

**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. Paul Russell Hanson (CPSO# 65864)
(the Respondent)**

INTRODUCTION

The Complainant is the ex-spouse of the Patient, who is related to the Respondent, and is engaged in a family court proceeding with the Patient. The Respondent prescribed medications to the Patient after the Patient was involved in an accident which resulted in the loss of a child. There is no doctor-patient relationship between the Respondent and the Complainant.

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

COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS

The Complainant is concerned that the Respondent:

- **prescribed medications to the Patient in February and March 2018; and**
- **failed to comply with a court order to release the Patient's medical records.**

COMMITTEE'S DECISION

A Family Practice Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of June 18, 2020. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to his failure to comply with the College policy, *Treating Self, Family Members and other Close to Them*; inappropriately prescribing two antipsychotic medications simultaneously in large doses; and not being careful to check for drug interactions when prescribing medications.

COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS

As part of this investigation, the Committee retained an independent Assessor who specializes in family medicine. The Assessor opined that the Respondent's intent in February 2018 did not breach the College's policy on treating family members but that the verbal prescribing of the medication in issue in high doses and quantities, to a highly distressed family member living at a distance who was naïve to these medications, did not meet the standard of practice expected of the profession even in this unusual circumstance. In addition, the Assessor concluded that the Respondent's treatment of

the Patient's presumed sinus infection with a verbal prescription of other medications in March 2018 breached the College's policy, and that he failed to meet the standard in prescribing the medication over the telephone for a patient not assessed in person and not considering potential drug interactions while making the prescription. The Assessor concluded that the Respondent displayed a lack of knowledge and judgment and exposed the Patient to risk in prescribing the medications he did, and in doing so over the telephone with no in-person assessment, and with no organized follow-up or monitoring.

While the Committee appreciated the difficult and tragic circumstances that led to the request for the Respondent's assistance, it shared the Assessor's opinion that the Respondent's conduct demonstrated a concerning lapse of judgment and knowledge. The Committee noted that while the Respondent stated that the Patient did not have the fortitude to attend a hospital or clinic, it was evident from the record that the Patient did in fact attend the emergency room on the date in issue. The Respondent should have asked the appropriate questions of the Patient's father to determine if the Patient had emergency treatment by others, and he could have spoken with the Patient herself. Furthermore, the amounts and types of medications that the Respondent prescribed were very concerning (in terms of both potential side effects and potential drug interactions) and demonstrated a significant knowledge gap.

Regarding the Complainant's request for records, the Respondent stated that he did not keep any records relating to the Patient. He did not at first appreciate that there was a court order requiring the disclosure of information, and he did later write to the Complainant's counsel to inform him of the absence of any clinical records for the Patient.

In the circumstances, the Committee was of the opinion that it was appropriate to caution the Respondent, as outlined above.