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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 21 April 2015

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mardi 21 avril 2015

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 21 April 2015

Mardi 21 avril 2015

The committee met at 0902 in committee room 1.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Good morning, and welcome again to another Tuesday morning. We have a few intended appointees this morning, but we have some business to take care of in terms of subcommittee reports. I know we've got a couple. Can I have a motion to put it forward? Ms. Martins?

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, April 2, 2015.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Ms. Martins. Any discussion? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

We have a second subcommittee report. Ms. Martins?

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, April 9, 2015.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much. Any discussion? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MR. PIERRE TESSIER

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Pierre Tessier, intended appointee as member, Champlain Local Health Integration Network.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): As I said, we have two intended appointees this morning. Our first intended appointment is Pierre Tessier, nominated as member of the Champlain Local Health Integration Network. Mr. Tessier, can you move forward?

Bonjour, monsieur Tessier. Merci d'être ici ce matin. Vous pouvez parler en français ou en anglais. Les services de traduction sont disponibles ce matin. Je parle français un peu.

I will continue in English. You have five minutes to make a presentation. Please feel free to speak in the language you prefer. As I say, we have translation services. Then, any time that you use will be deducted from the government's time. The questioning will begin with the government. Mr. Tessier.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll do most of my presentation in English, but I might, at some point, just switch.

Merci, monsieur le Président. C'est un honneur pour moi d'être ici ce matin. Comme introduction, ce que j'aimerais faire c'est d'adresser peut-être la question de la raison pourquoi j'ai postulé pour le poste de membre au « LHIN ».

There are two main reasons why I have put my name forward. The first one has to do with basically my background in management and my wanting to invest some time in the community in a different way from what I've perhaps done over the last 45 years. Now that I have a little bit more time on my hands, I'm being more specific as to what I would like to do and where I would like to invest that time. Health care is an area that I haven't been exposed to professionally, but in a second you'll see why I have been exposed to it as a parent or as an end user. That's my first reason, really: to try to make a difference wherever I can go, and, at the same time, feel that I'm contributing something to the community that I live in.

The second reason really is a personal one, and it's to honour my son, who depended on the Ontario health care system for 13 years until his passing 10 years ago.

On June 1, 1990, my wife and I became instant caregivers after my son had a motorcycle accident that left him quadriplegic. You can imagine what happens to a family when something like this occurs. We instantly became, not professionals, but we certainly had to become very well versed in what services were being provided and what he needed. We were exposed to the whole gamut of services, from emergency to being operated on three different times, to an emergency tracheotomy, to rehab, to being able to drive his own vehicle eventually, and buying a house and converting a house so that it could be accommodated for him.

Really, this is one way for me to say, "You know what? He's not there anymore, but I can certainly try to do something to maybe improve the conditions of people who are in the same condition."

During the last 45 years, I've held progressively more responsible positions in education, first as a teacher—not very long, but still, I was a teacher for a short while—then as the superintendent of business for the Eastern Ontario French Public School Board, which covered an area from Cornwall to Trenton and Deep River and Hawkesbury. It's very similar to the LHIN boundaries. In those five years I supervised the expenditure of over \$155 million worth of infrastructure.

Prior to that position, I was a municipal recreation and parks director and a chief administrative officer for various municipalities, one being the town of Hawkesbury—that was my first one—and then the township of Russell, then the city of Gloucester, and then Clarence-Rockland, which was the last one that I was the CAO for. I guess I'll put it this way: I've been working in community development since 1966, so all of my work has always related back to the community that I work in. I've been lucky to be able to work in an area like eastern Ontario.

I've had about four or five careers. In 2000, I was appointed by the provincial government to the transition board that was responsible for creating the new city of Ottawa. There were 11 local municipalities—I was a city manager of one—and a regional government. In the space of about 10 months, we had to create this new city called Ottawa. I think we did pretty well—at least, I remember the election night. The mandate that I gave my team was that the election results had to come in and we needed the results by 10 o'clock at night. We beat that by an hour. I think that was an indication of just how much work had to go into making a new city operational.

