

Aug. 7, 2024

Dr. Richard Hatfield sanctioned for failing to maintain appropriate boundaries with patient

Edmonton, AB – A CPSA Hearing Tribunal sanctioned family physician Dr. Richard Hatfield for failing to maintain appropriate boundaries with a patient, and for improperly prescribing drugs prone to misuse.

Dr. Hatfield was accused of violating physician-patient boundaries in 2023 by hugging and attempting to kiss a patient—actions which meet the definition of sexual misconduct under the *Health Professions Act*. Dr. Hatfield also prescribed a stimulant and a benzodiazepine to the same patient without meeting the documentation requirements of CPSA's [Prescribing: Drugs Associated with Substance Use Disorders or Substance-Related Harm](#) standard of practice.

Dr. Hatfield admitted to the allegations and the Hearing Tribunal accepted a joint recommendation on sanction, the particulars of which are:

- Dr. Hatfield will receive a reprimand.
- Dr. Hatfield's practice permit is suspended for three months, with two months held in abeyance pending completion of the Tribunal's remaining orders (Dr. Hatfield's CPSA registration has been inactive since May 2023; the suspension will take effect if/when Dr. Hatfield returns to practice in Alberta).
- At his own expense, Dr. Hatfield must complete and unconditionally pass two courses, one on boundaries and another on prescribing controlled substances.
- Dr. Hatfield is responsible for 75% of the costs of the investigation and hearing.

Under [An Act to Protect Patients](#), health professionals in Alberta who are found guilty of sexual misconduct towards a patient are subject to a mandatory suspension.

Resources:

[CPSA Hearing Tribunal decision](#)

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The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta is the regulator for all physicians, physician assistants and surgeons in the province and is governed by the Health Professions Act. Our role is to protect the public by issuing practice permits to those who meet educational and training criteria, hold Alberta physicians to ethical and medical practice standards, and investigate and resolve physician-related complaints. CPSA also ensures the safety and quality of medical and diagnostic testing services in Alberta through an independent accreditation program.

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