

**College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia**  
**Summary of Decision of Investigation Committee “C”**

**Dr. Aliasghar Norouzian**

Investigation Committee “C” of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia concluded its investigation into a complaint against Dr. Aliasghar Norouzian by Decision rendered December 6, 2016. The complaint involved allegations of misrepresentation of information on Dr. Norouzian’s assessment and licensing applications with the College. The Investigation Committee resolved the matter by way of an informal resolution, whereby Dr. Norouzian agreed to have his licence to practice medicine revoked. The Committee further agreed through the informal resolution that Dr. Norouzian is granted permission to reapply for registration but must satisfy all of the criteria required under the *Medical Act* and its regulations prior to registration being granted.

A summary of the complaint and the informal resolution accepted by the Investigation Committee are set out below.

OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINT, RESPONSE AND PROCESS OF COMMITTEE

Dr. Aliasghar Norouzian was issued a Defined Licence to practice medicine in 2014 and he commenced his practice in Sydney, Cape Breton in the late fall of 2014.

Dr. Norouzian was an international medical graduate who attained licensure in Nova Scotia through the College’s Clinical Assessment for Practice Program (CAPP), a program which was in effect at the time but no longer exists.

Dr. Norouzian applied for licensure through the CAPP Program on two occasions, and was rejected the first time as he did not meet CAPP’s requirement for practice experience within a defined period of time.

Upon being notified of this rejection, Dr. Norouzian re-applied with new information suggesting he had in fact been practicing in Iran within a timeframe that would qualify him for the CAPP Program. Based on this new information, Dr. Norouzian was accepted into the CAPP program and issued a Defined licence.

Subsequently, the College questioned some of the information provided by Dr. Norouzian in his second application for the CAPP Program. The Registration Committee of the College took steps to verify the information provided by Dr. Norouzian and had concerns about the information it uncovered. In order to review this information with Dr. Norouzian, a meeting was held between a representative of the College and Dr. Norouzian in April, 2015. Dr. Norouzian was advised of some inconsistencies in his application, and he advised that his application had been completed on his behalf by someone else, and the information was inserted incorrectly, without his awareness. Dr. Norouzian also provided the same inaccurate information on his application for licensure with the College.

Upon learning of the inaccurate information provided by Dr. Norouzian, the Investigation Committee issued an interim suspension of Dr. Norouzian’s Defined Licence effective May 1, 2015.

In the course of its investigation the College reviewed Dr. Norouzian's application documents for licensure in Manitoba, where he had been denied licensure, and determined there was inaccurate information provided by him in those application documents as well. Dr. Norouzian advised the College he was new to Canada and did not understand the importance of accuracy in a CV.

After completing its investigation of these inaccuracies and the documentation provided by Dr. Norouzian, the Investigation Committee of the College did not accept Dr. Norouzian's explanations for the inaccurate information provided in the Manitoba documents, the application for CAPP and the application for licensure with the College. The Committee found Dr. Norouzian to have been strategically and purposefully dishonest in his completion of these documents.

In April of 2016, the Committee provided Dr. Norouzian with its conclusions and proposed an informal resolution whereby he would agree to have his licence revoked effective the date of its initial suspension on May 1, 2015, and would permit him to reapply for registration and a Defined Licence on certain terms.

Four months later, Dr. Norouzian wrote to the College in response to the proposed informal resolution. He apologized for his actions and provided the College with a different version of the events leading to his application to the CAPP Program and his application for licensure. He stated that he acted on the advice of a friend when he changed his application documents to reflect inaccurate dates, and that he was aware this information was inaccurate at the time he provided it to the College. He also advised the College of details of his difficult personal circumstances, as a backdrop to his actions.

## DECISION

The Investigation Committee and Dr. Norouzian have reached an agreement for an informal resolution whereby Dr. Norouzian agrees that his licence to practice medicine is revoked effective May 1, 2015.

The Committee grants Dr. Norouzian permission to reapply for registration and a Defined Licence, but he must satisfy all the criteria required under the *Medical Act* and its regulations at the time of such application. The Investigation Committee of the College leaves any decisions respecting the issuing of a new licence to the Registration Committee, and makes no recommendations to the Committee in this regard.

In the event Dr. Norouzian applies for registration, the Registrar shall provide the Registration Committee with all information gathered during the investigative process, including the decisions of the Investigation Committee. In the event a Defined Licence is issued to Dr. Norouzian, it shall be subject to the provisions of the *Medical Act* and its regulations, together with any conditions required by Dr. Norouzian's sponsor, and any additional conditions required by the Registration Committee. The Investigation Committee also provided recommendations to the Registration Committee with respect to additional conditions, in the event the Committee chooses to issue a new licence.

In reaching this decision, the Committee is of the view that revocation of Dr. Norouzian's registration is the only appropriate disposition of this matter, given that his registration and

licence were obtained under false pretences. The importance of truthfulness during the College's application process is underscored by the language of the application form itself:

I understand that I am deemed not to have satisfied the requirements and qualifications for registration/licensure if, in connection with this application or past application, I have made a false or misleading representation, either because of what was stated or left unstated and that on that basis, my licence may be revoked.

In its decision upholding the interim suspension of Dr. Norouzian's licence, the Committee noted that the inaccuracies in the information provided to the College were unacceptable. The Committee favoured the explanation that these inaccuracies were "wilful and strategic errors made to disguise the truth and enhance Dr. Norouzian's candidacy for CAPP."

The Committee further found that Dr. Norouzian had not taken responsibility for what they believe was strategic and purposeful dishonesty, when he provided his initial responses to the Committee. Dr. Norouzian maintained his position that he was unaware of the inaccurate information in his application documents for more than a year when providing his explanations to the College. The Committee does note that Dr. Norouzian eventually acknowledged his role in the matter, and the Committee commends Dr. Norouzian for this. The weight to be given to this acknowledgement will be determined by the Registration Committee in the event Dr. Norouzian applies for registration with the College.

It was the view of the Committee in considering the interim suspension, and remains the view of the Committee now, that "it was clear to Dr. Norouzian when he signed the College's forms that misrepresentation may result in the revocation of his licence".

Further, the Committee in its interim decision stated:

The College exists in order to serve and protect the public interest in the practice of medicine, preserve the integrity of the medical profession, and maintain the confidence of the public and the profession in the ability of the College to regulate the practice of medicine.

This language applies with the same force in considering the final disposition of this matter. Dr. Norouzian made a deliberate decision to misrepresent information to the College in order to gain access to a program for which he would otherwise have been ineligible. His personal gain was more important than his honesty. The College cannot condone, and indeed must condemn in the strongest way possible, the dishonesty of any applicant for membership in the College who chooses to misrepresent or omit required information during the licensure process.

The College's licensure process is the gatekeeper to the provision of competent medical services to the public. Those who seek the privilege of a licence to practice medicine, in addition to practising medicine with integrity, must also complete the application process with integrity. Failure to do so must result in the strongest possible sanction, which in this case is the revocation of Dr. Norouzian's licence to practice medicine.

In the view of this Committee, the circumstances of Dr. Norouzian's case justify the informal resolution accepted here, where his licence to practice medicine is revoked, but if he can satisfy a Registration Committee that he now meets all requirements for licensure, including that of

having the current capacity, competence and character to safely and ethically practise medicine, he is permitted to reapply.