



## College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia

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### MEDIA RELEASE – March 4, 2020

## An undercover operation reveals unlawful practice of medicine continuing despite previous court orders to stop

**VANCOUVER, BC:** On February 18, 2020, the Supreme Court of BC granted the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC an order to enter and search a property in Vancouver where Ms. Maria Ezzati, who is not a registered or licensed health professional, was suspected of storing cosmetic medical injectables. The search was conducted on February 20, 2020 by private investigators accompanied by Vancouver police officers.

The search and seizure order was granted after undercover private investigators obtained evidence that earlier this month Ms. Ezzati was administering cosmetic medical injectables to three different individuals at a “Botox and filler party” at a private residence in Vancouver, and being paid in cash for the service.

This follows a court order enjoining and prohibiting Ms. Ezzati from providing any service that may only be provided by a registrant of the College.

See also: [Backgrounder on Ms. Maria Ezzati](#)

The College will be seeking a court order to allow it to attend to the safe and proper disposal of the drugs, products and instruments that it found during execution of the search, and which it says relate to the practice of medicine. The College will also be prosecuting a fresh application seeking to have Ms. Ezzati held in contempt of court for her recent conduct in apparent violation of the injunction.

Botulinum toxin is listed in Schedule I of the *Drug Schedules Regulation, CB Reg 9/98* and therefore cannot be sold or administered without a prescription. Hyaluronic acid and lidocaine are the primary medical components of dermal fillers, and are listed in Schedule II of the *Drug Schedules Regulation*. They cannot lawfully be sold to a member of the public except by a licensed pharmacist, from the “professional service area” of a pharmacy (where there is no public access and no opportunity for patient self-selection).

“Receiving an injection of a prescription drug from an unlicensed practitioner is risky and has the potential for complications, including reaction to agents, infections, or greater harm due to human error,” said Dr. Heidi Oetter, registrar and CEO of the College. “There is no assurance that the practitioner is competent or qualified to provide treatment, or that the instruments and products being used were provided by a licensed manufacturer.”

Under the *Health Professions Act*, the College is responsible for licensing physicians and regulating the medical profession. The College takes action against those who pose as physicians and put the public at risk by practising medicine unlawfully.

The College recommends that any person who has been treated by an unlicensed practitioner consult with their family physician or nurse practitioner to review the treatment/procedure received and the materials used in performing the procedure. To verify the credentials and to ensure a physician is registered with the College, members of the public are encouraged to visit the online physician directory on the College website at [www.cpsbc.ca](http://www.cpsbc.ca).

With these actions, the College is confident that the public interest is being served.

*The College of Physicians and Surgeons is the licensing and regulatory body for all physicians and surgeons in the province. Governed by provincial legislation, the College's role is to protect the public by establishing, monitoring and enforcing high standards of qualification and ethical practice across the province.*

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