

College of Physical Therapists of British Columbia Public Notice
under s. 39.3 of the *Health Professions Act*

Ryan Emberley, RPT

Location: Kamloops, BC

Date of Action: June 19, 2023

Nature of Action: Mr. Emberley entered into a consent agreement with the Inquiry Committee of the College agreeing to the following terms:

1. a public reprimand for engaging in an unprofessional, inappropriate and sexual relationship with a young female client;
2. a 30-day suspension of his practice of physical therapy (to commence on July 1, 2023); and
3. an undertaking to successfully complete the PROBE: Ethics & Professional Boundaries program – Canada, at his own expense, no later than October 31, 2023.

Reasons:

The College commenced an investigation into a complaint that Mr. Emberley engaged in a personal and sexual relationship with a client.

During the investigation, Mr. Emberley confirmed that he engaged in a sexual relationship with a young female client. In responding to the complaint, Mr. Emberley acknowledged the power imbalance inherent in the client-therapist relationship. This power imbalance, combined with the fact the client was a young female that recently moved to Kamloops, B.C., left the client in a vulnerable position at the time she was seen by Mr. Emberley.

On review of the evidence obtained during the investigation, the Inquiry Committee concluded there was sufficient evidence to indicate that the Registrant departed from multiple sections of College Practice Standard 14: Professional Boundaries and Sexual Misconduct and the College's Code of Ethical Conduct by engaging in an unprofessional, inappropriate, and sexual relationship with a client.

The Inquiry Committee noted that Mr. Emberley's conduct is a serious and unacceptable departure from the College's practice standards, which require that the physical therapist maintain professional boundaries that honour and respect the therapeutic relationship with clients. Registrants cannot have sexual relationships with clients and are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the impact of power, trust, respect, and physical closeness on relationships with clients.

Given that Mr. Emberley has accepted responsibility for his misconduct, the Inquiry Committee determined that the terms of the consent agreement would be sufficient to protect the public.