



This Bulletin is forwarded to every medical practitioner in the province. Decisions of the College on matters of standards, amendments to Regulations, guidelines, etc., are published in Bulletins. The College, therefore, assumes that a practitioner should be aware of these matters.

## Council Update

At its meeting on 5 April, 2013, Council considered the following matters.

### COMPLAINTS

A *Counsel* is advice as to how to improve the physician's conduct or practice.

A *Caution* is intended to express the dissatisfaction of the Committee and to forewarn the physician that if the conduct recurs, more serious disciplinary action may be considered.

A *Censure* is the expression of strong disapproval or harsh criticism.

A young adult patient alleged that a physician was improperly attempting to have contact with her outside of his office. The patient declined any of his attempts to meet with her or speak with her. The physician asserted an innocent explanation for his actions. The Committee felt it appropriate to *Caution* the physician to avoid any behaviour which could be subject to such misinterpretation.

A patient suffered a pulmonary embolus, alleging poor follow-up of a fracture by a surgeon. In response, the physician asserted that the patient had no symptoms suggesting any such significant complication. In reviewing the matter, the available records supported the version of the surgeon. The Committee concluded that the complication was an unfortunate one, but for

which no fault could be found.

A patient asserted that a physician removed a gastrostomy tube in an unnecessarily aggressive and painful manner. Based on the response of the physician, the Committee wondered whether there could have been better preparation for the patient regarding any potential discomfort. The Committee felt it appropriate to *Counsel* the physician to prepare such patients as much as possible regarding what to expect.

It was alleged that a physician was improperly directing patients to receive prescriptions at a specific pharmacy. It was further alleged that the physician would decline treatment to patients who sought to have their prescriptions filled elsewhere. The physician responded that he felt it

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appropriate to take advantage of the specific services available from the pharmacy in question. In reviewing the matter, the Committee noted the longstanding College rule against the directing of prescriptions. This rule has been in place to avoid any potential inference of an improper financial arrangement between the physician and the pharmacy. On that basis, the Committee felt it appropriate to reinforce this standard and *Censure* the physician regarding the inappropriateness of directing such prescriptions.

A patient had foot surgery and suffered a prolonged course of infection and repeated complications. In reviewing the matter, the

