

**THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF MANITOBA  
INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE**

**IN THE MATTER OF:** *THE REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT, CCSM  
c. R117, Part 8 (the “RHPA”)*

**AND IN THE MATTER OF:** **MS MONICA KEHAR, a former member of the  
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba (the  
“College”)**

**CENSURE: IC4208**

**DATE OF CENSURE: November 13, 2020**

On November 13, 2020, in accordance with subsection 102(2)(d) of the RHPA, the Investigation Committee censured Ms Kehar as a record of its disapproval of her conduct in:

- altering documents, submitting those documents, and allowing those documents to stand until her attempt to mislead was detected by others on two separate occasions, once before the investigation of her conduct, and once during the investigation of her conduct;
- demonstrating a pattern of attempting to mislead the College and others and deflect from her personal responsibility for her unethical and inappropriate actions;
- lying to the College on more than one occasion during an investigation into her conduct, including falsely purporting to experience a possible diagnosis of a serious health condition and undergoing a surgical procedure for same;
- lying to medical colleagues, including misrepresenting her status as a medical resident and member of the College and misrepresenting that she was diagnosed with a non-existent serious medical condition and undergoing invasive treatment for same; and
- misrepresenting her health circumstances to medical colleagues and obtaining financial support.

Censure creates a disciplinary record. It may be considered in future by the Complaints Committee, Investigation Committee, or a Panel of the Inquiry Committee of the College acting in accordance with subsection 126(2) of the RHPA.

**I. PREAMBLE**

Medical residents are members of the College and are required to conduct themselves with the same professionalism and high standard of ethical behaviour expected of fully qualified physicians. Attempts to mislead through altering documents reflects a lack of honesty and integrity. Conduct of this sort represents egregious breaches of the ethical and professional standards expected of a medical resident.

Lying to the College in the course of an investigation and providing false and misleading information to an academic institution constitutes professional misconduct and, if serious enough and/or part of a pattern of behaviour, can also demonstrate an unfitness to practice medicine.

Physicians understand the physical and emotional significance of a diagnosis of a serious health condition and its impact on not only the patient, but also their friends, family and colleagues. In this context, it is a particularly egregious breach of ethical and moral standards for a physician to represent to others, including the physician's medical colleagues, that the physician has or had been diagnosed with a non-existent serious medical condition and has undergone or is undergoing treatment for that condition when neither is true in order to gain personal advantage. Such conduct is unbecoming a member of the medical profession.

## **II. THE RELEVANT FACTS ARE:**

The following is a description of the circumstances that led to censure:

1. Some details underlying this censure have been removed or anonymized to avoid providing identifying information about third parties.
2. When Ms Kehar was registered with the College and enrolled as a first year family medicine resident at the University of Manitoba ("the University") in or about February of 2019, she was participating in an elective which she had arranged in Saskatchewan. Ms Kehar commenced working there without ensuring that proper licensing in Saskatchewan was in place. This included having failed to provide the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Saskatchewan ("CPSS") with a Certificate of Professional Conduct ("COPC") from the College. Ms Kehar has stated that this was inadvertent and that this resulted in her unknowingly practising in Saskatchewan without a license for several days in early February 2019.
3. After Ms Kehar was made aware of the problem and directed to cease practice by the University, on or about February 13, 2019:
  - a. Ms Kehar immediately stopped practicing; and
  - b. Ms Kehar altered an email she had received from the College before forwarding it to CPSS. This was an apparent attempt by Ms Kehar to remedy the situation and to deflect responsibility for this error from herself onto the College.

