August 5, 2014

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
80 College Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 2E2

Re: CPSO Policy #5-08: Physicians and the Human Rights Code

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) appreciates the ability to offer comments on this policy review. The EFC is a national association of denominations, ministry organizations, post-secondary educational institutions including seminaries, colleges and universities, and local churches. Some of our affiliates provide medical and health care in Canada and overseas, and many physicians are members of our affiliated denominations.

Having reviewed the policy, we note that while there is a strong emphasis on the duty not to discriminate in the provision of services, there is a lack of emphasis on the religious freedom and freedom of conscience guarantees and protections offered in Canadian law to individuals and, in this context, physicians.

We endorse the analysis and commentary in the written submission and covering letter of the Christian Medical Dental Society (CMDS) and the Canadian Federation of Catholic Physician Societies. The CMDS is an EFC affiliate, and we commend these documents to you.

Christianity has a long history of fostering and promoting medical care. It was and continues to be a distinctive of the Christian tradition, as documented by Gary Ferngren in his book *Medicine and Health Care in Early Christianity* (Johns Hopkins, 2009). Integrity of belief and practice is a core element of the Christian faith and respect for religious freedom is critical to the ability of individuals and groups to live out their faith in an integral way before God and in the service of others.