College of Physicians & Surgeons of Ontario
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 attn: Policy Dept.

Re: Freedom of Conscience Right of Physicians

I would like to comment on three policies:
1) Providing planning for quality end-of-life care
2) Consent to treatment
3) Professional obligation and human rights

It is now proposed that doctors be obliged to provide referrals when they cannot perform a procedure for reasons of conscience included in your draft entitled "Professional Obligations and Human Rights."
Under the guise of language which suggests objectivity and the protection of patients, this policy really proposes the trampling of physicians' human rights. If this policy is approved without amendment, the inevitable result would be the loss of physicians of integrity in the medical profession. Eventually, such a policy could be extended even to euthanasia, should it become legal.
It is sad to imagine a world where doctors are held to leave the profession if they cannot accommodate a request to either kill a patient or refer them to a doctor who will.

Freedom of conscience and freedom of religion, where faith informs conscience, is a foundational principle in our society.

Good doctors follow their convictions in trying to do what is right for their patient and should not be separated from their consciences and humanity when caring for others."