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Dr. Andreas Laupacis
Health Quality Ontario
130 Bloor Street West, 10th floor
Toronto, ON M5S 1N5

RE: Claims of using “rigorous scientific methods” to assess Health Quality Issues.

Dear Dr. Laupacis

PREAMBLE:

As you will recall I wrote you in December 2016 asking you, among other questions how you justified using health technology assessment [HTA] to assess PET given that everyone agrees there is no scientific validity or basis to use the HTA. In your response you did not offer any scientific evidence to justify using HTA, but said that you “believed” there was a role for the HTA as if the practice of medicine in this province was based on “FAITH”. You stated how proud you were of your efforts using HTA to assess PET, and that you had nothing further to offer. I beg to differ.

I now have a legal opinion about the duties and responsibilities of those acting as “public servants”, to be accountable ‘publicly’ and ‘to the public’ for their actions. This is an excerpt from my CMPA lawyer’s letter to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

- 1. I believe that my advocacy complies with the College’s Policy Statement #3-16, Physician Behaviour in the Professional Environment (the “Professionalism Policy”). I freely admit that I fiercely advocate for better PET access for my patients. Nonetheless, I have always strived do so in a respectful, courteous and civil manner.*

2. **Neither CCO nor the PET Steering Committee are directly involved in the provision of health care. They are effectively public servants who advise the Ministry and are therefore accountable to the voters of Ontario for their actions and statements.**

NOTE:

In keeping with need for the public to be fully informed about how critical decisions about the “quality” of their health care are made, I will be posting all of our communications on the internet.

The actions of ICES have had a profound and severe impact on Ontario patients which have lead to unprecedented and severe accusations against ‘Public Committees from Cancer Care Ontario’ by Canadian and International medical experts. Indeed in the 2017 Auditor General’s Report on Cancer Care Services in Ontario she noted that Ontario patients have the least number of scans/1,000 population of any country offering PET. You are now further involved with a government body which will impact Ontario patients.

Therefore I will continue my efforts to have those acting as “public servants” that play a critical role in health care policy in Ontario to defend their actions “publicly”.

If you have any issues with my expectations that our dealings can be done in a ‘public space’, then I would be happy to pass any objections you might have on to my lawyer.

THE ROLE OF HEALTH QUALITY ONTARIO:

The following entry is from the Health Quality Website: [Emphasis added]

Who We Are

We are a **scientifically rigorous group** with diverse areas of expertise. We strive for complete objectivity, and look at things from a vantage point that allows us to see the forest and the trees. We work in partnership with health care providers and organizations across the system, and engage with patients themselves, to help initiate substantial and sustainable change to the province’s complex health system.

Part of the methods being used with be health technology assessment [HTA]. Yet have made it clear in your letter to me that:

- *There is no scientific basis or justification to use HTA to assess any diagnostic imaging device.*

QUESTION:

How do you justify the discrepancy between the claims that Health Quality Ontario [HQO] is using “scientifically rigorous methods” and the fact that you have included HTA knowing full well that is NOT “scientifically rigorous”?

I would suggest that this is a deliberate misleading of the public and therefore I am formally asking you if you are prepared to remove the statement about using “scientifically rigorous methodology” and replace it with:

- *“HQO will use methods based not on science but on the BELIEF/FAITH of HQO members in the methods they use to evaluate “health quality”.*

Alternatively, since you did not challenge the statement by Professor Rodney Hicks, that critical decisions on health care policy with respect to PET are based on “the most egregious and politically motivated agenda in the world”, you will make clear that at least in part:

- *Health Quality Ontario will make recommendations not based on “rigorous science” but based on the government’s political agenda.*

Given your ‘duty as a public servant’ and your actions having significant impact on health care delivery in Ontario, it is my expectation, that you fully address and defend your position on these critical issues. Thus the public can then make up their minds based on the ‘facts’.

Respectfully Submitted

Dr. Dave Webster