



IN THE MATTER OF:
William O'Connor, MD
License Nos.: MD07012 and CMD07012
Case No.: 200256

CONSENT ORDER FOR VOLUNTARY SURRENDER

William O'Connor, MD ("Respondent") is a physician licensed pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-37-1 *et seq.* and holds physician license numbers MD07012 and controlled substance registration CMD07012 (collectively, "License" or "Licenses"). Respondent wishes to voluntarily surrender the Licenses, reserving the right to petition for reinstatement as set forth below.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent is a physician licensed to practice in Rhode Island under the Licenses.
2. Respondent has been licensed to practice as a physician in Rhode Island since December 17, 1986.
3. Respondent graduated from the Faculte de Medecine, University de l'Etat a Liege in Belgium on June 1, 1979. His primary specialty is otolaryngology. Respondent has practice sites in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.
4. On February 14, 2020, the Rhode Island Board of Medical Licensure & Discipline received notice of a "Temporary Summary Suspension" of Respondent's Massachusetts physician license from the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine ("MA Board"),

indicating that Respondent's Massachusetts physician license had been ordered temporarily suspended by the MA Board upon its determination that Respondent poses "an immediate and serious threat to the public health, safety, or welfare," which "necessitate said suspension."

5. The Mass Board had received "an ethics violation complaint" against Respondent in January of 2020 in which it was alleged, among other things, that Respondent had acted unethically with respect to a patient of his, Patient A (alias).

6. The Mass Board "Statement of Allegations" for Adjudicatory Case No. 2020-009 details prior involvement with law enforcement, including Respondent's arrest for and charging with, among other things, operating under the influence of liquor in 2001. The Statement of Allegations also details Respondent's subsequent disciplinary action from the Mass Board based on Respondent's failure to disclose his 2001 arrest and criminal charges on his 2003 license renewal application.

7. Additionally, the Statement of Allegations contains new allegations that Respondent "dated" Patient A from approximately 2008 to 2016, during which time Respondent also provided medical care to Patient A. Further, the Statement of Allegations alleges that, on or about August 26, 2017, Patient A's fiancé filed a no trespass notice with the Brewster Police Department regarding the Respondent to stop Respondent from trespassing on property shared between Patient A and her fiancé. On May 25, 2018, Patient A obtained from the Woburn District Court an Abuse Prevention Order ("Order") against Respondent, requiring, among other things, that Respondent stay at least 100 yards away from Patient A. This Order was extended on or about June 5, 2018 and June 18, 2019, after Respondent allegedly continued to violate the no trespass notice. Then, on or about September 27, 2019, the Orleans District Court issued a Straight Warrant for Respondent's arrest, charging him with (a) trespass, (b) violation of the

Abuse Prevention Order, and (c) attempt to commit crime.

8. The Mass Board has provided the Board with a copy of their underlying investigation and basis for the Temporary Summary Suspension and determination that Respondent poses "an immediate and serious threat to the public health, safety, or welfare," which "necessitate said suspension."

9. Respondent is currently disputing these allegations in Massachusetts.

10. Based on the determination of the Mass Board, the Director has grounds to determine that Respondent's continuation in practice could constitute an immediate danger to the public.

Based on the foregoing, the parties agree as follows:

1. Respondent admits to and agrees to remain under the jurisdiction of the Board.
2. Respondent has agreed to this Consent Order and understands that it is subject to final approval of the Director.
3. If approved by the Director, Respondent hereby acknowledges and waives,
 - a. The right to appear personally or by counsel or both before the Board;
 - b. The right to produce witnesses and evidence on his behalf at a hearing;
 - c. The right to cross examine witnesses;
 - d. The right to have subpoenas issued by the Board;
 - e. The right to further procedural steps except for those specifically contained herein;
 - f. Any and all rights of appeal of this Consent Order;
 - g. Any objection to the fact that this Consent Order will be presented to the Director for consideration and review.

h. Any objection that this Consent Order will be reported to the National Practitioner Data Bank and Federation of State Medical Boards and posted to the Rhode Island Department of Health public website

4. Respondent will self-refer to the Rhode Island Medical Society Physicians Health Program ("PHP"), or comparable Massachusetts program acceptable to the Board, and follow their recommendations, which recommendations are incorporated herein by reference.

5. After evaluation by the PHP, or comparable Massachusetts program acceptable to the Board, or after resolution of the precipitating matter before the Massachusetts Board, whichever occurs first, Respondent may approach the Board for reinstatement.

6. If Respondent violates any term of this Consent Order, the Director of the Department of Health shall have the discretion to impose further disciplinary action. If the Director imposes further disciplinary action, Respondent shall be given notice and shall have the right to request a hearing within twenty (20) days of the suspension and/or further discipline. The Director of the Department of Health shall also have the discretion to request a hearing after notice to Respondent of a violation of any term of this Consent Order. The Administrative Hearing Officer may suspend Respondent's license or impose further discipline if any alleged violation is proven by a preponderance of evidence.

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS]

Signed this 20th day of February 2020



William O'Connor, MD



Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH
Director of Health

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