

SUMMARY

DR. HAIDER HASNAIN (CPSO# 64959)

1. Disposition

On January 18, 2017, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (“the Committee”) required Dr. Hasnain (Family Medicine) to appear before a panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to office management, medical record-keeping and ending the physician-patient relationship.

2. Introduction

After having been terminated from Dr. Hasnain’s practice, a patient complained to the College that Dr. Hasnain’s wait times were excessive, that he forgot to make notes in his charts about follow-up and specialist referrals and sometimes forgot to sign prescriptions, that he said he preferred she use the on-site pharmacy, that he would not provide necessary information to assist with her disability application, and that he began cancelling and missing appointments in 2013. Dr. Hasnain terminated the patient from his practice in 2015 for a “lack of synergy between you and my staff.”

Dr. Hasnain responded that he has restructured his practice since moving locations and patients never usually have to wait longer than 30 minutes. He said they scan and document everything in the electronic medical record (EMR). Dr. Hasnain explained that the on-site pharmacy uses an electronic program whereby he submits prescriptions directly, but the pharmacy comes to him for an original signature once the prescription is received. He denied saying the patient had to use the on-site pharmacy, but rather noted that any points of clarification may not be answered immediately if she went to some other pharmacy; he said he does prefer several different pharmacies for prescriptions for controlled substances, so he can keep track of these. Dr. Hasnain maintained that he did as much as could be expected to assist the patient with her disability application. He explained he had to cancel appointments for various reasons, but that they always gave patients prompt notice and dates to reschedule.

3. Committee Process

As part of this investigation, the Committee retained an Independent Opinion provider (“IO provider”) who specializes in family medicine. The IO provider reviewed the entire written investigative record and submitted a written report to the Committee.

A General 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.cpsso.on.ca, under the heading “Policies & Publications.” In this case, the Committee referenced the College policies on *Ending the Physician-Patient Relationship* (#3-08) and *Medical Records* (#4-12).

4. Committee’s Analysis

The IO provider opined that Dr. Hasnain met the standard of practice in the care he provided in this case, but commented that he showed a lack of skill, knowledge and judgement in the manner in which he terminated the patient from his practice and in his medical record-keeping, particularly in his records before he switched to an EMR. Dr. Hasnain responded to the IO report and said he is aware of the best practice of discharging a patient and has made changes to his practice consistent with College guidelines. He acknowledged his record-keeping prior to the use of an EMR was inefficient, but noted that since starting to use the EMR (in 2011) his record-keeping has been thorough and appropriate.

The Committee agreed with the IO provider’s conclusions on these two points. The Committee observed that this was not the first time concerns about Dr. Hasnain’s approach to the termination of care have arisen. The Committee also noted that Dr. Hasnain had undergone remediation around his medical record-keeping around the time he was providing care to the patient, and while his EMR records were an improvement over his previous handwritten records, he overly relied on the use of templates. The Committee decided to caution Dr. Hasnain in person on ending the physician-patient relationship and on his medical record-keeping.

The Committee was satisfied with Dr. Hasnain's approach to third party reports, but set out its concerns about various aspects of his office management (including wait times, the need to sign all prescriptions, the issue of preferring certain pharmacies, and cancelling patient appointments), all of which led it to conclude this too should form part of the caution in person for Dr. Hasnain.