

COLLEGE OF DIETITIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Inquiry Case #18-26 - Complaint Outcome Report

On **December 13, 2018**, the College received correspondence from a member of the public expressing concerns with a section of a registrant's website containing information on "detox diets" that seemed inaccurate and potentially harmful in regard to chronic illness and cancer.

On **December 14**, the Inquiry Committee met and agreed to move forward with an investigation. An investigator was appointed and a subject matter expert was contacted.

On **January 24, 2019** the subject matter expert was hired to review both the allegations and the website content for an opinion on the state of science on the topic and address the risk of harm to the public.

The registrant was notified of the complaint on **January 29, 2019**.

On **February 8, 2019** a different inspector took over the investigation upon the first inspector's leave.

The subject matter expert report was received on **February 20, 2019**.

The inspection took place between **January 24, 2019** and **February 20, 2019**.

On **February 23, 2019**, the registrant responded to the allegations.

On **May 16, 2019**, the Inquiry Committee reviewed the allegations, the registrant's written answer, the subject matter expert report, and additional documentary evidence, including practice guidelines and the CDBC risk analysis tool.

The Inquiry Committee found that the evidence collected in the inspection report was sufficient to inform the allegations and disposed of the case on **May 29, 2019** under ss. 33(6)(c) and 36(1)(b) of the *Health Professions Act* after identifying the following concerns:

- Lack of understanding of the potential consequences of misinforming the public on "detox diets" and implying that detox diets may cure serious illnesses such as cancer
- Misrepresentation of "detox diets" when compared to the sample meal plan provided, which were markedly different from what is generally marketed and understood as a "detox diet", and
- Lack of scientific evidence in the overall body of scientific literature to justify marketing "detox diets" and "Ayurvedic medicine" as evidence-based nutrition information to the public.

The Inquiry Committee determined that the overall risk of harm to the public was low, with a few moderate risks regarding the registrant's lack of evidence-based practice and marketing that was not in compliance with the CDBC Marketing Bylaws and Standards of Practice 3, 13, and 17.

On **June 15, 2019**, the registrant signed a consent agreement to:

- Review CDBC Bylaws on Marketing (s.74), policy Qac-09 on Marketing, Sales and Conflict of Interest and Standards of Practice 13.5 and 17.2,
- Complete the College of Dietitians of Ontario's "Evidence-based Practice" workshop,
- Complete Cochrane Training modules:
 - Navigating the healthcare information jungle.
 - Using Cochrane reviews in real life.

- Introduction to GRADE.
 - A study suggests.
- Submission of a report upon successful completion of the points above summarizing what the registrant took away from the workshop and online training courses and how this changes her practice as a regulated health professional,
- Submission of a summary of changes to the registrant's website to demonstrate compliance with the CDBC Bylaws and Standards of Practice on marketing and evidence-based practice.

The complainant was notified of the decision on **June 24, 2019**.

A copy of the signed consent agreement is saved in the registrant's file permanently, in accordance with section 69 of the CDBC bylaws.

161 days were required to resolve the case.