### **Original email Ms Kehar received from College dated February 13, 2019:**

Good afternoon Dr. Kehar  
Our apologies, however we did not receive the faxed consent form and authorization for payment form for your Certificate of Professional Conduct request to the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Saskatchewan. (emphasis added)

Email as altered and forwarded to CPSS by Ms Kehar on the same date:

Good afternoon Dr. Kehar, Our apologies, we did not fax the consent form for your Certificate of Professional Conduct request to the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Saskatchewan. I will have this done on an urgent basis. (emphasis added)

4. After follow-up contact from CPSS, the above alteration was discovered by staff at the College on February 14, 2019 and reported to the University that same day. That led to the College and the University each conducting concurrent investigations into Ms Kehar's conduct, both of which lasted several months and led to further concerns about Ms Kehar's conduct as described herein.
5. In the context of the University investigations:
  - a. On February 14, 2019, Ms Kehar initially had communications with the Associate Dean of Post Graduate Medicine Education ("PGME") of the Max Rady College of Medicine (the "Associate Dean, PGME") in which Ms Kehar denied having altered the February 13, 2019 email. The University placed Ms Kehar on a paid leave of absence pending further review,
  - b. Ms Kehar later contacted the Associate Dean, PGME to advise that she had received an email from another person who confessed to hacking her account and altering the February 13, 2019 email.
  - c. Ms Kehar has stated that in early March 2019, she attempted to communicate with the PGME's office through her Student Advocate, who made repeated attempts to arrange a time to meet with the Associate Dean, PGME.
  - d. On or about March 13, 2019, Ms Kehar was permitted to return to her resident duties.
  - e. On or about March 15, 2019, the University provided Ms Kehar with a report confirming that there was no evidence to support her suggestion that someone else was responsible for altering the email, and also provided that report to the College.
6. On April 19, 2019, Ms Kehar provided a letter to the College responding to the concern that she had altered the February 13, 2019 email. In that letter, Ms Kehar took responsibility for altering the document and attributed her actions to "a brief episode of mental exhaustion" and described the decision she made as arising from "fear, stress, exhaustion and nervousness".
7. In the context of the ongoing University investigation:
  - a. On April 23, 2019, the Associate Dean, PGME sent Ms Kehar a letter advising her of the allegations against her as part of the University's investigation, and invited her to provide her response to those allegations verbally and/or in writing at a meeting to take place on April 30, 2019.
  - b. On April 30, 2019, Ms Kehar met with the Associate Dean, PGME and admitted to

- altering the February 13, 2019 email both verbally and in writing.
- c. Ms Kehar has stated that her Student Advocate indicated that Ms Kehar wanted to admit to the allegations to the University earlier.
  - d. On May 7, 2019:
    - i. Ms Kehar was expelled from the University's Family Medicine Program. Her expulsion was based on her admission to having altered the e-mail in question, and the Faculty's finding that Ms Kehar had been dishonest in relation to certain other academic events, which she denied; and
    - ii. The College was advised by the University of Ms Kehar's expulsion by the University
  - e. On May 21, 2019, Ms Kehar appealed her expulsion from the PGME program to the University's Local Discipline Committee ("LDC") and submitted materials in support of her appeal. In Ms Kehar's submission to the LDC:
    - i. She described a concern that she might have had a serious health condition;
    - ii. Ms Kehar stated that concern arose during the period between December 2018 and January of 2019, and that she underwent a surgical procedure to address the concern in January of 2019; and
    - iii. She explained that "Though I am not comfortable discussing this issue, I now understand that it is relevant to this matter and had an impact on me and my actions during this time."
8. The materials Ms Kehar submitted to the LDC in relation to the appeal of her expulsion on or about May 21, 2019 were provided to the College.
9. In the context of the College investigation:
  - a. On May 28, 2019, Ms Kehar was interviewed by the College Investigator. During that interview Ms Kehar described going through a very difficult time commencing in December 2018 and January 2019 and she described feeling extremely stressed at the time. She attributed her state of mind as being related, in part, to a concern that she might have had a serious health condition for which she had a related surgical procedure in January of 2019. During that interview, Ms Kehar provided a description of the surgical procedure which she said was performed at the hospital.
  - b. Subsequent to Ms Kehar's College interview, she was asked to provide additional information about the January 2019 surgical procedure and to provide a report from either the surgeon who performed it or to provide the records from the hospital related to the procedure,
10. On June 14, 2019, the appeal of Ms Kehar's expulsion to the LDC was heard and subsequently dismissed on June 17, 2019.
11. On June 27, 2019, when Ms Kehar had failed to provide the College with the requested documentation regarding her surgical procedure, the College wrote to her requiring that

she produce a copy of the operative report or similar hospital documentation describing the procedure and certain written information from the surgeon related to the procedure by a specified deadline.

