



Public
New York State Board for Professional Medical Conduct
433 River Street, Suite 303 • Troy, New York 12180-2299 • (518) 402-0863

Richard F. Daines, M.D.
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NYS Department of Health
James W. Clyne, Jr.
Executive Deputy Commissioner
Keith W. Servis, Director
Office of Professional Medical Conduct

Kendrick A. Sears, M.D.
Chair
Carmela Torrelli
Vice Chair
Katherine A. Hawkins, M.D., J.D.
Executive Secretary

February 8, 2010

CERTIFIED MAIL-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Robert Stewart Epstein, M.D.

Redacted Address

Re: License No. 191184

Dear Dr. Epstein:

Enclosed is a copy of BPMC #10-20 of the New York State Board for Professional Medical Conduct. This order and any penalty provided therein goes into effect February 15, 2010.

If the penalty imposed by this Order is a surrender, revocation or suspension, you are required to deliver your license and registration within five (5) days of receipt of this Order and return it to the Office of Professional Medical Conduct, New York State Department of Health, 433 River Street, Suite 303, Troy, NY 12180-2299

Sincerely,

Redacted Signature

Katherine A. Hawkins, M.D., J.D.
Executive Secretary
Board for Professional Medical Conduct

Enclosure

cc: Wilfred T. Friedman, Esq.
60 East 42nd Street, 40th Floor
New York, NY 10165

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
STATE BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL CONDUCT

**IN THE MATTER
OF
ROBERT STEWART EPSTEIN, M.D.**

**CONSENT
ORDER**

BPMC No. #10-20

Upon the application of Robert Stewart Epstein, M.D. (Respondent), in the attached Consent Agreement and Order, which is made a part of this Consent Order, it is

ORDERED, that the Consent Agreement, and its terms, are adopted and it is further

ORDERED, that this Consent Order shall be effective upon issuance by the Board, either

- by mailing of a copy of this Consent Order, either by first class mail to Respondent at the address in the attached Consent Agreement or by certified mail to Respondent's attorney, OR
- upon facsimile transmission to Respondent or Respondent's attorney, whichever is first.

SO ORDERED.

DATE: 2-5-2010

Redacted Signature

KENDRICK A. SEARS, M.D.
Chair
State Board for Professional Medical Conduct

**IN THE MATTER
OF
ROBERT STEWART EPSTEIN, M.D.**

**CONSENT
AGREEMENT
AND
ORDER**

Robert Stewart Epstein, M.D., representing that all of the following statements are true, says:

That on or about January 6, 1993, I was licensed to practice as a physician in the State of New York, and issued License No. 191184 by the New York State Education Department.

My current address is Redacted Address, and I will advise the Director of the Office of Professional Medical Conduct of any change of address.

I understand that the New York State Board for Professional Medical Conduct (Board) has charged me with one specification of professional misconduct.

A copy of the Statement of Charges, marked as Exhibit A, is attached to and part of this Consent Agreement.

I plead guilty to the First Specification in full satisfaction of the charges against me and agree to the following penalty:

1. Two year stayed suspension; and
2. Five year period of probation on the terms and conditions set forth in Exhibit B, attached hereto and made part hereof.

I further agree that the Consent Order shall impose the following conditions:

That Respondent shall remain in continuous compliance with all requirements of N.Y. Educ Law § 6502 including but not limited to the requirements that a licensee shall register and continue to be registered with the New York State Education Department (except during periods of actual suspension) and that a licensee shall pay all registration fees. Respondent shall not exercise the option provided in N.Y. Educ. Law § 6502(4) to avoid registration and payment of fees. This condition shall take effect 30 days after the Consent Order's effective date and will continue so long as Respondent remains a licensee in New York State; and

That Respondent shall cooperate fully with the Office of Professional Medical Conduct (OPMC) in its administration and enforcement of this Consent Order and in its investigations of matters concerning Respondent. Respondent shall respond in a timely manner to all OPMC requests for written periodic verification of Respondent's compliance with this Consent Order. Respondent shall meet with a person designated by the Director of OPMC, as directed.

Respondent shall respond promptly and provide all documents and information within Respondent's control, as directed. This condition shall take effect upon the Board's issuance of the Consent Order and will continue so long as Respondent remains licensed in New York State.

I stipulate that my failure to comply with any conditions of this Consent Order shall constitute misconduct as defined by N.Y. Educ. Law § 6530(29).

I agree that, if I am charged with professional misconduct in future, this

Consent Agreement and Order **shall** be admitted into evidence in that proceeding.

I ask the Board to adopt this Consent Agreement.

I understand that if the Board does not adopt this Consent Agreement, none of its terms shall bind me or constitute an admission of any of the acts of alleged misconduct; this Consent Agreement shall not be used against me in any way and shall be kept in strict confidence; and the Board's denial shall be without prejudice to the pending disciplinary proceeding and the Board's final determination pursuant to N.Y. Pub. Health Law.