In the last two years, I've done consulting work because I've tried to retire three different times and I keep coming back to do other things. I currently hold a position of interim executive director for a national organization dedicated to the promotion of economic development for francophone communities across Canada. It's referred to as RDÉE Canada. I will probably be there for the next few months as they find a replacement for the executive director.

Finally, in the middle of the positions that I've just described, I was an employee of the government of Ontario, for the better part of seven or eight years over two different periods of time, with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. I was regional director for the eastern region for three years, which took me from Belleville to Cornwall—the big eastern Ontario—Chalk River, Deep River and so on. I've done every town and every county. I did 26 economic development strategic plans during that space of time, so I got to know the territory very well. I think that, in itself, would be very helpful for me if I was a member of the LHIN board, at least understanding the geography.

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Finally, I'm confident that my experience in labour relations and contract administration, negotiations, community development, strategic planning, financial management, capital development and so on will serve me well in the type of work that I think will be required at the board level.

Certainly I would be honoured to be chosen to be a member of the LHIN board.

Merci beaucoup.

Le Président (M. John Fraser): Merci, monsieur Tessier. Madame Lalonde?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Monsieur Tessier, merci beaucoup d'être ici. C'est un grand plaisir de vous

avoir parmi nous. Au nom des membres ici du comité, je voulais vous dire nos sympathies pour la perte de votre fils.

Écoutez, moi j'ai travaillé quand même dans le domaine de la santé pendant plusieurs années, et ce n'est pas facile d'aider et, comme vous dites, d'être parachuté dans une situation. Peut-être me parler un petit peu de votre expérience au niveau du système de la santé quand on regarde l'appointement que vous voulez au niveau du RLISS, et comment cette expérience-là va contribuer à l'amélioration du RLISS?

M. Pierre Tessier: Si je regarde sur le côté personnel, l'expérience que j'ai vécue avec notre garçon m'a fait voir le système de l'intérieur, c'est-à-dire comme un client, comme quelqu'un qui a besoin des services. Il y a du bon et il y a du moins bon dans tout ça. Puis, même si ça fait déjà 10 ans que mon fils n'est plus là, il y a des choses, je suis certain, qui n'ont pas changé. Il y a certainement eu des choses qui se sont améliorées.

Ce que je veux faire, c'est de prendre l'expérience que j'ai vécue, non seulement comme parent, mais comme professionnel. Ça fait quand même 45 ans que je travaille dans le domaine public, où je peux mettre en place et apporter des changements, trouver des solutions et puis de m'assurer que les services qui sont fournis sont fournis d'une façon équitable, mais qu'ils sont aussi fournis d'une façon où les résultats sont quantifiables. Je pense qu'il faut aujourd'hui voir comment est-ce qu'on peut identifier l'impact d'un service. Je pense que ce que je peux apporter à la table, c'est cette vision-là.

Je suis une personne qui regarde le gros portrait en premier, et ensuite, je vois un peu plus profondément—

Le Président (M. John Fraser): Monsieur Tessier, merci.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci beaucoup.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Mr. Fedeli?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Mr. Tessier. I want to welcome you here.

I want to begin by first saying thank you very much for the incredible level of community service that you have participated in in the last several decades, especially the United Way. Thank you very much for your service. I, too, want to express my sympathy for the loss of your son which got you into this field to begin with. Thank you very much, and our condolences.

I want to paint a picture for you and then ask you how you would solve this. I live in North Bay. My riding is Nipissing. Just last week, the LHINs came out with their annual report, so I'm going to paint the picture of what we have and ask you, as a board member, what you would contribute to resolve the issue, if that's fair.

