

**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. Rafik Bushra Abdel Messih Hanna (CPSO #78225)
(the Respondent)**

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, the Complainant attended appointments with the Respondent at a walk-in clinic (the Clinic) to receive a two-step tuberculosis skin test and signed forms confirming her vaccination status. During these appointments, the Respondent is alleged to have made comments about the Complainant's sexual history and ethnic and/or cultural background and place of origin. The Complainant contacted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (the College) to express concerns about the Respondent's conduct.

COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS

The Complainant is concerned that the Respondent made inappropriate, biased remarks about her during a clinic visit.

COMMITTEE'S DECISION

A General Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of October 13, 2022. The Committee required the Respondent to appear before a Panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect maintaining professional boundaries and avoiding discussing one's own cultural or personal beliefs with patients, particularly when discussing sensitive subjects such as sexual health and vaccination. The Committee also requested that the Respondent provide the Committee with a written report with respect to when it is appropriate to discuss culture in a clinical encounter, the negative impact of racism, gender bias, and systemic bias in medicine, and how to appropriately conduct sexual health counselling.

COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS

In his response to the complaint, the Respondent explained that he did not have a clear recollection of his discussions with the Complainant and could not recall if the Complainant was uncomfortable during her visits with him. The Respondent explained in what instances he would normally take a sexual health history or engage in sexual health counselling with a patient. He indicated that it was common practice to ask about a patient's country of birth in the context of tuberculosis testing as it may inform the results of a positive tuberculosis test.

Of concern to the Committee was the fact that the Respondent acknowledged that he may have discussed his own cultural background in the course of providing care to the Complainant. The Committee also noted that the Respondent did not specifically deny making the comments alleged by the Complainant, and he acknowledged that misperceptions may occur when he asks patients personal questions.

The Committee noted in reviewing this matter that the Respondent has received other complaints in recent years that raised concerns about unprofessional communications and boundary violations involving female patients, for which he received advice from the Committee. The Committee was concerned that despite the previous advice, there was a further complaint raising similar issues.

The Committee determined that it was appropriate to caution the Respondent as set out above.