I agree that, if the Board adopts this Consent Agreement, the Chair of the Board shall issue a Consent Order in accordance with its terms. I agree that this Consent Order shall take effect upon its issuance by the Board, either by mailing of a copy of the Consent Order by first class mail to me at the address in this Consent Agreement, or to my attorney by certified mail, OR upon facsimile transmission to me or my attorney, whichever is first. The Consent Order, this agreement, and all attached Exhibits shall be public documents, with only patient identities, if any, redacted. As public documents, they may be posted on the Department's website.

I stipulate that the proposed sanction and Consent Order are authorized by N.Y. Pub. Health Law §§ 230 and 230-a, and that the Board and OPMC have the requisite powers to carry out all included terms. I ask the Board to adopt this Consent Agreement of my own free will and not under duress, compulsion or restraint. In consideration of the value to me of the Board's adoption of this Consent Agreement, allowing me to resolve this matter without the various risks

and burdens of a hearing on the merits, I knowingly waive my right to contest the Consent Order for which I apply, whether administratively or judicially, I agree to be bound by the Consent Order, and I ask that the Board adopt this Consent Agreement.

I understand and agree that the attorney for the Department, the Director of OPMC and the Chair of the Board each retain complete discretion either to enter into the proposed agreement and Consent Order, based upon my application, or to decline to do so. I further understand and agree that no prior or separate written or oral communication can limit that discretion.

DATE 12-31-09

Redacted Signature

~~ROBERT STEWART EPSTEIN, M.D.~~
RESPONDENT

The undersigned agree to Respondent's attached Consent Agreement and to its proposed penalty, terms and conditions.

DATE: 1/4/10

Redacted Signature

WILLFRED T. FRIEDMAN, ESQ.
Attorney for Respondent

DATE: 1/5/09

Redacted Signature

KEVIN C. ROE
Associate Counsel
Bureau of Professional Medical Conduct

DATE: 2/5/10

Redacted Signature

KEITH W. SERVIS
Director
Office of Professional Medical Conduct

IN THE MATTER
OF
ROBERT STEWART EPSTEIN, M.D.

STATEMENT
OF
CHARGES

Robert Stewart Epstein, M.D., Respondent, was authorized to practice medicine in New York State on or about January 11, 1989, by the issuance of license number 191184 by the New York State Education Department.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- A. By Consent Agreement and Order BPMC #07-83-125, dated April 27, 2007, Respondent admitted guilt to one specification of negligence on more than one occasion in violation of New York Education Law §6530(3) and his license was placed on probation for three years under terms and conditions which required that he conduct himself in all ways in a manner befitting his professional status and conform fully to the moral and professional standards of conduct and obligations imposed by law and by his profession.
- B. Respondent provided medical care and treatment to Patient A at Community General Hospital, Syracuse, NY on January 14, 2008. Respondent's care and treatment of Patient A failed to meet accepted standards of care, in that:
Respondent failed to adequately evaluate Patient A.
- C. Respondent prescribed controlled substances to family members without

adequately documenting medical justification in 2008 and 2009.

SPECIFICATION OF CHARGES

VIOLATION OF PROBATION

Respondent is charged with violating a term of probation imposed pursuant of New York Public Health Law §230, in violation of New York Education Law §6530(29) in that, Petitioner charges:

1. The allegations in Paragraphs A, B and C.

DATE: *January 11* 2009
Albany, New York

Redacted Signature

Peter D. Van Buren
Deputy Counsel
Bureau of Professional Medical Conduct

EXHIBIT B

Terms of Probation

1. Respondent's conduct shall conform to moral and professional standards of conduct and governing law. Any act of professional misconduct by Respondent as defined by N.Y. Educ. Law §§ 6530 or 6531 shall constitute a violation of probation and may subject Respondent to an action pursuant to N.Y. Pub. Health Law § 230(19).
2. Respondent shall maintain active registration of Respondent's license (except during periods of actual suspension) with the New York State Education Department Division of Professional Licensing Services, and shall pay all registration fees.
3. Respondent shall provide the Director, Office of Professional Medical Conduct (OPMC), Hedley Park Place, 433 River Street Suite 303, Troy, New York 12180-2299 with the following information, in writing, and ensure that this information is kept current: a full description of Respondent's employment and practice; all professional and residential addresses and telephone numbers within and outside New York State; and all investigations, arrests, charges, convictions or disciplinary actions by any local, state or federal agency, institution or facility. Respondent shall notify OPMC, in writing, within 30 days of any additions to or changes in the required information.
4. Respondent shall cooperate fully with, and respond in a timely manner to, OPMC requests to provide written periodic verification of Respondent's compliance with the terms of this Consent Order. Upon the Director of OPMC's request, Respondent shall meet in person with the Director's designee.
5. Respondent's failure to pay any monetary penalty by the prescribed date shall subject Respondent to all provisions of law relating to debt collection by New York State, including but not limited to: the imposition of interest, late payment charges and collection fees; referral to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance for collection; and non-renewal of permits or licenses [Tax Law § 171(27); State Finance Law § 18; CPLR § 5001; Executive Law § 32].
6. The probation period shall toll when Respondent is not engaged in active medical practice in New York State for a period of 30 consecutive days or more. Respondent shall notify the Director of OPMC, in writing, if Respondent is not currently engaged in, or intends to leave, active medical practice in New York State for a consecutive 30 day period. Respondent shall then notify the Director again at least 14 days before returning to active practice. Upon Respondent's return to active practice in New York State, the probation period shall resume and Respondent shall fulfill any unfulfilled probation terms and such additional requirements as the Director may impose as reasonably relate to the matters set forth in Exhibit "A" or as are necessary to protect the public health.
7. The Director of OPMC may review Respondent's professional performance. This review may include but shall not be limited to: a review of office records, patient records, hospital charts, and/or electronic records; and interviews with or periodic visits with Respondent and staff at practice

