

**SUMMARY of the Decision of the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee
(the Committee)**

(Information about the complaints process and the Committee is available at:
<https://www.cpsso.on.ca/Public/Services/Complaints>)

**Dr. Virendra Singh Chawla (CPSO# 25038)
(the Respondent)**

INTRODUCTION

The Complainant contacted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (the College) to express concerns about the Respondent's care for his family member, the Patient. The Respondent is a general practitioner and the Patient was in his family practice for many years. The Patient experienced a stroke that left her with left-sided weakness.

COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS

The Complainant is concerned that the Respondent failed to provide appropriate care in the Patient's management. For example, the Respondent:

- **failed to ensure that the Patient's Xarelto (an anti-coagulant) was renewed in a timely manner;**
- **did not discontinue the Patient's "water pill" upon the Complainant's request, which caused the Patient's anxiety to persist;**
- **prescribed Abilify, which worsened the Patient's anxiety despite the Respondent saying there were no side effects; and**
- **failed to appropriately perform venipuncture (the process of obtaining intravenous access for the purpose of intravenous therapy or for blood sampling of venous blood) and directed the Patient to attend the hospital Emergency Room (ER), which caused the Patient to have significant distress.**

COMMITTEE'S DECISION

A General Practice Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of February 27, 2019. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to:

- failing to renew Xarelto in timely manner
- medical record-keeping
- ensuring he prescribes psychotropics for a clear and supported indication
- considering how crucial laboratory tests are and where to get them done in a timely manner.

The Committee also accepted an undertaking from the Respondent related to some of these issues, which included a period of clinical supervision, professional education, and a practice reassessment.

COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS

Concern about Xarelto

The Respondent's decision to put the Patient on Xarelto was medically sound at the time, however, records indicate he failed to properly monitor the Patient or renew the medication in a timely manner. The Respondent admits to a "medication check oversight" in his follow-up visits with the Patient. The Respondent's medication records were poor, as was his medical record-keeping overall.

Concern about "water pill"

The Respondent says he told the Patient's family to discontinue the Patient's Lasix (a medication used to treat fluid build-up) during two appointments. However, there was no documentation of this in his records for the second visit. Instructions such as these should be documented each time a physician gives them.

Concern about Abilify

While reviewing the Respondent's records, the Committee had difficulty tracking what psychotropic medications the Patient was on, and noted that the Respondent provided few reasons for medication changes, and that his prescribing of Abilify to the Patient was not an appropriate choice for the clinical circumstances. The Committee also noted some concerns about the Respondent's management of the Patient's diabetes mellitus (including choice of medication and monitoring).

Concern about venipuncture

The Committee was uncertain why the Respondent even tried to obtain blood in the clinical circumstance of an older patient with a low systolic blood pressure, noting that if results were critical to obtain in a timely manner the Respondent should have sent the Patient to the E R directly.

Committee's dispositions: Undertaking and Caution in Person

The Committee had concerns about the Respondent's management of diabetes mellitus, anti-coagulation for atrial fibrillation, geriatric pharmacotherapy (treating illness in the elderly by means of medication) and medical record-keeping. The Committee noted that its concerns would be satisfied, in part, if an undertaking could be obtained from the Respondent to address the issues in question, and such an undertaking was successfully obtained.

In addition to accepting the Respondent's undertaking, the Committee determined that it was also appropriate to require the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to the topics noted at the outset of this summary.