

SUMMARY

DR. AMARPREET SINGH CHEEMA (CPSO# 83915)

1. Disposition

On July 18, 2018, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (the Committee) required family physician Dr. Cheema to appear before a panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to missing a diagnosis of cauda equina syndrome in the patient, related in part to a lack of physical examination, and with respect to medical record keeping.

The Committee also accepted an undertaking from Dr. Cheema with respect to the investigation and management of back pain, the diagnosis of cauda equina syndrome, differential diagnosis of constipation, management of substance use disorders, medical record keeping, and employing a patient-centred approach.

2. Introduction

The patient complained to the College that Dr. Cheema failed to provide appropriate care during the patient's admission to the hospital in March 2014. For example, Dr. Cheema failed to conduct an examination of her back, incorrectly diagnosed her constipation as due to narcotic abuse, and failed to properly assess, diagnoses, and seek correct treatment for the patient's cauda equina syndrome.

Dr. Cheema acknowledged that he missed the diagnosis of cauda equina syndrome in the patient and apologized for his mistakes. He acknowledged that he made an incorrect diagnosis of constipation from narcotic abuse, and as such, failed to properly assess the patient's ability to urinate, failed to ensure that the patient was taught self-catheterization, and failed to seek timely surgical intervention.

3. Committee Process

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.cpso.on.ca, under the heading "Policies & Publications."

4. Committee's Analysis

The Committee recognized that Dr. Cheema has reflected on his practice following this incident. However, in the Committee's view, Dr. Cheema failed to provide appropriate care to the patient and the patient experienced a delay in the diagnosis and treatment of cauda equina syndrome.

In reviewing the chart in this case, the Committee found deficiencies in Dr. Cheema's record keeping, specifically, a lack of documentation of a comprehensive history, physical examination, diagnosis and management plan, and lack of evaluation of all relevant investigations pertinent to patient symptoms.

As a result of this investigation, the Committee had concerns about Dr. Cheema's investigation and management of back pain, diagnosis of cauda equina syndrome, differential diagnosis of constipation, management of substance use disorders, and medical record keeping. The Committee was concerned with Dr. Cheema's dismissal of the patient's symptoms and signs of cauda equina syndrome for other causes, such as constipation and drug abuse.

Dr. Cheema expressed his intention to take necessary steps to improve his practice, pursuant to an undertaking. In addition to accepting Dr. Cheema's undertaking, the Committee determined

that the appropriate disposition is to require Dr. Cheema to attend at the College to be cautioned.