



November 21, 2016

Dr. Michael Caffaro  
Assistant Registrar & Complaints Director  
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Dear Dr. Caffaro,

I would like to start by commending the CPSA's and your individual efforts to respond to the recommendations contained in the Continuity of Care Report written largely about many of the events leading up to Greg's death.

I have taken a little time to look at the blog you are hosting that shows many different comments on the amended Referral Standard to take effect in January 2017.

While it is certainly tempting to react to the comments questioning patient's intelligence and our family's inserting ourselves into health care affairs, I will not do that for it serves no go forward purpose.

I will say though, that effective health care can only be delivered as a team effort by all that are needed, and including specifically the patient and often their family.

I will also say categorically, that the so-called system is not functional and effective at delivering care and has not been for some time. In fact, we agree with some of your doctors' comments, that the move to provincial political oversight and associated accountability avoidance has shifted the system and many individualistic players, further from what is needed to consistently, successfully work with patients in achieving the best care. In fact, it often fails in providing safe care at all, sometimes with tragic results.

Successful teams in any arena, are made up of players that work together, building on each other's strengths, to achieve the best outcomes. Outcomes well beyond what any individual player can possibly accomplish. They function together through a high degree of respect and confidence in each other, and through strong communication in order for each to play their roles the very best they can. Other teams, on paper, may have more stars, more talent, more intelligence but do not perform nearly as well while they work as individuals, most often chasing their own limelight. In some cases, the most talented can be the most disruptive and hold the team back from its potential. While they may be well rewarded financially, they are not winners.

Good team players learn as much as they can from each other and the challenges of the game in order to get better together. Individualist players blame others for their lack of talent, skills or game sense or



experience. It is never their fault and there is no interest in learning. Ridicule fits better than humility or respect and broader team goals mean less to them than individual ones.

Surely in health care, the goal is to work together to achieve the best care possible with patients. We also know that everyone is human, and that nobody's perfect so we all need to work together to cover our limitations and utilize our respective strengths.

We see the steps being taken by the College as those which may put some more structure around certain aspects of the system in order to facilitate better communication and better team work. Most of the negative comments attempt to defend the existing system. Many comments lay blame on others for the practical hurdles as they exist today, rather than recognize the problems and seek to work together to find the best solutions for everyone. Team work is give and take for the betterment of all.

There is one more aspect to the required teamwork that applies here in Alberta. That is the cost of the so called system. While the system is currently managed by a command and control structure, and the provincial political intervention is being elevated even further, the bottom line is that Albertans will not continue to hand over blank cheques to the system for players that are in total, delivering average to below performance. There are some dedicated and talented people working very hard the best way they can but as time goes on, they are being overwhelmed by the rest who work completely as individuals. If we don't work together to improve then we should not be surprised if the rules of the game and the roster completely changes.

In sport it is called team chemistry. In health care it is called culture. In our view, anyone that is fighting to maintain today's system culture is a cancer to the future well-being of care providers and their patients equally. It is not acceptable and it is not defensible. It will be dealt with, one way or another.

Oh and if I hear one more time that I don't understand, its complicated, or we can't boil the ocean, I will explode! It is not about an instant solution or some magic potion, it is about working together for the betterment of others, one step at a time, always as a team. We can do this. Caring for others is why people enter the health care field, isn't it?

Greg always put others ahead of himself and he is sorely missed.

Sincerely,

Dave Price on behalf of Greg's family