College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

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To Whom This Concerns

I am writing to express my thoughts on the proposed policy entitled “Professional Obligations and Human Rights”. Thank you for inviting the public in this consultation period.

While I can understand the chagrin of some patients who want their doctors to perform an abortion, or to advise on reproduction technology, or (if it is ever legalized) to be assisted in suicide and are told by the doctor that he or she doesn’t agree with such procedures in conscience and will neither perform them nor refer to another doctor who would, the policy drafted doesn’t get at the heart of Professional Obligations and Human Rights.

Indeed, it removes the professional obligation of a Physician to “do no harm”. It also denies the Physician his or her fundamental human right to act according to his or her conscience, which is upheld by the United Nations Human Rights Code, and the Canadian Charter.

Though this is a provincial matter, it cannot weaken what already is contained in the Canadian Charter.

Furthermore, if euthanasia or assisted suicide is legalized physicians must maintain their right of conscience to refuse to participate in any way. I personally would not feel safe if my physician were to participates in any way in euthanasia or assisted suicide.

Again, thank you for this opportunity.