

By: Heather Coleman  
Deputy Agency ClerkSTATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

In Re: Emergency Restriction of the License of  
Anthony John Reading, M.D.  
License Number: 28226  
Case Number: 2005-05672 and 2005-54682

ORDER OF EMERGENCY RESTRICTION OF LICENSE

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H., Secretary of the Department of Health, hereby ORDERS the emergency restriction of the license of Anthony John Reading, M.D., ("Dr. Reading") to practice as a medical doctor. Dr. Reading holds license number 28226. His address of record is 3202 Magnolia Islands Boulevard, Panama City, Florida 32408. The following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law support the emergency restriction of Dr. Reading's license to practice as a medical doctor in the State of Florida.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Department of Health ("Department") is the state department charged with regulating the practice of medicine pursuant to Chapters 20, 456, and 458, Florida Statutes. Section 456.073, Florida Statutes, authorizes the Secretary of the Department to summarily restrict Dr. Reading's license to practice as a medical doctor in the State of Florida, in accordance with Section 120.60(6), Florida Statutes.

2. At all times material to this order, Dr. Reading was licensed as a medical doctor in the State of Florida, pursuant to Chapter 458, Florida Statutes. Dr. Reading is board certified in Psychiatry and Neurology by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

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3. At all times material to this order, Dr. Reading was a professor employed by the University of South Florida ("USF"), College of Medicine, and practiced psychiatry at the USF Psychiatry Clinic ("Clinic") located in Tampa, Florida.

FACTS RELATED TO CASE NO. 2005-05672

4. In or around February and March 2003, T.L., a 36 year-old female, was a patient at the Clinic. T.L. was diagnosed as suffering from major depression and anxiety.

5. On or about March 3, 2003, Officer Penni Napoleon, Tampa Police Department, responded to 3515 E. Fletcher Avenue regarding a battery. Upon arrival, Officer Napoleon noted T.L. as being very upset and physically shaking. Officer Napoleon interviewed T.L. and then referred this case to the detective section.

6. On or about March 7, 2003, Detective Lisa Martineau, Tampa Police Department, conducted an interview with T.L. regarding Dr. Reading.

7. During the interview, T.L. related the following facts:

a) T.L. recently moved to Tampa and began seeing Dr. Reading at the Clinic for panic attacks;

b) At the first session, on or about February 12, 2003, T.L. was upset and crying at the end of the session;

c) Both T.L. and Dr. Reading rose from their chairs at the same time;

d) Dr. Reading then hugged T.L.;

e) T.L. felt uncomfortable because Dr. Reading brushed the sides of T.L.'s breasts with his open palms as he extended his arms around T.L.'s torso;

- f) On or about March 3, 2003, at the end of the second session, again Dr. Reading brushed T.L.'s breasts as he began to embrace T.L. tightly;
- g) Dr. Reading pulled back slightly and conversed with T.L. while maintaining a loose hug;
- h) Dr. Reading then retightened his hug;
- i) When Dr. Reading drew back from the hug, Dr. Reading maintained his left arm around T.L.'s waist while Dr. Reading grasped T.L.'s left breast in his right hand;
- j) Dr. Reading then commented that T.L. was "not an unattractive woman";
- k) T.L. then quickly left the office and placed a call to her roommate for a ride; and
- l) The roommate called the police department and Officer Napoleon responded;

FACTS RELATED TO CASE NO. 2005-54682

8. In or around September 2002, G.B., a 35 year-old female, began seeing Dr. Reading as a patient at the Clinic. G.B. is diagnosed as suffering from depression.

9. On or about August 24, 2005, Deputy John McDarby, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department, conducted a telephone interview with G.B. A Department representative and investigator participated in the interview.

10. During the interview, G.B. related the following facts:

- a) By the third visit, G.B. became uncomfortable with Dr. Reading because of his eye contact and staring at her chest area;
- b) On the fourth visit, at the end of the session, Dr. Reading rolled his chair toward G.B., leaned in toward G.B.'s face, then looked down at G.B.'s chest and said, "Oh, I like that;"
- c) During one of the following sessions, G.B. was sitting on the couch and crying. Dr. Reading sat on the couch next to her and hugged her. Dr. Reading started fondling her left breast;
- d) G.B. pushed Dr. Reading away and he said, "I'm trying to make you feel better;"
- e) G.B. tried to skip sessions;
- f) Dr. Reading called G.B. on her cell phone. Dr. Reading made statements about not being able to help himself because G.B. is so beautiful, that this is the first time this has ever happened, and that G.B. did not want Dr. Reading because he was an old man;
- g) Dr. Reading made G.B. feel as if it were G.B.'s fault but never acted as if the incidents didn't happen;
- h) G.B. brought either her sons or a friend to future sessions;
- i) During one session, Dr. Reading pulled G.B. to him and kissed G.B. on her lips;
- j) G.B. told Dr. Reading to stop and he commented that he was sorry; he couldn't help it because G.B. was so pretty;

k) In or around April 2003, G.B. was admitted to a hospital because she was suicidal;

l) Upon returning to Dr. Reading's care, after three or four visits, the fondling and kissing restarted at the end of the sessions. The fondling would occur while Dr. Reading was hugging G.B.;

m) In or around September 2003, during a session, Dr. Reading fondled G.B.'s breast under her blouse and bra. Dr. Reading then unbuttoned her blouse and removed her bra and fondled both breasts with both hands;

n) On the second to last visit, during a session, Dr. Reading fondled G.B.'s breast under her blouse and bra;

o) On the last visit, during the session, Dr. Reading placed G.B.'s hand on Dr. Reading's penis over his pants. Dr. Reading again unbuttoned her blouse, pulled up her bra, and fondled her breast;

p) Dr. Reading then commented that G.B. shouldn't tell anybody about these incidents of inappropriate sexual conduct;

q) In or around February 2004, G.B. began seeing Dr. John Zak, M.D. at the clinic;

r) On or around March 17, 2004, during a session with Dr. Zak, G.B. revealed Dr. Reading's inappropriate physical touching;

s) On or around April 9, 2004, during a session, G.B. played a message left by Dr. Reading on her cell phone on April 8, 2004, for Dr. Zak to hear; and

t) G.B.'s last session with Dr. Reading was on or about December 16, 2003;

11. On or about June 13, 2005, G.B. filed a formal complaint with the Department regarding Dr. Reading.

#### ADDITIONAL FACTS

12. In or around July or August, 2005, S.C., a 34 year-old female, contacted the Tampa State Attorney's Office regarding Dr. Reading.

