

State of Rhode Island
Department of Health
Board of Medical Licensure & Discipline



IN THE MATTER OF:
John Sappington M.D.
License Number MD 09034
Case # 181211

SUSPENSION

John Sappington M.D. (hereinafter "Respondent") is licensed as a physician in Rhode Island. Respondent was issued his license on October 5th, 1995. Respondent physician license was reinstated on June 14th, 2017 based on resolution of a prior suspension of his license involving facts related to case C96-014. The Board and the Director of Health make the following findings:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent graduated from University of Texas at Houston Medical School June 30th, 1989.
2. Respondent agreed to a Consent Order which was ratified on June 14th, 2017 with certain terms and conditions within the Consent Order. This Consent Order was amended on April 11th, 2018 with certain terms and conditions within this Amended Consent Order.
3. Respondent agreed to a specific condition in this Amended Consent Order, which was contained in both orders. In the April 11th, 2018 Amended Consent Order, paragraph 9

states *"Respondent agrees to continue to check the PDMP before prescribing any controlled substance."*

4. The Board conducted review of compliance with the agreed upon Consent Order and specifically reviewed Respondents adherence to the condition in paragraph 9 to check the PDMP prior to prescribing a controlled substance.
5. This review revealed several patients who were prescribed various controlled substances yet an audit of the PDMP reveals the PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent. It is also recorded in the PDMP that Respondent does not have a delegate to review the PDMP for him.
6. Respondent does not have any delegates assigned to review the PDMP.
7. Patient A (alias) was prescribed Ketamine on July 2nd, 2018 with 4 refills. Ketamine is a controlled substance and classified as a Schedule III controlled substance. The PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent prior to prescribing this medication.
8. Patient B (alias) was prescribed Ketamine on August 28th, 2018. Ketamine is a controlled substance and classified as a Schedule III controlled substance. The PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent prior to prescribing this medication.
9. Patient C (alias) was prescribed Testosterone on March 20th, 2018. Testosterone is a controlled substance and classified as a Schedule III controlled substance. The PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent prior to prescribing this medication.
10. Patient C (alias) was also prescribed Dextroamphetamine on January 22nd, 2018. Dextroamphetamine is a controlled substance and classified as a Schedule II controlled substance. The PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent prior to prescribing this medication.

11. Patient D was also prescribed alprazolam on August 22nd, 2018. Alprazolam is a controlled substance and classified as a Schedule IV controlled substance. The PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent prior to prescribing this medication.
12. Patient D was prescribed butalbital-acetaminophen and caffeine on September 11th, 2018. This medication is a controlled substance and classified as a schedule III. The PDMP was not reviewed for this patient.
13. Patient D was prescribed clonazepam on August 16th, 2018 for a 30 days' supply and August 22nd, 2018 for another 30 days' supply. Clonazepam is a controlled substance and classified as a Schedule IV controlled substance. The PDMP was not reviewed for this patient.
14. Patient E (alias) was prescribed alprazolam on 7/12/2018. Alprazolam is a controlled substance and classified as a schedule IV. Respondent did not check the PDMP.
15. Patient E was prescribed Dextroamphetamine on August 6th, 2018. Dextroamphetamine is a controlled substance and classified as a schedule II. The PDMP was not reviewed by Respondent prior to prescribing this medication.
16. Patient E (alias) was prescribed clonazepam on February 14th, 2018 and March 7th, 2018. Clonazepam is a controlled substance and classified as a schedule IV-controlled substance. Respondent did not check the PDMP.
17. Respondent sent a letter to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Board via email on Saturday September 22nd, 2018. Among other things in this letter, Respondent admitted *"...I am sure that I have prescribed without checking, simply by not being through enough and being in a hurry. I do my best to comply and sure I have fallen short of 100%. Ultimately it is my responsibly. I can try to do better and ask others for assistance...."*

18. The ratified consent order of April 11th, 2018 states *“In the event that any term of this Consent Order is violated, after signed and accepted, the Director of the Department of Health shall have the discretion to summarily suspend the Respondent’s license and/or impose further disciplinary action. If the Director suspends the license and/or impose further disciplinary action, Respondent shall be given notice and shall have the right to request an administrative hearing within twenty (20) days of the suspension an/or further discipline. The Director of the Department of Health shall also have the discretion to request an administrative hearing after notice to the Petitioner of a violation of any term of this Consent Order. The Administrative Hearing Officer may suspend Petitioner’s license, or impose further discipline, for the remainder of Petitioner’s licensing period if the alleged violation is proven by a preponderance of evidence.”*
19. The Respondent has violated Rhode Island General Law § 5-37-5.1 (24) *“Violating any provision or provisions of this chapter or the rules and regulations of the board or any rules or regulations promulgated by the director or of an action, stipulation, or agreement of the board;”*

ORDER

20. After considering the findings of the Board, regarding John Sappington M.D., and the subsequent ratified Consent Order, the license of John Sappington M.D. is suspended from practicing medicine. The Respondent may request, in writing, an administrative hearing on this suspension, which will be conducted within (20) days of the Department’s receipt of said written request for hearing
21. Respondent is required to ensure appropriate continuity of care for his patients including ready access to medical records, appropriate referral to qualified health professions.

22. Respondent is required to ensure a safe transition of care of any patients taking a controlled substance. Respondent shall refer patients who are taking medication assisted treatment with buprenorphine to any state recognized opioid treatment program, such as CODAC East Bay on 850 Waterman Ave, East Providence, Rhode Island 02914.

Nicole Alexander-Scott
Nicole Alexander-Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Director of Health

09/24/18
Date

(delegation of authority)

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a copy of this **ORDER** was delivered to John Sappington M.D., via constable to Respondent:

on this _____ day of _____, 2018.
