

**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. Howard Bryan Bongard (CPSO #24891)
(the Respondent)**

INTRODUCTION

The Complainant's family physician referred her to the Respondent for issues with her trachea. The Respondent saw the Complainant in consultation in November 2018.

The Complainant contacted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (the College) to express concerns about the Respondent's conduct.

COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS

<p>The Complainant is concerned about the Respondent's professionalism when he spoke to her in an abusive manner, used a harsh tone, dismissed her point of view, and refused to allow her husband into the appointment.</p>

COMMITTEE'S DECISION

A General Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of June 13, 2019. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to communication.

COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS

The Committee conducts a review of documentation only and is not in a position to determine with any certainty exactly how a conversation between physician and patient might have gone. It was difficult for the Committee to know whether the Respondent used a harsh tone or was dismissive in his manner, as the parties had provided differing versions of events and there was no independent information to lead the Committee to prefer one version over the other. In this case, however, the Committee considered other factors that gave rise to concerns about the Respondent's communication.

The Respondent has some history of College complaints regarding communication and professionalism. The Committee took no action on a public complaint in 2015 but issued a statement of expectations to the Respondent regarding respectful and professional communication with patients. In 2017, the Respondent entered into an undertaking with the

College in resolution of a complaint regarding professionalism and communication with a colleague.

On the basis of the circumstances of the current complaint and the Respondent's history with the College, the Committee had concerns about the Respondent's communication and professionalism. These concerns were heightened by the Respondent's conduct toward the College investigator, which was inappropriate and unprofessional.

The Respondent declined to enter into a remedial agreement with the College in regard to this complaint. On that basis, and in light of all the above, the Committee decided to require him to attend at the College to be cautioned in person.