The average wait time for the CCAC in-home services grew to 70 days last year, well beyond the target that was expected and anticipated. Their goal was 48 days. That's despite spending \$63 million more than they did five years ago. We have seen missed targets in hip surgeries. Knee replacements, MRI scans and CT scans all missed their targets, and so did the 30-day re-admission wait for

the case mix groups, the mental health and the substance abuse patients.

You're a new board member. You walk into this. What would you do?

Mr. Pierre Tessier: As I mentioned a few minutes ago, my approach to most things is that I have to take a look at the big picture first. I need to understand what it is we're dealing with. You have to understand also that, since I haven't been on a LHIN board, I don't know the intricacies of the LHIN board, per se.

My questioning would be as to breaking down what it is that we're supposed to do, and then subsequently saying, "How are we actually doing what we're supposed to do"; in other words, keeping it down so that if we can identify ways and means to improve the way services are provided, or wait times are reduced, then I think we need to address those.

As a board member, I think I would question—I guess, in a sense, because I have less experience in the actual health field, the odds are I'm probably going to ask questions that are more difficult, for the one I'm asking the questions to, to respond to, because I'm asking it in part out of ignorance but in part out of curiosity, to see: Why are we doing this? Why is it being done this particular way and not some other way? Is innovation part of the issue? Are there are other mechanisms that we can use to provide the services? I think that's the approach that I would take initially.

Once I get immersed in more knowledge about the intricacies of what the LHIN board does, then my questioning might be a little different. But I still remain a person who looks at things in a very pragmatic way, and I try to find solutions from that standpoint.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I appreciate that. Thank you very kindly.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Mr. Pettapiece.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you for coming here today. I went through a similar situation as my colleague here, as my mother-in-law took almost three months to get out of a hospital because they were assessing her to see if she could go to a nursing home. That was where she was going. She was 90 years old.

My wife became very frustrated, and, if you knew my wife, she can get a little upset once in a while. She went at the administration that was looking after this and asked them what the holdup was. "Oh, well, it's the paperwork," and all this other stuff—but there were beds waiting for my mother-in-law. She didn't want to miss this. She knew, everybody knew, that she was going to go, except nobody could seem to get this stupid paperwork filled out. That seems to be a frustration in this ministry, or with health care: the paperwork and the amount of work involved to do your job.

I wonder, sir: Have you had an experience with this type of thing? The paperwork is an endless trail, and patients shouldn't have to worry about that, which, with this prolonged period to do with my mother-in-law—she's lying in a hospital bed, which costs more money than where she was going. So we wasted health care dollars in that situation.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Well, on a personal note, my wife and I did experience that a number of times during those 13 years. You're correct: People who are normally calm people tend to lose their temper at some point, because you get frustrated. You say, "Please do something."

I know in one case with my son, in one situation, I intervened because I was afraid he was going to die. That's a little different than waiting for a bed, but the idea is that—what bothers me the most in how we provide services is sometimes how we treat people, how we deal with them from the moment we come in contact with them, whether it's in an emergency department or whether it's another—because people would understand that there may be delays, provided that it's explained to them properly and that, in the meantime, if there are other means of providing care, that they have that care. But just making somebody wait for the sake of waiting would bother me.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It seemed in this case it was not about the patient; it was about—

Mr. Pierre Tessier: The system.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: —the system, and it does get frustrating. I wouldn't have known this probably unless we had complaints to my office, but with my mother-in-law, we saw this first-hand. It is totally frustrating.

The Champlain LHIN's data insists that it is over-supplied with long-term-care beds and primary care physicians. However, this is not the reality on the ground. Cornwall and Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry report some of the highest rates of emergency department visits by patients with no access to a primary care physician, while the wait-list for local long-term-care beds can be up to three years long. The LHINs' data doesn't add up.

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Can you comment on listening to local concerns and responding to local needs when stakeholders bring them to your attention?

