

SUMMARY OF DECISION OF HEARING PANEL

Dr. RAYAN ALHAZMI

On December 4, 2015 a Hearing Panel of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia approved a Settlement Agreement resolving allegations of professional misconduct and incapacity against Dr. Rayan Alhazmi, a post graduate trainee in internal medicine at Dalhousie University.

Summary of allegations and admissions

The complaint was initiated in the summer of 2014, after unusual and questionable prescribing of opioid medications by Dr. Alhazmi was identified by a community pharmacist and reviewed by the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP). After determining the prescribing in question might have been improper, the PMP referred its concerns to the College.

In October, 2014, after discussion with the Registrar, Dr. Alhazmi provided his undertaking to remove himself from the practice of medicine pending further decision of the College.

Throughout the investigation of the complaint, Dr. Alhazmi provided inconsistent and incomplete information to the College respecting the matters under investigation. Further, it was determined that prior to the investigation of this complaint, on both his applications for an Educational Licence from the College and for the residency program at Dalhousie University, Dr. Alhazmi failed to fully disclose the circumstances of his withdrawal from an earlier residency program.

Dr. Alhazmi admits that his actions in this matter, including the withholding of relevant information and the provision of inconsistent and incomplete information to the College, amount to professional misconduct. "Professional misconduct" is defined in the *Medical Act* to include "such conduct or acts in the practice of medicine that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional and that, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may include breaches of:

- (i) the Code of Ethics approved by Council;
- (ii) the accepted standards of practice of medicine;
- (iii) the *Medical Act*, the regulations and policies approved by Council.

Dr. Alhazmi further admits that while holding a licence from the College and practising as a medical resident, he improperly prescribed opioid medications.

The College accepts the admission of Dr. Alhazmi that at all times relevant to this investigation, he was incapacitated within the meaning of the *Medical Act*. "Incapacity" is defined in the *Medical Act* as "the status whereby a member suffers or suffered from a medical, physical, mental or emotional condition, disorder or addiction that renders or rendered the member unable to practise with competence, or that may endanger or have endanger the health or safety of individuals".

Dr. Alhazmi has received treatment for this incapacity. Based on expert evidence, the College accepts that Dr. Alhazmi is medically fit to return to practice, with conditions and restrictions as set out below.

Information respecting the nature of the incapacity and the treatment received are subject to a publication ban in accordance with the requirements of section 120 of the regulations under the *Medical Act*.

Disposition

Dr. Alhazmi is reprimanded for his professional misconduct and his licence to practice medicine is suspended for a period of 12 months. Dr. Alhazmi has not practised medicine since October, 2014. As such, the period of suspension is deemed served.

Dr. Alhazmi is permitted to apply for a licence to practice and to return to practice once the licence is issued, under restrictions including:

1. He shall return to practice on a graduated basis, with his residency advisor fully informed of the content of the Settlement Agreement;
2. He shall continue to engage in medical treatment as determined by his treatment providers;
3. His health status shall be monitored by the College in such manner as agreed upon between Dr. Alhazmi and the College;
4. Subject to limited exceptions while on night call as set out in the Settlement Agreement, he is permanently prohibited from prescribing, administering, and having access to:
 - i. narcotic drugs as set out in the Narcotic Control Regulations under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*; and
 - ii. controlled drugs as set out in Schedule G of the Food and Drugs Act.

For clarity this includes all medication that requires the use of duplicate prescription pads.

In addition, Dr. Alhazmi has agreed to pay a portion of the College's investigative costs, on terms specified by the College.

The Settlement Agreement containing these terms has been approved by the College's Investigative Committee and a Hearing Panel. The Hearing Panel has issued a decision approving the Agreement, indicating that while the misconduct involved was very serious and created an unacceptable risk to the public, the Panel was satisfied that through the conditions imposed on Dr. Alhazmi, the public is protected and the conduct or its causes has been successfully treated. The Panel believed the Settlement Agreement to be in the best interests of the public and the profession and approved it.