February 10, 2015

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

Dear Members of the Consultations Committee:

Subject: Draft Policy “Professional Obligations and Human Rights”.

I am writing to you with sincere concern regarding the content of your proposed draft policy where sections suggest that physicians who decline to participate in certain acts for reasons of conscience should be compelled to refer their patients to other physicians who will perform these acts. It does not address the fact that many of these same physicians will find the act of referral itself objectionable, as they consider it material cooperation with the act. In compelling physicians to refer, you are limiting their right to conscientious objection.

In this Electronic age, there should be other ways for patients to get the referral they are seeking. May I suggest that patients could be accommodated by, for example,

1. Phoning or e-mailing the College for a referral
2. The College could create a search function on their webpage for patients to locate Doctors who are agreeable to perform the procedure they are seeking
3. Doctors who support various procedures could post on the internet so a SEARCH on Google, etc. would locate a match.

I am sure there are other resource routes that could be created to serve everyone fairly. I sincerely hope that new avenues can be created that satisfy both the patients requests for service and the doctors who object to certain referrals for reasons of their conscience.