

**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. Theresa Annamarie Heese (CPSO #90073)
(the Respondent)**

INTRODUCTION

In March 2018, the Complainant went to a hospital emergency department with reports of pain, numbness and discoloration of her right leg. The Respondent provided care to the Complainant during this visit. A few days later, the Complainant underwent emergency surgery for severe disc herniation. The Complainant contacted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (the College) to express concerns about the Respondent's care.

COMPLAINANT'S CONCERNS

The Complainant is concerned that the Respondent failed to provide adequate care to her during her visit to the Emergency Department in March 2018. For example, the Respondent:

- **failed to assess or examine complaints of pain, numbness and discoloration of the Complainant's right leg;**
- **failed to order tests or diagnostic imaging; and**
- **misdiagnosed the Complainant's condition as sciatica.**

COMMITTEE'S DECISION

A Family Practice Panel of the Committee considered this matter at its meeting of June 27, 2019. The Committee required the Respondent to attend at the College to be cautioned in person with respect to the clinical assessment of the patient presenting with acute leg weakness and discolouration, and the appropriate examination and documentation of findings.

COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS

The Committee found the Respondent's assessment of the Complainant inadequate. In the Committee's view, the documentation of the physical examination was very poor, with no notation of pulses or colour, no sensory examination, and no power examination or reflexes. Additionally, there was no documentation of "red flags" to watch for on discharge.

Overall, the documentation suggests to the Committee that the Respondent did not conduct an appropriate assessment of the Complainant. It is possible that if the Respondent conducted a more thorough examination, she would have reached a different diagnosis and ordered appropriate tests or diagnostic imaging, such as an urgent magnetic resonance imaging scan.