RE: Draft policy “Professional Obligations and Human Rights”

Dear Members of the Consultations Committee for CPSO Policy,

I am opposed to what is put forward in the draft policy lines #156-161 dealing with the compulsory “effective referral.”

Physicians and patients both have rights. A physician has the right and should continue to have the right to decline to participate in certain acts based on their own personal morals/ethics and or medical knowledge. The CPSO should NOT define or limit morality. Making an “effective referral” compulsory by the CPSO would be forcing that physician to directly participate in whatever act they find morally/ethically objectionable—thus forcing the physician to violate their own conscience.

By logical extension, I suppose the “effective referral” would also regrettably one day be applicable to assisted suicide given the Supreme Court of Canada’s recent decision on assisted suicide. Imagine physicians who having sworn to heal and to do no harm, being forced to assist in their patient’s suicide!

Freedom of conscience is foundational to our free society and cannot be limited, even for the best of intentions.