

Citation Authorized: November 2, 2023
Citation Issued: February 21, 2024
(CVBC File No. 20-091)

IN THE MATTER OF THE *VETERINARIANS ACT*, S.B.C. 2010, c. 15

and

IN THE MATTER OF
THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA and a
hearing before a DISCIPLINE PANEL
of the COLLEGE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

and

DR. PAVITAR BAJWA

Ruling on College's Application to Adjourn Generally

Counsel for the Respondent

Clea Parfitt

Counsel for the College

Michael Shirreff

Discipline Panel

Carol Baird Ellan K.C., Chair
Dr. Allan Runnells
Dr. Ian Welch

Date of Decision

July 17, 2026

[1] The Panel was sadly advised on June 5, 2026, that the Respondent in this matter, Dr. Pavitar Bajwa, passed away on June 4, 2026. The Panel extends its condolences to his family and his counsel, Ms. Parfitt.

[2] This is one of the several CVBC discipline matters pertaining to Dr. Bajwa that remained unresolved at the date of his death. The proceedings in this matter, like the others, were prolonged due to Dr. Bajwa's ongoing health challenges. As with the other matters, the College has applied to adjourn this matter generally, pending formal confirmation of the death and action under the *Veterinarians Act* to discontinue the proceedings.

[3] The citation here (the "Citation"), issued on February 21, 2024, involves allegations of professional misconduct and breaches of the CVBC Bylaws in connection with the treatment of a 13-year-old Dachshund in September 2020. The discipline hearing commenced in August 2024 but was adjourned to October 2024 to accommodate Dr. Bajwa's medical issues. It resumed as scheduled but was adjourned again because of another health challenge. By the time of that second adjournment, the College had closed its case, and the Respondent had opened his, but had not completed his testimony in chief.

[4] The matter was re-scheduled to dates in January 2025, but the Respondent was again medically unable to proceed. Further continuation dates were set for May 22 and 23, 2025. Those May dates were the subject of a further adjournment application after the Respondent travelled to India to explore treatment for his health challenges. That adjournment was granted by the Panel on certain conditions in a written ruling dated May 23, 2025.¹

[5] Dr. Bajwa returned from India in September 2025 and thereafter obtained a letter from his general physician in BC confirming his intention to return to practice as of October 8, 2025. A panel on File No. 23-067 issued a ruling on October 8, 2025² suspending the Respondent's practice certificate until October 22, 2025. The Respondent did not return to practice, however; he was admitted to hospital on October 23, 2025, and discharged on October 26, 2025. He

¹ 2025-05-2, *CVBC v Bajwa* No. 20-091, *Ruling on Fourth Application for Adjournment*

² 2025-10-08 *CVBC v. Bajwa*, No. 23-067, *Ruling on Procedural Issue*

reportedly travelled back to India on November 8, 2025. In India, Dr. Bajwa saw a psychiatrist on November 17, 2025, who reported that he was experiencing significant mental health challenges.³ Dr. Bajwa thereafter applied for adjournments on several matters scheduled for late 2025 and early 2026, including this one.

[6] In a ruling dated December 8, 2025,⁴ another panel granted an adjournment of a matter scheduled for December 3 to 5, 2025, conditional upon fulfilment of numerous terms. This Panel adopted similar conditions in granting the January adjournment. The Panel thereafter received periodic updates on Dr. Bajwa's condition until a case management conference in March 2026, when hearing dates of November 4 – 5, 2026 were reserved. The Panel conducted a further case management conference in April and had rescheduled another for June 3. That was adjourned due to news of a further medical setback, which was followed on June 5 with the news of Dr. Bajwa's death.

[7] In seeking a general adjournment at this point, the College points out that the multiple proceedings that remained outstanding at the time of Dr. Bajwa's death, which raise serious allegations of professional misconduct, are being followed by complainants, members of the profession and the public. The College submits that it is important to bring the matters to an end formally with an explanation of why they are concluding without further hearings or decisions on the merits. In support of the need to proceed in this fashion, the College points to its duty under the *Veterinarians Act* to protect the public interest, which includes enforcing standards of practice; pursuing matters of discipline; and governing registrants, who pay the cost of the College's legal expenses in relation to disciplinary proceedings. The College asserts that those costs have been significant in relation to the disciplinary actions against Dr. Bajwa, and the membership is entitled to understand the reason that the matter is concluding without a decision.

[8] Dr. Bajwa's lawyer, Ms. Parfitt, has expressed concern that Dr. Bajwa's interests cannot be addressed if panels continue proceedings in any fashion without him. She questions why the College cannot simply discontinue the proceedings.

³ 2026-01-23, CVBC v. Bajwa, No. 21-010, *Ruling on Application for Deferral*, para. 8.

⁴ 2025-12-08 CVBC v. Bajwa, No. 21-104, *Ruling on Fourth Adjournment*

[9] The Act and Bylaws do not specify a process in the event of the death of a registrant who is subject to a citation. While sometimes matters in different legal spheres proceed posthumously because it is deemed to be in the interests of justice to do so,⁵ those are exceptional cases and there is no application to have that occur in this matter.

[10] Under section 77 of the Act, the Investigation Committee has authority to request that the Registrar cancel a citation. In the meantime, a panel is authorized by section 284 of the Bylaws to govern or adjourn its proceedings. There is also some support in case law for a regulatory panel to complete its process following the death of a registrant.⁶

[11] The Panel understands that some formalities will need to be completed in order to confirm the Respondent's death, and it agrees with the College and the other CVBC panels who have provided similar rulings that the appropriate approach is to say something about each matter in written reasons. Acknowledging Ms. Parfitt's concerns, and out of an abundance of fairness, we have drawn no prejudicial conclusions here beyond those that have already been the subject of rulings or decisions.

[12] The College asked that the Panel set out some history of the proceedings and College counsel provided a summary, which the Panel has adopted above with some amplification. The Panel accepts the College's characterization of Dr. Bajwa's matters as posing "a challenging task of balancing the public interest in the timely resolution of disciplinary proceedings with Dr. Bajwa's interest in ensuring the hearing was fair, a matter impacted by medical condition." This was particularly so within the past year, as Dr. Bajwa's health sadly deteriorated.

[13] The Panel will observe that it is unfortunate that the complainant will be left without a decision on the complaint. In keeping with the prior CVBC decisions and the applicable principles, however, it is not open to us to provide that.

⁵ *R. v. Smith*, [2004 SCC 14](#) (CanLII), [2004] 1 SCR 385; *Ontario (College of Pharmacists) v. Savji*, [2015 ONCPDC 24](#) (CanLII); *Ontario (College of Pharmacists) v. St-Denis*, [2017 ONCPDC 10](#) (CanLII); *Ontario (College of Pharmacists) v. Sharma*, [2021 ONCPDC 18](#) (CanLII);

⁶ *College of Patent Agents and Trademark Agents (CPATA) v Eric Fincham*, [2025 CPATA 5](#) (CanLII)

[14] The matter is adjourned generally pending further action on the part of the Investigation Committee and/or the Registrar to cancel the Citation, in due course.

Carol Baird Ellan

Carol Baird Ellan K.C., Chair

Al Runnells

Dr. Al Runnells

Ian Welch

Dr. Ian Welch