

Local doctor loses licence

By Sarah Sobanski

A Coe Hill doctor has lost his right to practice medicine, but that isn't slowing his desire to care for the community.

The Discipline Committee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) has decided to revoke Dr. Rob Kamermans' medical licence. It found that Kamermans "failed to maintain the standard of practice of the profession" under the Medicine Act and branded him "incompetent".

Kamermans said he plans to appeal the decision. He suggested that without him, 500 patients in Coe Hill would go without a doctor.

"The college [says] they stand there to protect the public. I don't understand how they are protecting the public and putting 500 people at risk," said Kamermans, wondering where his patients will go. He said other doctors in the area are stressed with patients as it is.

He added, "I feel terrible for my patients."

Kamermans said he had 12 hours to close his practice after the college informed him that it was revoking his licence.

He is expected to pay a fine just over \$28,000 to the college over the next six months.

In further response to the decision, Kamermans will reopen his practice instead as a wellness centre. The centre will see Kamermans as a sort of counsellor or consultant for patients looking for homeopathic and holistic or natural medicines as opposed to pharmaceutical medicine.

"I can talk to them about all the different spectrums of alternative or different kinds of treatments. Some people lean more to homeopathic, or herbal medicine, or Chinese medicine. I'm pretty well versed in all [those] healing methods," said Kamermans. "It will focus more on healing. Not just healing the body, but healing the emotions that lead to the medical problems. It goes deeper than just giving a pill."

Kamermans said that other practitioners such as other herbalists or massage therapists may work at the centre.

"In some ways I feel like I've broken free of the college and now I can really do what I need to do," said Kamermans.

The CPSO found Kamermans guilty of failing to maintain the standard of practice in six patient cases while working in the ER at a health care centre in 2011. Expert doctors protected by a publication ban "were in agreement that Dr. Kamermans' documentation of patient encounters did not meet the standard of practice." The committee reviewed a variety of evidence including nurses' notes and patients' testimonies.

The release noted that the college had previously disciplined Kamermans in 2013. At that time, it found that Kamermans had failed to maintain the standard of practice for 21 patients at his family practice. It suggested this contributed to its decision to revoke his licence last week.

Kamermans had been under supervision to improve his patient documentation at his family practice. His supervisors reported back to the college that there were some concerns in certain areas about his standard of practice, but that he was improving in some areas as well.