

**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. Eli Alegado (CPSO #67460)  
(the Respondent)**

**INTRODUCTION**

There is no physician-patient relationship between the Respondent and the Complainant. The Complainant is a citizen of the Philippines. He has made several social media posts critical of Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte. The Respondent is a supporter of President Duterte and demonstrates his support via a Facebook page he maintains.

The Complainant contacted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (the College) to express concern about the Respondent's conduct related to his social media posts.

**COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS**

**The Complainant is concerned that the Respondent threatened him on line in that, when the Complainant and the Respondent expressed different opinions about the President of the Philippines, the Respondent posted a \$100,000 reward on line for information that would lead to the identification and location of the Complainant.**

**COMMITTEE'S DECISION**

A General Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of March 13, 2019. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to inappropriate use of social media. The Committee also requested that the Respondent review the CPSO Position Statement entitled *Social Media – Appropriate Use by Physicians* and provide a written report to the College reflecting on this document and how he will change his use of social media so as not to bring the reputation of the medical profession into disrepute.

**COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS**

The Committee noted the following points in reaching its decision:

- The College's expectation of professionalism of physicians extends beyond the medical field to their conduct generally, as certain actions by physicians regardless of whether they are delivering medical care have the potential to reflect poorly on the medical profession.

- The Respondent identifies himself as a physician on his Facebook page. Thus, he used his professional qualifications in making the post in question. One could assume he uses the fact of his professional credentials to bolster his credibility generally. It is therefore even more concerning the Respondent would make comments that a reasonable person could interpret as threatening, despite the fact that the discussion in question does not relate to the practice of medicine or the Respondent's professional capacity or responsibilities in any way.
- There is arguably a difference between expressing an extreme or intense political stance versus offering a reward for the identity of a person expressing an opposing view, which the Respondent did in this case. Such conduct by a physician is troubling.
- The College's position on social media is that physicians are expected to comply with all of their existing professional expectations, including those set out in relevant legislation, codes of ethics, and College policies, when engaging in the use of social media platforms and technologies. Physicians should ensure they protect their own reputation, the reputation of the profession, and the public trust by not posting content that could be viewed as unprofessional.
- The Committee is concerned that the Respondent's post is not consistent with his professional obligations. The Respondent needs to express the political positions he is taking in a professional way, in keeping with his obligations as set out in CPSO policies and position statements.

Given the Committee's concern about the Respondent's use of social media, the Committee issued its caution outlined above.