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Well, I can't comment on specific discussions I might have had with individuals with regard to that. What I would like to do as a board member is be out there in the community and actually start listening to some of the comments that might be made, bring that back to the table and say, "Look, we've got some problems in this particular area and we need to address them."

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I think that's the focus of this question. Too often people get frustrated trying to get through the bureaucracy. I don't know; there's eight or nine layers in the health care department. It's incredible. People get frustrated with that. It almost looks like they want to get you frustrated so you leave them alone.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: That's something that we don't want to see happen, especially with health care.

I'm glad to hear your answer that you would be willing to do that, because too often, that isn't the case.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Mr. Fedeli?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: No.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): You're good? Thank you very much. Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, sir. How are you? First of all, I'd like to offer my condolences with your son. I think the one thing that a lot of people don't realize is, when you have a loved one who has a serious accident, it is a real life-changing experience. You certainly find out how the system operates and some of the challenges that are out there. Without getting into any personal stuff, I understand it extremely well. I just wanted to offer that.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It says here you're currently a self-employed organization consultant. I just thought: What is that?

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Well, it seems that in the last three or four years, I've been called in to take on some jobs in specific areas. For example, in the town of Clarence-Rockland, there was no CAO in place, so I was hired as an interim CAO to start with. Where I am now, that's what I'm doing.

What I like to do, also in organizational development, is to go into an organization like a municipality or a non-profit group and look at how they function and how they can improve the way they do their business. Some organizations are well-managed and others perhaps not as well. What I bring to the table is the practical knowledge of having done this for 40 years.

That's basically what I do. I parachute myself into an organization and then I try to turn it into something better than what it is.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I read your history and I noticed there's a lot of former this, former that, former this. I see where you've moved into a lot of organizations. I was a campaign chair of Niagara as well. It's a very rewarding job and it's something that stays with you your entire life.

I think you would agree with this: The health care system needs a lot of work. I believe, not knowing you, sir, but knowing what you went through, that's probably the reason why you would like to get involved. I think you came across some of the challenges that every parent does when they have a loved one—and I'm sure that's one of the reasons why you're here today.

One of the things I'm finding in health care, which is really disturbing, quite frankly: You have the LHINs; they get an envelope of money. They send an envelope of money down to the CCAC, and then they contract the work out. Through that process, a lot of health care dollars are disappearing because the company they're sending it out to wants to make money too. Then what happens is, quite frankly, they don't treat their workers the way they should because they're more interested in profits. Then that filters down into cutting the amount of time they're able or allowed by the private company to spend with a patient who really needs some care.

We're certainly seeing that in Niagara. I know the company is called CarePartners. We have a situation down in our area, but it's also up in the Hamilton area as well.

Do you believe we should concentrate more on keeping our health care publicly funded and publicly delivered so that every cent, every valuable dollar that we have in the province of Ontario—and I listen to it every day in question period, how we're fighting for every dollar—rather than continuing to contract out work that should be publicly funded rather than go to profit? I'd like to hear what your comments would be around private profit or publicly funded health care.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: I'm not sure that I'll be able to provide you a full answer on that, because I'd like to know more about how things are actually being done right now.

I think there's room in government to provide some private funding or private services. What's important to me is that, quite often, if you offer a contract to a company, if the standards by which they have to operate are not maintained, then you will have the result you're talking about.

I'm not going to go into whether they should pay their employees more or less. That's another area. But I think what's critical for me is, if we do provide a service like that, then they should be just as accountable as anyone else. So the results should be there as opposed to thinking that, because it's a private company, they can do what they want. I don't quite believe that.

I'm a bit of an entrepreneur myself, but I call myself a public entrepreneur. I've done many projects using the private sector, but the key is in how you create that contract or that agreement up front so that the services are delivered. They should be seamless. The client or the patient should not know the difference between who does what, in my view.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I can tell you, that's not what's going on. Hopefully, when you get there, you take a look at that because I think we're losing valuable health care dollars and what's transpiring is, the private companies are there to make money. They are not there to take care of the patient, and the patients are suffering right across the province of Ontario.

