

## **SUMMARY**

### **DR. CRAIG KARPILOW (CPSO# 85959)**

#### **1. Disposition**

On October 19, 2017, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (“the Committee”) ordered Dr. Karpilow (Family Medicine) to complete a specified continuing education and remediation program (“SCERP”). The SCERP requires Dr. Karpilow to:

- complete one-on-one instruction in professional communications, to be facilitated by the College;
- review the College’s Practice Guide, and discuss this review with his instructor, as mentioned above.

#### **2. Introduction**

The College received a complaint from the parent of a 13-year-old patient who had concerns about Dr. Karpilow’s care and conduct when he assessed the patient at a walk-in clinic, in relation to throat and chest issues. Specifically, the parent was concerned that Dr. Karpilow made inappropriate and insensitive comments about the patient’s weight/eating habits and facial acne.

Dr. Karpilow provided his account of the interaction, and while his version of events differed from the parent’s in certain respects (for example, he claimed the parent insisted on antibiotics and abruptly left the room, and that the parent raised her voice with him in the waiting area in front of other patients), he did not specifically deny the statements the parent attributed to him about the patient’s weight/diet and facial acne. In fact, he stated in his response that the patient had “obvious acne vulgaris on her face” and that he asked her what she had eaten for breakfast and then commented on the high sugar content and lack of benefit from what she had consumed. Dr. Karpilow also acknowledged that he suggested the patient see a dietician,

and then suggested that she be referred to a psychologist for her “sensitivity”, when the parent expressed concern about the impact his comments might have on the patient’s self-esteem.

### **3. Committee Process**

A Family Practice 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](http://www.cpso.on.ca), under the heading “Policies & Publications.”

### **4. Committee’s Analysis**

The Committee noted that the Clinic’s receptionist recalled a disturbing altercation between Dr. Karpilow and a patient’s mother who was upset with him (in relation to which she had to ask them to move into an examination room as it was disturbing other patients), and she also recalled Dr. Karpilow informing her that he had made comments about a young patient eating a waffle for breakfast and the patient being unhappy with his remarks in that regard. The receptionist also noted that there were frequently issues with patients when Dr. Karpilow worked at the Clinic (with at least one patient per shift having an issue with Dr. Karpilow).

The Committee stated that in its view Dr. Karpilow’s statements that the patient should see a dietician, and then a psychologist, were intemperate and inconsiderate, given the presence of the young patient (and the impact the blunt statement may have had on her) and the parent’s obvious distress with the discussion on these points.

The Committee stated that while it could not know with certainty what transpired in the examination room, it was clear that the parent was left with a very negative perception of Dr. Karpilow’s manner, describing him as rude and unprofessional in his communications with the parent and the patient.

The Committee noted that its concern in this case was heightened by the fact that it had another unrelated complaint before it at the time it considered the present complaint, which raised very similar concerns about Dr. Karpilow's manner and communications with a young patient and his mother and Dr. Karpilow had a history of prior complaints to the College raising issues about his professionalism and communications. The Committee indicated that while no action was taken on the prior complaints, the fact of the prior complaints in combination with the two current complaints before the Committee suggested that something in Dr. Karpilow's manner of communication was problematic.

Overall, the Committee was left with the opinion that Dr. Karpilow requires education to assist him in ensuring that he engages in respectful and courteous communications with patients and family members.