

**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. Melanie Ursell (CPSO #71356)
(the Respondent)**

INTRODUCTION

The Respondent is subject to a Fitness to Practice (FTP) Order, dated December 18, 2017. The College received information raising concerns about the Respondent's compliance with the Order. Subsequently, the Committee approved the Registrar's appointment of investigators to investigate this information.

COMMITTEE'S DECISION

A General Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of September 11, 2024. The Committee required the Respondent to appear before a Panel of the Committee to be cautioned with respect to compliance with all the terms of the Order of the FTP Committee and regarding appropriate storage of medical records and securing office space to maintain confidentiality of medical records.

COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS

In November 2022, the Respondent was charged with Operation while impaired – blood alcohol concentration (80 plus). The Respondent pleaded guilty to the charge in March 2023.

The information obtained in this investigation confirmed that the Respondent failed to comply with the terms of her FTP Order. The Order requires that the Respondent abstain completely from the consumption of alcohol and any unauthorized substances of abuse. The fact that the Respondent was found guilty of operating a motor vehicle while impaired demonstrates that the Respondent failed to comply with this term of the Order.

The Order also requires the Respondent to attend appointments with her addictions medicine physician (AMP) at least once per month. The information provided by the Respondent's AMP demonstrated that the Respondent did not comply with this requirement. Nor did she always provide blood work or urine samples for random drug screening upon the request of her AMP, as required by the Order.

The Committee was troubled by the Respondent's conduct in this matter. The onus is, and has always been, on the Respondent to ensure that she fully complies with the requirements of the Order. This includes ensuring that appointments with her AMP

occur no less frequently than monthly and that she submits to blood or urine screening, or hair analysis or breathalyzer, on the same day that she receives notice of the testing. The Committee decided to caution the Respondent with respect to compliance with all the terms of the Order of the FTP Committee.

In addition, the College received a telephone call in July 2023 from the mother of a patient, who reported that she took her daughter to the Respondent's office for a scheduled appointment, but the office appeared to be unattended. The Committee conducted an unannounced visit to the Respondent's office on July 11 and found neither the Respondent nor her staff present. (The Respondent was unable to practice from June 29 to July 17, 2023, because her workplace monitor had resigned, and she was unable to find a replacement.) College staff found the reception area unlocked and unattended. They were able to freely access the reception area and the Respondent's private office and examination room. Patient charts and other documents containing patients' personal health information were unsecured.

The Committee decided to also caution the Respondent on the issue of appropriate storage of medical records and securing office space to maintain confidentiality of medical records.