

**SUMMARY of the Decision of the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee  
(the Committee)**  
(Information is available about the complaints process [here](#) and about the Committee [here](#))

**Dr. Robert Charles Asselstine (CPSO #21906)**  
**General Practice**  
**(the Respondent)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The College received information raising concerns about the Respondent's breach of an order imposed by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and an undertaking the Respondent entered into with the College restricting his prescribing of narcotic drugs, narcotic preparations, controlled drugs, benzodiazepines, and other targeted substances or monitored drugs. Subsequently, the Committee approved the Registrar's appointment of investigators to conduct a broad review of the Respondent's practice.

## **COMMITTEE'S DECISION**

A General Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of November 4, 2020. The Committee required the Respondent to appear before a panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to breach of his QAC order, breach of his undertaking to the College, and failure to meet his professional obligation to provide accurate information to the College in response to inquiries.

## **COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS**

The Committee noted that data from the Narcotics Monitoring System (NMS) of the Drug Program Services Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care showed that between June and August 2019, the Respondent issued 11 prescriptions to five patients for substances he was prohibited from prescribing under order of the QAC.

The Committee further noted that subsequent investigation by College investigators revealed that the Respondent had also prescribed other prohibited medications to four patients between November 2018 and October 2019, while he was restricted from doing so both by his QAC order and by an undertaking he entered into in September 2019.

In addition, the Committee noted that during the course of the investigation, College investigators and compliance monitors noted discrepancies between the Respondent's initial response to the College and medication information received from pharmacies and patient medical records. In a subsequent response, the Respondent apologized for his mistakes and stated that the errors in reporting happened because he relied on his memory rather than reviewing the charts before submitting his initial response.

The Committee was concerned that the Respondent had breached both a QAC order and an undertaking, and that he had also not provided accurate information to the College's inquiries. The Committee noted that breach of an order and an undertaking are grounds for referral to the Discipline Committee. In this instance, however, the Committee determined that it would be reasonable to caution the Respondent in order to emphasize its concerns about the breach of his prescribing restrictions and his failure to provide accurate information to the College to promote deterrence of this behaviour.