

**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. Iram Kareemi Zando (CPSO# 59919)  
(Internal Medicine)  
(the Respondent)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Complainant contacted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (the College) to express concern about the Respondent's care and conduct he sought assessment for a skin condition. The Respondent did not wear a mask during three in-person appointments despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

## **COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS**

**The Complainant is concerned is concerned that the Respondent:**

- **was dismissive and abrupt during two visits in October 2020**
- **failed to wear personal protective equipment (PPE)**
- **asked that he bring his wife to his second visit during the COVID-19 pandemic, only to ask her what she feeds him**
- **wanted him to fill her prescription at the office pharmacy.**

## **COMMITTEE'S DECISION**

An Internal Medicine Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of July 12, 2021. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to with respect to failure to comply with public health guidelines with respect to use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the rationale for in-person patient appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS**

As part of this investigation, the Committee retained an independent Assessor who specializes in internal medicine. The Assessor opined that the Respondent did not meet the standard of practice of the profession with regards to infection prevention and control (IPAC) as outlined by the Ministry of Health in May 2020. The assessor also indicated that the Respondent demonstrated both a lack of knowledge about the provincial IPAC guidance and a lack of judgement in failing to minimize the patient's COVID-19 risk either by avoiding an in-person assessment or by using alternative PPE options if the Respondent was not able to wear a mask. The Assessor opined that the Respondent's clinical practice, behaviour, or conduct exposes or was likely to expose her patients to harm or injury both for the patient and for the patient's spouse who

attended the appointment as well.

*Concern that the Respondent was dismissive and abrupt*

- The Respondent denied this allegation. The Committee had no independent information to substantiate the Complainant's account. The Committee noted that the Respondent, in her submissions to the College, had reflected on this concern and apologized. The Committee did not believe that further action on this issue was necessary.

*Concern that the Respondent failed to wear PPE  
and*

*Concern that the Respondent asked the Complainant to bring his wife to an appointment during the COVID-19 pandemic*

- The Committee shared the concerns identified by the Assessor about the Respondent's failure to wear PPE despite Ministry of Health guidance to the profession, and her decision to expose not only the Complainant but also his spouse to potential infection during a pandemic. For this reason, the Committee decided to caution the Respondent.

*Concern that the Respondent wanted the Complainant to fill a prescription at the office pharmacy*

- The Respondent explained that she directed the Complainant to the clinic pharmacy as a matter of convenience but it was always his choice to choose where to fill his prescription.
- The Committee found no information to support this allegation and for this reason took no action, noting however that it is important for physicians with in-clinic pharmacies to ensure that patients are fully informed of their option to fill prescriptions elsewhere (as appears to have been the case with the Respondent).