Ethics on Demand – Freedom of Expression

**Article:** [Freedom of expression vs. professionalism at heart of the $26K battle between nurse and SRNA](https://regina.ctvnews.ca/freedom-of-expression-vs-professionalism-at-heart-of-the-26k-battle-between-nurse-and-srna-1.4596940)

**What was the situation?**

A Saskatchewan nurse is arguing that a fine of $26,000 she received from the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association was unfair. The fine was in reaction to a Facebook post she made which criticized the quality of care a family member received while at a health centre in Macklin, SK.

**What went wrong?**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Not maintaining standards of professional conduct | Lack of professional responsibility  Lack of integrity | Not taking responsibility for professional acts |

**Using the Code of Ethics**

The [CSMLS Code of Ethics](https://www.csmls.org/About-Us/Our-Members/Code-of-Ethics.aspx) serves to define and expand the inherent ethical concepts contained in the [CSMLS Code of Professional Conduct](https://www.csmls.org/About-Us/Our-Members/Code-of-Conduct.aspx), document expectations of ethical behaviour for all medical laboratory professionals and provide a framework during professional and personal self-evaluation. Consider how adhering to these codes could have prevented the situation. What other codes are applicable?

*Code of Ethics*

* 1.4 Utilize professional and institutional mechanisms to intervene when witness to unsafe, incompetent or unethical practices.
* 4.1 Be responsible first to the patient, then to society and the environment for safe and lawful practice and the sustainable use of resources.
* 5.3 Encourage the trust and confidence of the public through high standards of professional competence, conduct and deportment.

*Code of Professional Conduct*

* Medical laboratory professionals shall be aware of the laws and regulations governing medical laboratory technology and shall apply them in the practise of their profession.
* Medical laboratory professionals shall protect the confidentiality of all patient information.

**Relevant Reports**

# [Protecting confidentiality in the health care setting: The menace of social media](https://hospitalnews.com/protecting-confidentiality-in-the-health-care-setting-the-menace-of-social-media/)

[Freedom of expression or personal attack? Nurse appeals fine for Facebook post](https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/freedom-of-expression-or-personal-attack-nurse-appeals-fine-for-facebook-post-1.4597248)

[Freedom of Speech + Professional Discipline: Striking The Balance](http://www.mondaq.com/canada/x/741598/Social+Media/Freedom+Of+Speech+Professional+Discipline+Striking+The+Balance)