



Policy on Conscientious Objection approved by CPSS Council

SASKATOON, September 18, 2015 – During its regular meeting on September 18th, 2015, the Council of the College adopted a new policy on Conscientious Objection.

The decision follows a year-long process of deliberation, drafting and revising by a dedicated committee, and has been the object of two consultations with physicians and members of the public, several consultations with national medical organizations, and three discussions by Council.

The policy outlines a physician’s responsibility in providing patients with “full and balanced health information required to make legally valid, informed choices about medical treatment (e.g., diagnosis, prognosis, and clinically appropriate treatment options, including the option of no treatment or treatment other than that recommended by the physician), even if the provision of such information conflicts with the physician’s deeply held and considered moral or religious beliefs.”

The policy further specifies that “the obligation to inform patients may be met by arranging for the patient to obtain the full and balanced health information required to make a legally valid, informed choice about medical treatment from another source, provided that arrangement is made in a timely fashion and the patient is able to obtain the information without undue delay.”

“It is impossible to please everyone when these kinds of decisions must be taken. What is important is that a balanced decision has been made by giving thoughtful consideration to all perspectives. Council strongly feels that this has been achieved. ” said Dr. Grant Stoneham, president of the Council.

The policy comes into effect immediately and will be accessible shortly on the College website at www.cps.sk.ca.

NOTE: It is important to note that this policy does not apply to physician-assisted dying or physicians’ conscientious objection related to a potential physician-assisted death.

The mission of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan is to serve the public by regulating the practice of medicine and guiding the profession to achieve the highest standards of care. It currently issues licenses to more than 2,500 physicians and surgeons in the province, as well as over 1,400 corporate permits.

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