

**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. Ira Michael Price (CPSO# 83245)  
(the Respondent)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The College received information raising concerns about the Respondent's involvement with a pedorthist who operated a medical assistive device business. The Respondent provided blank, signed prescriptions to the pedorthist, who used the prescriptions to submit false claims for health appliances (such as compression stockings and orthotics) for employees of various organizations, thereby defrauding insurance companies and the employers. The pedorthist split the insurance monies for the fraudulent claims between himself, his clients, and others. The pedorthist was charged with fraud in 2015 and was later convicted. Subsequently, the Committee approved the Registrar's appointment of investigators to conduct a broad review of the Respondent's practice.

## **COMMITTEE'S DECISION**

A General Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of April 1, 2020. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to conflicts of interest and inappropriate delegation. The Committee also directed that the Respondent enter into an undertaking involving remediation of his practice.

## **COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS**

As part of this investigation, the Registrar appointed an independent Assessor to review a number of the Respondent's patient charts, interview the Respondent, and submit a written report to the Committee. On review of 12 patient charts and interview with the Respondent, the Assessor opined that the Respondent did not meet the standard of practice of the profession in 11 of 12 charts, predominantly because of insufficient information in the chart notes. The Assessor also opined that the Respondent showed a lack of judgement in failing to maintain proper records, leaving signed blank prescriptions with and placing trust in the pedorthist and assuming an appropriate "delegation" regime was in place, and failing to recognize the potential for conflict of interest in his arrangements with the pedorthist. The Assessor did not find that the Respondent's clinical practice, behaviour, or conduct exposed or was likely to expose his patients to harm or injury.

The Respondent acknowledged the shortcomings in his record keeping at the time and his lack of judgement. He denied any knowledge of the pedorthist's fraud and stated that he had been naïve in becoming involved with the pedorthist. He maintained that no controlled act was delegated when he transferred prescribing of orthotics and other medical devices to the pedorthist via the signed, blank prescriptions. He acknowledged his conflict of interest, and how it should have been managed. He stated that because the patients were complicit in the fraud scheme and because the number of patients involved was so great, he did not recognize the possibility of an organized fraud. He stated that he was duped. He has since taken an ethics course (as a result of a Discipline Committee finding related to another College investigation) and indicated he now fully understands willful blindness, moral distress and moral complacency.

The Committee was very concerned by the lack of prudence shown by the Respondent in receiving \$50 for each prescription used by the pedorthist and \$200 for each Disability Tax Credit (DTC) submitted to the Canada Revenue Agency under his signature. The Respondent should have perceived this obvious conflict of interest (i.e., income for both the pedorthist and the Respondent increased with the number of prescriptions issued and DTC forms submitted). The Committee was also concerned that the Respondent had delegated to the pedorthist inappropriately.

The Committee noted that, while the Respondent is still a relatively young physician, he has a significant history with the College, and the allegations raised in this investigation are very troubling.

Given the above determination and considering its concerns about the Respondent's conflicts of interest and inappropriate delegation, the Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned.