

Discipline Report

Physician unsuccessfully appeals disciplinary decision to Alberta Court of Appeal

Grande Prairie orthopedic surgeon **Dr. Mohammed Al-Ghamdi** was previously found guilty of disruptive conduct and sanctioned by a CPSA hearing tribunal. He appealed to a CPSA Council Review Panel, where the decision was upheld. He then appealed to the Alberta Court of Appeal, where his appeal was dismissed.

Background

In 2017, Dr. Al-Ghamdi was found guilty of eight counts of disruptive conduct towards his colleagues at Grande Prairie's Queen Elizabeth II Hospital. This conduct included:

- Failing to follow on-call schedules and claiming to have a schedule of his own.
- Failing to cooperate with colleagues to ensure surgical cases were performed based on the need for urgent care.
- Threatening legal action and making repeated complaints to hospital administration and the health authority about his colleagues.
- Failing to follow the hospital's issue/dispute resolution processes.
- Having nursing staff open sterilized packs of surgical instruments not reasonably required, making them unavailable.

Dr. Al-Ghamdi's practice permit was suspended by the tribunal for three years, pending a fitness-to-practice assessment and the completion of any required remediation to the satisfaction of the Registrar. At that point, after a minimum of two years, he could request reinstatement of his practice permit. He was also ordered to pay a portion of costs associated with the investigation and hearings.

Dr. Al-Ghamdi appealed the decision to a CPSA Council Review Panel in 2018 and to the Alberta Court of Appeal in 2020, who both upheld the original decision. Dr. Al-Ghamdi's practice permit was cancelled in February 2019 for failing to complete his annual registration requirements.

Commentary

While the Alberta Court of Appeals felt the CPSA hearing tribunal and Council Review Panel improperly relied on certain evidence, this was not enough to overturn the ruling and sanctions against Dr. Al-Ghamdi. Disruption in any workplace is not acceptable, particularly in medicine, where a functional team approach is key to the safe and responsible delivery of patient care.