

## **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.cpsa.on.ca/Public-Information-Services/Learn-About-Our-Complaints-Process>)**

**Dr. Jaswinder Bhalla (CPSO# 94886)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Between December 17, 2015 and August 5, 2016, the College received a number of public complaints regarding Dr. Bhalla, a family physician.

In March 2017, the Committee approved the Registrar's appointment of investigators under Section 75(1)(a) of the Health Professions Procedural Code to examine Dr. Bhalla's practice.

### **COMMITTEE'S DECISION**

A Family Practice Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of February 21, 2019. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to her poor communications, poor office management, and poor medical records.

The Committee also accepted an undertaking from the Respondent to engage in education, practice under supervision, and undergo a reassessment approximately six months following the period of education and supervision.

### **COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS**

As part of this investigation, the Registrar appointed a family practitioner as an independent Assessor (the Assessor) to review a number of Dr. Bhalla's patient charts, observe some clinical encounters and interview Dr. Bhalla.

As a result of this investigation, the Committee had concerns about:

- Dr. Bhalla's communication (for example, her lack of respectful and caring communications with patients, with particular attention to breaking bad news – such as communication about breast lumps – and explaining office policies and procedures)
- Dr. Bhalla's poor medical record-keeping
- Dr. Bhalla's clinical practice (for example, assessment of musculo-skeletal symptoms including recognition of "red flags" and heightened suspicion in patients with predisposing conditions such as osteoporosis or malignancy; management of ear canal obstruction due to cerumen; assessment, management and preventative treatment of chronic diseases such as diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension,

hyperlipidemia, including discussion with patients and documentation; documenting the assessment and management of patients with mental illness such as anxiety and depression; and safe and effective use of opioids for chronic non-cancer pain, to include screening for patients at risk, and monitoring and documentation of symptom control, including assessment of pain intensity, side-effects, addiction risk, diversion risk, patients' response to treatment, selection of appropriate opiate and reason for rotation, taper).

The Committee noted that its concerns in the current investigation would be satisfied if an undertaking could be obtained from Dr. Bhalla to address the issues in question. An undertaking was obtained which included education, practice under supervision, and a reassessment.

In addition to accepting Dr. Bhalla's undertaking, the Committee determined that the appropriate disposition is to require Dr. Bhalla to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to her poor communications, poor office management, and poor medical records.