

Cape Breton doctor removed as head of emergency medicine for Eastern zone

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SYDNEY, N.S. -

Dr. Chris Milburn has been practising medicine for 22 years, over that time he hasn't shied away from controversy.

On a local radio show last week, Milburn questioned some decisions being made by the province.

"I'm not surprised Dr. Strang was angry, because my views were misrepresented to him," says Milburn, a Cape Breton physician.

Social media was abuzz with people targeting Milburn for his views on vaccinations, but the physician says his words were "taken out of context."

"What I'm for is science and what I'm for is personal choice," says Milburn. "Patient autonomy is one of the basic, ethical foundations of our modern health care system."

Milburn also questioned school closures, and whether some in leadership roles were – in his words – enjoying the limelight and "de facto rule over our province."

Some interpreted that comment as being directed at Dr. Robert Strang, Nova Scotia's chief medical officer of health. Milburn says it wasn't, but when a reporter asked Strang about the Cape Breton doctor's comments, this was his response.

"I think he's had a strong response from the community in Cape Breton," said Strang. "My only other thing would say he's a trained emergency physician and I'm trained as a public health physician, I don't try to practice emergency medicine, and you shouldn't try to practice public health medicine."

Milburn says "that is symptomatic of the whole issue to me."

Via email late Wednesday afternoon, the Nova Scotia Health Authority said Milburn is not currently department head of emergency medicine for the Eastern zone.

"Where are we going to see that public health impact," says Milburn. "You're not going to see it sitting in an office in Halifax. You're going to see it in an emergency room in Cape Breton, or Canso, or Halifax."

Despite being removed from his leadership role, Milburn continues to work as a physician in the Cape Breton Area.

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