When you're told that you have seven minutes to take care of a patient, if you can imagine—and I'll use not yourself or even myself—where you have a loved one, you know they have seven minutes to change them, do everything they're supposed to and they've got to be on the road to go do somebody else. That's piecemeal, and that's not the way we should be doing health care. But that's a different story.

I will finish with one tough question, if you don't mind. You're from Ottawa?

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Yes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Who are you cheering for, Ottawa or Montreal?

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Oh, that's a tough one.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Just say Toronto.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: No. My son-in-law and my three grandsons are all Toronto fans. So grandpa has to decide between Montreal and the Sens. I grew up with Montreal through my life, but now I'm a Sens fan.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good for you.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Tessier. Thanks for being here this morning. We'll consider the concurrences at the end of the meeting. Thank you very much.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: Thank you. It was a pleasure.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): You may remain, if you wish.

Mr. Pierre Tessier: I enjoyed it. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you.

MR. KURISUMMOOTTIL JOSEPH

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Kurisummoottil Joseph, intended appointee as member, council of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Our next intended appointment is Mr. K.S. Joseph, nominated as member of the council of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.

Mr. Joseph, thank you for being here this morning. You will have 10 minutes to make a presentation. Any time you use will be taken away from the government's time for questions, and our questioning will begin with the official opposition.

Mr. Joseph.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: Good morning. My name is Kurisummoottil Sebastian Joseph, commonly known as K.S. Joseph. I started working for the then Juvenile and Family Court as a court reporter in April 1967, one month after I arrived in Canada.

In 1976, I was appointed as the court administrator of the provincial court, family division. Later that year, I was appointed as a justice of the peace. In those days, it was a dual function.

In the fall of 1989, the ministry approached me to take over as the regional manager of the family support plan in Thunder Bay, which I accepted for a period of five years—it was a five-year secondment period—on the assurance that after the secondment, I would be given back my original position with the courts. On the terms I dictated, I accepted that position.

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I was also concurrently appointed as the regional manager of the family support plan in Oshawa for a period of six months, which required me to travel: fly to Toronto every Sunday, work at Oshawa Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, fly back to Thunder Bay on Thursday night and work in Thunder Bay on Friday. This continued for six months.

After I completed that, they asked me to take a one-month position at Sudbury. This was in addition to my Thunder Bay responsibilities. I was sort of the ministry's troubleshooter.

After the completion of that in August 1995, when the new Courts of Justice Act was proclaimed, creating the

Ontario Court of Justice and the Superior Court of Justice, I was given the option either to stay with the ministry or go back to the court. I accepted to go back to the court as a justice of the peace, where I worked until August 2004.

In October 2004, I was appointed to the dental college, the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, where I worked on the discipline complaints committee, which is now called the ICRC—the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee—and the Quality Assurance Committee, and I was elected to the executive committee of the college three times. That was completed in October 2004.

In January this year, I looked through the Internet to see which health care agency had any vacancies. I found out that the occupational therapists college has a vacancy, and I applied for that position.

In my community service, I worked as a member of the board of governors of St. Joseph's General Hospital in Thunder Bay for a period of 15 years. I was also president of the family development centre of Thunder Bay for a two-year term. I was a founding member of the India Canada Association of Thunder Bay and served as its president for two terms. I have been a member of the Rotary Club of Thunder Bay for the past 28 years.

On a personal note, I have been married to my wife for the past 51 years—I may not look that old—and I have two sons; one is practising criminal law in Thunder Bay and the other one is a high school teacher in Thunder Bay. I am blessed with five grandchildren. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Joseph. We'll begin with the official opposition. Mr. Fedeli.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Mr. Joseph. Fifty-one years of marriage: We don't hear that very often in Ontario or Canada, so congratulations. My wife and I are working on our 29th.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: And you also won't believe how old I am.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: You know, my mother turns 82 next month, and I'm telling you right here: She lives on her own; I wouldn't want to arm-wrestle her. I can guarantee you who the victor in that one would be, and it would not be me.

