

Notice of Censure

CRNM #141310

Allegation

The complaint alleged that the member posted patient information on her Facebook page.

Findings

The member admitted to posting to her Facebook page personal health information of a patient under her care. "I thought I would notify other medical professionals who have cared for this patient in the past of the serious nature of his condition. These individuals had access to my Facebook page, and I posted a comment on my Facebook page using the patient's initials."

The member violated her professional responsibility of Personal Health Information Act by posting information related to a patient under her care. The member failed to exercise discretion with respect to the disclosure of confidential information about a patient.

The member did not meet the *Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses*:

- **Standard I: Professional Responsibility and Accountability**
Registered nurses are responsible and accountable for their nursing practice and conduct.
 - Indicators:
 2. Practice in a manner consistent with the Registered Nurses Act, The *Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses*, the *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (Part 1)*, *Professional Boundaries for Therapeutic Relationships*, and other provincial and federal legislation

- **Standard V: Ethical Practice**
 - Indicators:
 24. Practice in accordance with the values outlined in the *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses (Part 1)*:
 - E. Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality**
Nurses recognize the important of privacy and confidentiality and safeguard personal, family and community information obtained in the context of a professional relationship.
 - Ethical responsibilities:
 5. When nurses engage in any form of communication, including verbal or electronic, involving a discussion of clinical cases, they ensure that their discussion of persons receiving care is respectful and does not identify those persons unless appropriate.

Decision

The member appeared before the investigation committee and was read the censure. The

investigation committee requested the member pay costs of \$1,000.00. Although this conduct is sufficiently serious to refer to discipline, the investigation committee is mindful of the fact that the member does not have a disciplinary record with CRNM. The censure will adequately protect the public's concern regarding the privacy of personal health information and the role of registered nurses as trustees of that information. Publication of the censure will act as a deterrent for other registered nurses using electronic social media.