

SUMMARY

DR. TSAI YU (CPSO# 53778)

1. Disposition

On November 18, 2016, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (the Committee) required general practitioner Dr. Yu to appear before a panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to appropriate office management practices (communicating professionally with patients and returning their telephone calls), and appropriate management of continuity of patient care when transitioning to a restricted practice.

2. Introduction

Patient A complained to the College that her recent prescription of clonazepam (a benzodiazepine) was not filled because Dr. Yu was no longer able to prescribe controlled substances. Patient A also expressed concern that Dr. Yu and his office staff behaved unprofessionally towards her, in that she left numerous messages asking to speak with Dr. Yu and he never returned her calls.

Dr. Yu responded that he ceased prescribing benzodiazepines at the College's request, and that Patient A was advised that he lost his privileges to prescribe clonazepam. Dr. Yu also indicated that he advised Patient A to attend a walk-in clinic physician, and that he offered to see her and provide her with alternative therapy. Dr. Yu stated that he did not realize that Patient A wanted to talk to him, as she had been communicating with his secretary (who did not leave any notes for him to call Patient A back).

3. Committee Process

A Surgical Panel of the Committee, consisting of public and physician members, met to review the relevant records and documents related to the complaint. The Committee always has before it applicable legislation and regulations, along with policies that the College has developed, which reflect the College's professional expectations for physicians practising in Ontario. Current versions of these documents are available on the College's website at www.cpso.on.ca, under the heading "Policies & Publications."

4. Committee's Analysis

The Committee had concerns about the manner in which Dr. Yu managed Patient A's care when he ceased prescribing benzodiazepines in 2016. In particular, the Committee was of the view that Dr. Yu's process of transitioning to a restricted practice was inadequate, as he simply stopped refilling Patient A's prescription without any discussion. It appears that Dr. Yu did eventually prescribe another drug to Patient A, but only did so after her repeated phone calls, and further, chose a medication that was inappropriate.

The Committee found that Dr. Yu failed to comply with the expectations set out in the College's policy on *Practice Management Considerations for Physicians Who Cease to Practise, Take an Extended Leave of Absence or Close Their Practice Due to Relocation*. The Committee's concern was heightened by the fact that Dr. Yu's response to the complaint appeared to place blame on the College for restricting his practice.

The Committee was also concerned about Dr. Yu's office management practices. The Committee noted that Dr. Yu demonstrated a lack of insight in failing to acknowledge that he is ultimately responsible for his staff and their communication (or lack thereof) with his patients. The Committee's concern on this point was heightened by the fact that Dr. Yu has a significant history with the College related to his office practices and communication with patients.