12. On July 1, 2019, Ms Kehar filed a further appeal of her expulsion to the University Discipline Committee (the "UDC"), wherein Ms Kehar repeated and relied upon the statements she had made to the LDC.
13. In the context of the College proceedings:
  - a. On August 20, 2019, after some delay, Ms Kehar provided the College with a letter of the same date purportedly written by the office manager of her surgeon's clinic confirming that Ms Kehar underwent the surgical procedure she had described as having been performed on January 8, 2019 both in Ms Kehar's interview and in her appeal submission to the University. Ms Kehar also advised, through her legal counsel, that there was no information available from the hospital about the procedure because she did not stay overnight.
  - b. Investigations conducted by the College later revealed that:
    - i. There was no evidence to support Ms Kehar's assertion of having a possible diagnosis of a serious health condition in or about December 2018 and/or January 2019, nor of her having undergone a surgical procedure in January 2019 at the hospital Ms Kehar identified as the location of her surgery;
    - ii. The surgeon Ms Kehar identified did not perform any surgical procedures on Ms Kehar in January 2019 as represented by her or at all; and
    - iii. The letter that Ms Kehar provided to the College purportedly from the surgeon's clinic office manager and dated August 20, 2019 was not written by the office manager on that date. It was a letter that had been written much earlier about another matter and had been altered by Ms Kehar to both change the date and content by inserting a different description of the procedure performed to align with the false story Ms Kehar had told the College investigator about having a possible diagnosis of a non-existent serious medical condition and having undergone surgery to deflect responsibility for her actions.
  - c. By letter dated September 12, 2019, the College investigation was expanded to include the concern that Ms Kehar had provided false and misleading information in both the University appeal proceedings and in the College investigation regarding her comments about a non-existent serious medical condition scare and the surgical procedure Ms Kehar described. The College advised Ms Kehar that it expected her to correct the record in the University proceedings, with reference to her misrepresentations.
  - d. On September 16, 2019, in response to inquiries from Ms Kehar's legal counsel as to the nature of the concerns in the expanded investigation, the College indicated to Ms Kehar's legal counsel that the College had reason to believe that the procedure

that Ms Kehar described as taking place in January of 2019 had not taken place as alleged by her or at all,

- e. On September 16, 2019, Ms Kehar's legal counsel, on Ms Kehar's behalf, requested an adjournment of the UDC hearing that was scheduled to take place the following day. The request for the adjournment included a statement from Ms Kehar's legal counsel that "an issue had arisen respecting information before the panel that may require clarification." The hearing was adjourned to late November 2019, however Ms Kehar did not advise the College of the date on which the hearing was to resume.
  - f. By letter received September 25, 2019, the surgeon who Ms Kehar stated performed the surgery confirmed with the College that the only procedures he had ever performed on Ms Kehar were in October 17, 2017 and February 9, 2018. He also provided information that made it clear that neither of the procedures were related to a potential diagnosis of or treatment for the non-existent serious medical condition or any other serious medical condition.
14. On November 15, 2019, legal counsel for the University advised the College that:
    - a. The hearing was proceeding as scheduled on November 26, 2019; and
    - b. No correction of the record had been made by Ms Kehar.
  15. On November 20, 2019, the University hearing was adjourned again to the new year.
  16. On January 3, 2020, after some delay and after Ms Kehar had provided the College with independent medical confirmation that she was able participate in the College investigation:
    - a. Ms Kehar provided a letter to the College admitting to having misrepresented both the timing and the nature of her medical procedure, and to having falsified a letter to the College to corroborate this misrepresentation; and
    - b. Ms Kehar provided a letter to the University admitting to having misrepresented both the timing and the nature of her medical procedure.
  17. On January 24, 2020, the appeal of Ms Kehar's expulsion from the Family Medicine Program was heard and dismissed on January 29, 2020. The reasons of the UDC for its decision include the following:
    - a. It overturned certain findings of fact relied upon by the Associate Dean, PGME as grounds for Ms Kehar's expulsion, while acknowledging Ms Kehar's admission of wrongdoing with respect to having altered correspondence from CPSS; and
    - b. It upheld Ms Kehar's expulsion, finding that it was a fair outcome in light of the seriousness of altering correspondence from a professional licensing body, and of providing additional false information throughout the investigatory and disciplinary processes.

