February 17, 2015-02-18

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

Attention: Members of the Consultations Committee

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

It is with great concern that we are writing you after learning of the contents of the above proposed draft. While we are sure your intentions are honourable, we have apprehensions with Sections 8, 10 and 11 which would mean that physicians who follow their conscience with regard to certain procedures would be compelled to refer their patients to other professionals who would perform these acts.

If a physician finds a procedure objectionable, who has the right to force this physician to send the patient to a less conscientious practitioner? Where is the professional freedom we all have fought so hard to preserve? Sure the patient has rights but what about the physician or any other professional? Is it your plan to remove the right of conscientious objection from the field of medicine?

We do not expect you to define morality. Who can? Values change. Soon doctors may be instruments of death instead of live saving. However, having the right to opt out or conscientious objection from procedures or actions that compromise the beliefs or principles of our medical professions will make our Province a safer place to live, protect the respect we have for our caregivers and not reduce the profession to one following the whelms of every self serving minority.

Please, please review the sections mentioned above and change them to make it very clear that any physician has the right to opt out for the reason of freedom of conscience.

Thanking you for your consideration.