Thank you also for your years of service. You have a very impressive resumé. I'm quite impressed with what I have read. Thank you for all of the volunteer work you've done and for your past service with the college of dental surgeons. We need your expertise level in Ontario. We're grateful that you share it with us.

With that, I'm going to approach this—and it may sound very uncomfortable, the approach that I want to take, but you have a job coming up in this role that talks about transparency and accountability. I want to go a little bit into the past and ask where you would have gone with some issues of transparency and accountability.

Let me read how the college describes this issue. They say, "As the public demand for more information about complaints and outcomes increases, it is incumbent on

the college to determine what information should be shared in the public interest.”

I want to ask you about transparency and accountability because I sat in this very chair for a year during the gas plant scandal hearings. I sat right in this very chair, summer and winter, with very little breaks ever, so we could get to what we hoped would be the truth. Eventually it took the Auditor General to disclose the actual truth. We got the former Premier telling us that the cancellation of the gas plant in Mississauga would be \$290 million, and the cancellation of the gas plant in Oakville being \$40 million—they were referring only to ratepayers. They didn’t want us to know the taxpayers’ cost—

Mr. Granville Anderson: Point of order: How is this relevant to this position? I think the member is off track there.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much. Mr. Fedeli, if you—

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very kindly. I’m talking about transparency and accountability, so I’m presenting what happened.

I’m going to ask the—

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): If you could get to your question, that would be great.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Yes, I was almost there. I’ll just review where I left off, then.

The government said that the cost to ratepayers was \$230 million, but the Auditor General disclosed that it was \$1.1 billion because first he and then she—the Auditors General—showed us what the whole cost to the taxpayer was. If you were presented with this dilemma when you were asked a question, how would you have answered that? Which would you have told us?

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Mr. Gates.

Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: My principle and my policy—

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): One second, Mr. Joseph.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I sit back and listen most of the time, but you know what? I don’t really think that this individual is here to be answering that type of question. I understand what he’s trying to do—

Interjections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I have the mike. Please let me explain. I believe that we have to be fair and reasonable to the witnesses who come here. We all understand and we all have our opinion on where the gas plants have gone. We’ve listened to it for a long time. I really don’t think it’s fair to have any individual come into this room and be asked these types of questions.

I have the same question here in front of me, quite frankly. I think the lead-up to the question is fair; I think accountability is a fair question. But tying it into something else for this gentleman is unfair. I just thought I’d echo the comments made by the other side.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Gates.

You’re at your question now, so—

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Yes, I appreciate your opinion. My question is: How do you handle this moral dilemma? Which side do you fall on—true disclosure or holding something back from the public?

Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: I would always urge all government agencies to be transparent and accountable to the public. That is what I did when I was at the dental college, because they were not posting most of the information on the website.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: “Were” or “weren’t?”

Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: They weren’t, and they were reluctant. I urged that. Especially with a member who was cautioned by the complaints committee, they were reluctant to do that. I said, “Why? The public has a right to know what happened to that member, because the public has the right to choose who they want to treat them.” So finally, they have now put that.

I would even go further. If there is a complaint and the committee has found that person deficient in something and ordered some additional training or qualification, that should also be posted on the website, because what are we going to lose? Being open and transparent to the public is more successful for both parties. It will help the member and also the college.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I’m very, very satisfied with his answer. Thank you very kindly.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you, Mr. Fedeli. Mr. Pettapiece, you have a little under three minutes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Three minutes? We had been working with an issue with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. It had to do with bees and the neonics business. You don’t need to understand that part of it; this is an insecticide the farmers use. We had been working with the ministry, and we had all long believed that they were going to use scientific analysis to make the decisions. Then all of a sudden, the Ministry of the Environment hit us with a ban on these things in a couple of years. So that’s what we have been facing.