18. Whereas in the University proceedings Ms Kehar admitted that “[she] had misrepresented the nature and timing of her health issues previously submitted as extenuating circumstances at the time [she] altered and sent the email”, Ms Kehar did not advise the UDC of her second falsification of documents as to both the nature and timing of the procedure and that she had fabricated a possible diagnosis of a serious medical condition and treatment for same as referenced in her appeal submission.
19. Ms Kehar has been advised that the College became aware of concerns about her dealings with three of her Colleagues in or about March 2020 and has been investigating those concerns. Ms Kehar has confirmed that between in or about December 2019 and July 2020, she lied to two of her medical colleagues about her personal circumstances, including the state of her health to garner sympathy and support. Although Ms Kehar has not provided a formal response to the College's investigation about these concerns, Ms Kehar has acknowledged that:
  - a. On several occasions, Ms Kehar misrepresented to her colleagues that she had been diagnosed with and was undergoing invasive treatment for a non-existent serious medical condition;
  - b. Ms Kehar misrepresented to one of her colleagues the nature and scope of the College and University proceedings and her status as a resident and member of the College to suggest that she was a victim of false accusations and still eligible to practice medicine; and
  - c. Colleagues loaned Ms Kehar substantial sums of money in response to requests from her for assistance on multiple occasions.
20. Ms Kehar has acknowledged that her conduct was a serious mistake and expressed remorse over her actions in retrospect.
21. Ms Kehar has acknowledged that she has demonstrated an unfitness to practice.

**III. ON THESE FACTS, THE COMMITTEE NOTED MS KEHAR’S EXPULSION FROM THE UNIVERSITY, UPHELD ON APPEALS. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT ALSO RECORDS ITS DISAPPROVAL OF MS KEHAR’S CONDUCT AS A FORMER MEMBER OF THE COLLEGE:**

1. On several occasions, both leading to and during the College's investigation, Ms Kehar provided false and misleading information to two separate professional regulatory authorities and an educational institution and in doing so Ms Kehar altered documents. Through this conduct, Ms Kehar demonstrated a pattern of calculated and intentional efforts to deceive and deflect responsibility for her actions.
2. The Committee is of the view that Ms Kehar’s actions in relation to the initial alteration of a College communication and in relation to her efforts to escape responsibility for those

actions not only constitute professional misconduct but that they also demonstrate an unfitness to practice medicine. Ms Kehar's attempt to explain her actions by, in part, fabricating evidence of a non-existent serious medical diagnosis and treatment was considered to be particularly egregious, unacceptable and unprofessional conduct for a member of the medical profession.

3. The Committee also considers Ms Kehar's conduct in misleading her medical colleagues by lying to them about a false serious medical diagnosis and treatment to be not only conduct unbecoming a member of the medical profession, but to be antithetical to the fundamental ethical and moral obligations of physicians.
4. The Committee notes that it would have referred this matter to an inquiry panel for a formal discipline hearing and sought revocation of Ms Kehar's license had she not already been expelled from the program and no longer eligible to practice medicine in Manitoba.
5. Through publication of this censure, including the details of Ms Kehar's actions seeks to fulfil the College's public protection mandate.

#### **IV. PUBLICATION AND COSTS**

1. Ms Kehar's name and the description of the circumstances that led to the censure has been made public pursuant to s. 104(2) of the RHPA.
2. Ms Kehar was ordered to pay costs of the investigation in the amount of \$8,937.60 pursuant to s. 104(4) of the RHPA.