



Name of Registrant: - Lucie Vézina

Date of Hearing: - February 26, 2008

Decision

In a hearing held on February 26, 2008, a Panel of the Discipline Committee of the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario found Ms. Lucie Vézina guilty of professional misconduct in that she was found guilty of an offense relevant to her suitability to practise. At Ms. Vézina's request a French translator was available throughout the hearing.

The Panel accepted a statement of facts in which it was agreed that, on or about May 3, 2007, Ms. Vézina was found guilty in the Quebec Court (Criminal and Penal Division) of 16 counts of having unlawfully performed dentistry procedures delegated to dental hygienists, without holding valid and appropriate licensure in Quebec, in that she scaled teeth and took x-rays. Ms. Vézina was fined \$9,600.00, as well as processing fees of approximately \$222.00.

A joint submission on penalty and costs was accepted resulting in the following Order:

1. Ms. Vézina shall be required to appear before the panel to be reprimanded, the fact of which shall be recorded on the register.
2. Ms. Vézina's certificate of registration shall be suspended for three weeks on a date to be set by the Registrar, to be fully served within nine months of the date the Discipline Panel's order becomes final.
3. The Registrar shall impose a specified term, condition and limitation on the certificate of registration of Ms. Vézina requiring her to successfully complete, in the opinion of the Registrar, an Ethics and Jurisprudence course acceptable to the Registrar, at Ms. Vézina's own expense, within six months from the date the Discipline Panel's Order becomes final.
4. Ms. Vézina shall pay to the College the amount of \$1,500.00 in costs, at the rate of \$62.50 per month, starting on the 15th day of the first month after the date the Discipline Panel's order becomes final, to be paid in full within twenty-four (24) months after the date the Discipline Panel's order becomes final. No interest will accrue on the

outstanding amounts so long as they are paid on time. At all times, Ms. Vézina shall be at liberty to increase the amount of her monthly payment, solely at her discretion.

The Panel determined that the order proposed jointly was appropriate in the circumstances. It sent a strong message that the law governing the practice of dental hygienists must be complied with. The penalty proposed satisfied the principles of specific deterrence against repeat misconduct by Ms. Vézina and served as a warning to other registrants and thereby satisfies the principle of general deterrence.

The offence for which Ms. Vézina was found guilty raised an ethical issue. Clients/patients have the right to expect ethical and professional conduct from all health care practitioners. The ethics and jurisprudence course that Ms. Vézina must take as part of the Panel's order was designed to meet the need for rehabilitation by assisting her in understanding not only the legislation that governs her dental hygiene practice but also the ethical principles that guide the conduct expected of registrants. Appropriate registration in the jurisdiction in which one practises dental hygiene, is the means by which the public is protected and Ms. Vézina's failure to do so in Quebec, deprived the public of Quebec that protection. The ultimate end of the process is that the public be protected and that registrants practise ethically and with integrity. Failure to do so will not be tolerated and will result in an appropriate order being made by the Discipline Panel.

The Panel noted that there was no issue about the competence of Ms. Vézina's clinical practice. Failure to comply with the law and the requirements of provincial regulation was the issue in this case.

The Panel took into account as mitigating factors the fact that Ms. Vézina had no prior discipline record and that she co-operated with the College and admitted her guilt at an early stage of the discipline process. With respect to costs, the Panel noted that the order jointly proposed took into account the fact that Ms. Vézina has already paid a fine and costs by order of the Quebec Court. This has been an expensive lesson, when suspension and the costs order of the Panel are taken into account as well.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Ms. Vézina waived her right of appeal and the reprimand was administered.