locations or OPMC offices.

8. Respondent shall adhere to federal and state guidelines and professional standards of care with respect to infection control practices. Respondent shall ensure education, training and oversight of all office personnel involved in medical care, with respect to these practices.
9. Respondent shall maintain complete and legible medical records that accurately reflect the evaluation and treatment of patients and contain all information required by State rules and regulations concerning controlled substances.
10. Within thirty days of the Consent Order's effective date, Respondent shall practice medicine only when monitored by a licensed physician, board certified in an appropriate specialty, ("practice monitor") proposed by Respondent and subject to the written approval of the Director of OPMC. Any medical practice in violation of this term shall constitute the unauthorized practice of medicine.
 - a. Respondent shall make available to the monitor any and all records or access to the practice requested by the monitor, including on-site observation. The practice monitor shall visit Respondent's medical practice at each and every location, on a random unannounced basis at least monthly and shall examine a selection (no fewer than 20) of records maintained by Respondent, including patient records, prescribing information and office records. The review will determine whether the Respondent's medical practice is conducted in accordance with the generally accepted standards of professional medical care. Any perceived deviation of accepted standards of medical care or refusal to cooperate with the monitor shall be reported within 24 hours to OPMC.
 - b. Respondent shall be solely responsible for all expenses associated with monitoring, including fees, if any, to the monitoring physician.
 - c. Respondent shall cause the practice monitor to report quarterly, in writing, to the Director of OPMC.
 - d. Respondent shall maintain medical malpractice insurance coverage with limits no less than \$2 million per occurrence and \$6 million per policy year, in accordance with Section 230(18)(b) of the Public Health Law. Proof of coverage shall be submitted to the Director of OPMC prior to Respondent's practice after the effective date of this Order.
12. Respondent shall obtain an independent medical evaluation at the Marworth Treatment Center, Waverly, PA. Respondent shall cause a written report of the evaluation to be provided directly to the Director of OPMC within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Order. Respondent shall be responsible for all expenses related to the independent medical evaluation.
13. Respondent shall enroll in and complete a course continuing medical education in the field of medical ethics. This continuing medical education program shall be subject to the Director of OPMC's prior written approval .
14. Respondent shall obtain a clinical competency assessment performed by a

program for such assessment as directed by the Director of OPMC. Respondent shall cause a written report of such assessment to be provided directly to the Director of OPMC within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this Order. Respondent shall be responsible for all expenses related to the clinical competency assessment and shall provide to the Director of OPMC proof of full payment of all costs that may be charged. This term of probation shall not be satisfied in the absence of actual receipt, by the Director, of such documentation, and any failure to satisfy shall provide a basis for a Violation of Probation proceeding.

15. At the direction of the Board and within 60 days following the completion of the clinical competency assessment (CCA) the Respondent shall identify a Preceptor, preferably a physician who is board certified in the same specialty, to be approved in writing, by the Director of OPMC. The Respondent shall cause the Preceptor to:
 - a. Develop and submit to the Director of OPMC for written approval a remediation plan, which addresses the deficiencies /retraining recommendations identified in the CCA. Additionally, this proposal shall establish a time frame for completion of the remediation program.
 - b. Submit progress reports at periods identified by OPMC certifying whether the Respondent is fully participating in the personalized continuing medical education program and is making satisfactory progress towards the completion of the approved remediation plan.
 - c. Report immediately to the Director of OPMC if the Respondent withdraws from the program and report promptly to OPMC any significant pattern of non-compliance by the Respondent.
 - d. At the conclusion of the program, submit to the Director of OPMC a detailed assessment of the progress made by the Respondent toward remediation of all identified deficiencies.

- 16 Respondent shall comply with this Consent Order and all its terms, and shall bear all associated compliance costs. Upon receiving evidence of noncompliance with, or a violation of, these terms, the Director of OPMC and/or the Board may initiate a violation of probation proceeding and/or any other such proceeding authorized by law against Respondent.