July 28, 2014

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
80 College St.
Toronto, ON M5G 2E2

Attention: Policy Dept.,

In the 2008 “Physicians and the Ontario Human Rights Code” document, physicians decide whether to accept patients and offer medical services or not, based on their technical expertise and on their own moral or religious beliefs.

It is paramount that physicians in Ontario are always able to choose their actions using their own judgement, and never feel forced to provide a medical service they are uncomfortable with.

The Ontario Human Rights Code provides assurance that individuals may not be denied medical service based on who they are. The policy of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario must provide assurance for physicians that they may choose what medical services to offer in their own practice.

We, the public, depend on physicians to use their medical knowledge, their technical ability and their professional and personal judgement to make appropriate recommendations for medical treatment. We, the public, have recourse to get a second opinion if we are uncomfortable with any medical procedure recommended to us.

Physicians also need to have a course of action available to them if they feel pressured to provide particular medical services. No person or committee or Human Rights Commission should be able to force a physician to offer a medical service or procedure they are uncomfortable providing. We need physicians to be free to act using their best judgement. We also need to recognize that the recommendation of one physician may not be identical to another physician, because of differences between the two physicians.

It is the mixture of medical knowledge, technical ability and professional and personal judgement that comprises the value of a physician. Limiting any of these characteristics would denigrate the profession of physicians.