

SUMMARY

DR. ROBERT TOMMASINI (CPSO# 58668)

1. Disposition

On March 17, 2016, the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (“the Committee”) ordered Family Physician Dr. Tommasini to complete a specified continuing education and remediation program (“SCERP”). The SCERP requires Dr. Tommasini to:

- complete one-on-one communications coaching and upon completion the instructor is to provide a written report regarding Dr. Tommasini’s progress; and
- review the College’s *Practice Guide: Medical Professionalism and College Policies* and prepare a two to three page summary of the document with reference to how it is applicable to Dr. Tommasini’s situation, and noting any changes Dr. Tommasini has made or plans to make to his practice. The written review will be submitted to the College to ensure completeness.

2. Introduction

The College received a complaint about Dr. Tommasini’s communications. According to the patient, Dr. Tommasini did not listen, yelled, lectured, and was belittling when the patient inquired about laboratory results at an appointment. The patient indicated that Dr. Tommasini communicated in an unprofessional manner at previous appointments.

Dr. Tommasini maintained he was respectful and professional with the patient, and that the patient was upset because of the delay in seeing him that day. He also indicated that the patient has a history of conflict in the workplace.

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, as well as College policies and relevant legislation.

4. Committee’s Analysis

The Committee is limited to a review of documentation only. As such, it was unable to determine the nature of Dr. Tommasini's communication with the patient in this instance as both parties give different versions of events, and there is no independent information to support either version.

However, the Committee notes that Dr. Tommasini has been the subject of numerous complaints to the College, including where concerns were raised about his unprofessional and inappropriate behaviour. In 2012, the Committee counselled Dr. Tommasini regarding his professional behaviour and recommended he take a communications course.

The College's policy entitled *Physician Behaviour in the Professional Environment* states that physicians are expected to act in a courteous, dignified and civil manner towards their patients.

Given that this complaint echoes Dr. Tommasini's previous complaint history regarding his unprofessional communications with patients, the Committee is of the view that Dr. Tommasini could benefit from one-on-one communications coaching, and that he should also reflect on how he is perceived by patients and how he might change his communications going forward.