Dr. Polemidiotis' conviction on three counts of sexual assault constitutes a guilty finding of an offence that is relevant to his suitability to practise, and he therefore engaged in professional misconduct under s. 51(1)(a) of the Code.

[17] The registrant's actions that led to the criminal charges – sexual assault of three patients – and the sexual abuse of Patients A and B, all represent conduct unbecoming a physician, under para. 1(1)34 of O. Reg. 856/93 as well as "acts or omissions relevant to the practice of medicine that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional" under para. 1(1)33 of the same regulation and therefore justify a finding of professional misconduct on these grounds as well.

Penalty and costs

[18] Under the Code and the relevant regulations, the mandatory penalty in this case includes the delivery of a reprimand by the panel, and the revocation of Dr. Polemidiotis' certificate of registration.

[19] Under s. 51(5)3(vi) of the Code, a reprimand is mandatory in cases of sexual abuse, and revocation is mandatory where the sexual abuse includes touching of a sexual nature of the patient's breasts. Both of these descriptions apply to the acts that the registrant committed against Patient A.

[20] The registrant's three sexual assault convictions also lead to a mandatory reprimand and revocation. Under s. 51(5.2)(a) of the Code, these penalties are mandatory because Dr. Polemidiotis was convicted of sexual assault under s. 271 of the *Criminal Code*, an offence that is prescribed under O. Reg. 262/18, and is relevant to his suitability to practise.

[21] The College informed the panel that Patients A and B had declined to submit victim impact statements. However, the trial judge, in delivering his sentencing decision, pointed to the victim impact statements that were provided by all three sexual assault victims. In their own words, they recounted the devastation that Dr. Polemidiotis caused. The impacts on them included emotional, professional and financial suffering; anger, rage, anxiety, depression, nightmares, loss of work, distance from friends and family, and insecurity that left them feeling unsafe in their own neighbourhoods.

[22] The Legislature's direction to reprimand the registrant and revoke his right to practice reflects the egregious nature of sexual assault and sexual abuse perpetrated by a physician on patients, and in this case, on an employee. As we stated at the hearing in delivering the reprimand directly to Dr. Polemidiotis, "these individuals came to your office expecting you to provide professional medical care in a safe environment. Instead, you exploited these medical encounters to pursue your own selfish needs... Your lack of professional integrity, the criminal convictions made against you, and the sexual abuse of patients undermine the trust our society places in all physicians and will not be tolerated."

[23] Dr. Polemidiotis has not practised since April 7, 2021 in accordance with his bail conditions. The College informed the panel as well that some ten or 11 investigations were disposed of on May 29, 2025, just before the hearing, when Dr. Polemidiotis signed an undertaking not to reapply for registration in future in Ontario.

[24] Having regard to the registrant's circumstances and his undertaking, the College did not seek funding for therapy and counselling under ss. 1.1 and 85.7 of the Code in cases of sexual abuse. The College, however, indicated that that does not prevent Patients A and B from applying for such funding.

[25] In accordance with the parties' draft order, the registrant is required to pay \$6,000 in costs within one month of the hearing.

Order

[26] We made the following order:

Penalty

1. The Tribunal requires the registrant to appear before the panel to be reprimanded.

2. The Tribunal directs the Registrar to revoke the registrant's certificate of registration effective June 4, 2025 at 12:01 a.m.

Costs

1. The Tribunal requires the registrant to pay the College costs of \$6,000 by July 3, 2025.

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Registrant

**The Tribunal delivered the following Reprimand
by videoconference on Tuesday, June 3, 2025**

*****NOT AN OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT*****

Dr Polemidiotis,

You sexually abused patient A and B. Patient A was also your employee, and you also violated professional boundaries by making sexualized comments to patient B. You have also been convicted in criminal court of sexual assault of patient A, as well as two other patients.

These individuals came to your office expecting you to provide professional medical care in a safe environment. Instead, you exploited these medical encounters to pursue your own selfish needs, without regard for the wellbeing of these patients. The pervasive, repetitive, and escalating nature of your misconduct is disgraceful, dishonourable and unprofessional and reflects conduct unbecoming of a physician.

Patient care should always be rooted in professionalism, mutual respect, and clear boundaries. Your lack of professional integrity, the criminal convictions made against you, and the sexual abuse of patients undermine the trust our society places in all physicians and will not be tolerated.

The penalty of revocation of your registration appropriately reflects the seriousness of your actions.