If the government is going to make a decision, I think all partners should be involved in the decision so that you know where they’re coming from. From your answer to my colleague here, I think that’s where you stand: Knowledge is better than no knowledge; information is better than no information.

Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: That’s right. We should be up front with the public.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: In general terms, what types of complaints did you deal with at the college?

Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: I have dealt with almost all kinds of complaints: sexual harassment, sexual assault, fraud, lack of proper dental treatment—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Lack of—

Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: Lack of proper dental treatment.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Oh, I see. Okay.

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Mr. Kurisummootil Joseph: Then shoddy treatment, excessive billing—almost all kinds of complaints

we receive. Some of them are very trivial, but to the person, to the public person who made the complaint, it's a big thing for them. The college has a duty to make sure that we deal in a fair and transparent way with the complainant.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you. I'm finished. Thank you, sir, for coming.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Pettapiece. Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I don't have a lot of questions for the witness. The one that I wanted answered was on transparency and accountability.

I notice on some of the things that you did, it said "regional manager of the family support plan." I find that kind of interesting, considering that you are married for 51 years. It's kind of interesting. I just thought I'd throw that out there. It doesn't make a lot of sense, but it is kind of interesting that—it's a very tough job, the family support plan.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: When I was working at the courts—the court enforces its own orders on all court orders for support and family support. I was very successful because I dealt with the public in a way that was reasonable and fair to them.

When the new family support plan was enacted in 1986 at the new offices—eight regional offices were formed—the then Attorney General, the late Ian Scott, decreed that 50% of wages should be garnished if the support payer is in arrears and hasn't been making payment. When I took over the office, one thing I did was I went on the public radio in the northwest region on a talkback show and informed the support payers, first of all, of the reason why the act was enacted. I told them it is not fair that I, or other people, pay support for their family. It is their duty. But I am prepared to accept, if they are prepared to pay the ongoing support plus something else on the arrears. I am prepared to sit with you and work out a solution. But I am not prepared to let you spend \$200 for cigarettes every month and \$200 for alcohol while your family is starving and the public is supporting them. I said, "I cannot accept that." After I found that it was successful, then I wrote to the director, and the minister changed the policy.

You deal with the issue, not the personality. If you deal with the issue, you can win. It can be a win-win situation.

Mr. Wayne Gates: In fairness to the other witness who was before you: Montreal or Ottawa—who are you cheering for?

Laughter.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: I knew the regional manager there, but you know, all people are—you see, I find it is mainly the manager's problem. Everywhere I was sent, the manager was the problem. They do not know how to deal with their staff. They treat it as, they are the boss. No. I said, "We are on a team. We are paid by the public to do a service for them. You teach your staff. If they don't know the job, teach them. Train them. Let them know."

When I went to Oshawa, they had serious problems because it was a union town. The union president was one of the staff members. The person first came to me and introduced to me: "I am so-and-so, Mr. Joseph. I hear that you came here to fix me." That was the introduction of that person. I said, "No. I, through my government, and you, through the union, made an agreement. The agreement was that I will pay you every second Thursday this much money, provided you put this much service to me. I'm here to make sure that if you provide the service, I will guarantee that your salary will be in your bank account every second Thursday, and I want a commitment from you." Finally, in six months, I changed that office.

So you deal with the issue. If the staff needs help, help them. If they need training, arrange training for them. But don't shout at the staff. That's what was happening.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Gates. Ms. Vernile.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Mr. Joseph, I want to thank you for all of your years of public service in your community and in this province. You obviously have a very impressive and varied background.

Thank you for travelling here today from Thunder Bay. You came from Thunder Bay to be here with us today.

We all want to know what the secret is to 51 years of successful marriage. I've been married 30 years—I was a child bride, I like to tell people. But we'll chat about that later.

I want to offer you apologies on behalf of this committee that you were subjected to a line of questioning that really does not relate to the position that you are here for.

Interjections.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Chair, point of order.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Point of order.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: That is absolutely ridiculous, Chair. There is nothing to apologize for in a line of questioning about transparency and accountability. I will apologize for the government's abysmal record on transparency and accountability.

I'm thrilled with your answer. I wish you were there—

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Fedeli. I'd ask that you direct your comments to the Chair.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Mr. Joseph, you are here to talk about a position with health care, and that is what I will speak about. I will ask you about that and not go off track.

You have heard that Minister Hoskins is asking health colleges to review improving transparency and accountability at colleges. Tell me what approach you would bring to that.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: I do not know much about occupational therapists, because I haven't been there yet. But in the dental college, which is what I was doing, I urged the members—I addressed the council to

inform them that the public has a right to know what we are doing here. They had all the discipline committee's decisions posted on the website. They never had anything else. I said that the public has a right to know. If you caution a member for some serious offences or complaints, then the public has a right to know, because a caution is one step below the discipline. It's a very serious matter; the next step is referring it to discipline. Then they started putting that.

Then I said, "If a member is lacking in proper training, and we order them to take training, that fact should be on the website." The public has a right to know what kind of deficiency this person has, because they are the ones who are choosing which doctor they should be treated by. That information—it is better to be on the public record.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: By passing the accountability and transparency act, our government has demonstrated that we are very much committed to this, despite the fact that the opposition did not support us on that particular bill.

If you are appointed to this board, what is your number one priority?

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: Transparency and accountability, because we are accountable to the public. That should be there all the time. That is what I will urge the council to take action on.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: We mentioned that you have a very impressive and varied background serving on so many other boards, and you've had other responsibilities. How will those experiences inform you if you are to be put on this board?

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: Well, especially at the dental college, I am a good negotiator. I can resolve conflicts, because I address the issue, not the personality of the person. If you address the issue, then it will be a win-win situation for the management and also for the staff. On any issue, you deal with the issue and resolve it.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I thank you very much, and I'm so happy that I chatted with you specifically about health care, which is the reason why you're here today.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: Yes, I am interested in health care because I believe health is number one, then wealth. What good is it if you have all the wealth of the world and you have not got health?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: You are so right. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Joseph, for being here this morning. You may step down. We'll be considering concurrence immediately after you sit down.

Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph: Thanks very much.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): We'll now consider the concurrences. The first concurrence we will now consider is for Pierre Tessier, nominated as member of the Champlain Local Health Integration Network. Could I have someone please move this concurrence? Ms. Martins.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Pierre Tessier, nominated as member of the Champlain Local Health Integration Network.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Ms. Martins. Any discussion?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Can we have a recorded vote, please?

Ayes

Anderson, Fedeli, Gates, Lalonde, Martins, Pettapiece, Vernile.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Carried. Congratulations. Félicitations, monsieur Tessier.

We will now consider the concurrence for Mr. Kurisummoottil Joseph, nominated as a member of the Council of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario. May I have somebody please move? Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: I move the concurrence in the intended appointment of Mr. K.S. Joseph, nominated as member, Council of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): Thank you very much, Mr. Anderson. Any discussion? Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Same again: A recorded vote, please.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): We'll have a recorded vote on this as well. Any other discussion?

Ayes

Anderson, Fedeli, Gates, Lalonde, Martins, Pettapiece, Vernile.

The Chair (Mr. John Fraser): It's carried.

Congratulations, Mr. Joseph. Thank you very much for being here this morning.

We have one other order of business this morning, and that's for the extension of the deadline for considering the appointment of Katie Mahoney, nominated as a member of the Council of the Ontario College of Pharmacists, to May 26, 2015. Is there an agreement on that? Are we all good? Thank you. Carried.

Adjourned. Thank you very much.

The committee adjourned at 0952.

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