13. During the telephone conversation with an assistant state attorney, S.C. related the following facts:

a) S.C. was a patient of Dr. Reading from 2002 until December 2003 when Dr. Reading retired from USF;

b) The first incident of inappropriate behavior occurred when Dr. Reading hugged S.C. when she stood to leave his office;

c) Dr. Reading put his hands inside of S.C.'s jacket and as Dr. Reading embraced S.C. his hands felt around her ribcage and lower breast area;

d) On the second incident, as S.C. stood to leave, Dr. Reading moved closer to S.C., leaning in to kiss S.C. on the mouth and kissed her on the cheek;

e) On the third incident, as S.C. was standing to leave, Dr. Reading hugged S.C. from behind. S.C. felt as though Dr. Reading had an erection; and

f) During S.C.'s sessions, Dr. Reading would have S.C. remove her jacket and twirl and Dr. Reading would comment that S.C. was attractive;

14. On or about August 30, 2005, the Tampa State Attorney's Office contacted the Department regarding the reported incident between S.C. and Dr. Reading.

15. Section 456.072(1)(u), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003), subjects a licensee to discipline, including suspension, for engaging or attempting to engage in sexual misconduct as defined and prohibited in Section 456.063(1), Florida Statutes.

16. Section 456.063(1), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003), defines sexual misconduct in the practice of a health care profession as a violation of the professional relationship through which the health care practitioner uses such relationship to engage or attempt to engage the patient or client, or an immediate family member, guardian, or representative of the patient or client in, or to induce or attempt to induce such person to engage in, verbal or physical sexual activity outside the scope of the professional practice of such health care profession. Sexual misconduct in the practice of a health care profession is prohibited.

17. As set forth above, Dr. Reading engaged several female patients in physical contact that included hugging, fondling, and kissing during psychiatric sessions in violation of Section 456.072(1)(u), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003), which prohibits sexual misconduct.

18. Section 458.331(1)(j), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003), subjects a licensee to discipline, including suspension, for exercising influence within a patient-physician relationship for purposes of engaging a patient in sexual activity. A patient shall be

presumed to be incapable of giving free, full, and informed consent to sexual activity with his or her physician.

19. As set forth above, Dr. Reading used the patient-physician relationship to engage in sexual activity with female patients during psychiatric sessions in violation of Section 458.331(1)(j), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003).

20. Section 120.60(6), Florida Statutes, authorizes the Department to restrict a physician's license if the Department finds that the physician presents an immediate serious danger to the public health, safety, or welfare.

21. As exemplified by the facts of this case, physicians often care for vulnerable patients in settings where they can easily abuse these patients. Due to the potential for abuse that is inherent under these circumstances, doctors must possess good judgment and good moral character in order to safely practice medicine. Dr. Reading's willingness to engage in sexual misconduct toward his female patients demonstrates a serious defect in Dr. Reading's judgment and moral character. Dr. Reading's conduct constitutes such a threat to the public health and safety and demonstrates such a disregard for the laws and regulations governing physicians in this state that the safety of Dr. Reading's female patients cannot be assured as long as he continues to practice medicine unrestricted in the State of Florida without a restriction prohibiting him from seeing female patients.

22. Dr. Reading's lack of good judgment and moral character and his disregard for the laws and rules governing the practice of medicine in the State of Florida represent a significant likelihood that Dr. Reading will cause harm to vulnerable female patients in



the future. This probability constitutes an immediate serious danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the State of Florida. Nothing short of the immediate restriction of Dr. Reading's license to practice medicine will ensure the protection of the public from this danger.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

23. The Secretary of the Department of Health has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Sections 20.43 and 456.073, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 458, Florida Statutes, as set forth above.

24. Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Secretary concludes that Dr. Reading violated Section 456.072(1)(u), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003), by engaging in sexual misconduct as prohibited in Section 456.063(1), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003).

25. Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Secretary concludes that Dr. Reading violated Section 458.331(1)(j), Florida Statutes (2002, 2003), by exercising influence within a patient-physician relationship for purposes of engaging a patient in sexual activity.

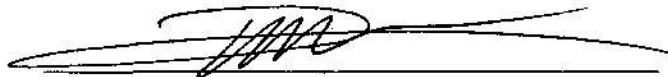
26. Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Secretary concludes that Dr. Reading's continued unrestricted practice as a physician constitutes an immediate and serious danger to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and that this summary procedure is fair under the circumstances to adequately protect the public.

WHEREFORE, in accordance with Section 120.60(6), Florida Statutes, it is  
THEREUPON ORDERED THAT:

1. The license of Anthony John Reading, M.D., license number ME 28226, is hereby immediately restricted to prohibit him from treating female patients.

2. A proceeding seeking formal restriction or discipline of the license of Anthony John Reading, M.D., to practice as a physician will be promptly instituted and acted upon in compliance with Sections 120.569 and 120.60(6), Florida Statutes.

DONE and ORDERED this 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2000.



John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H.  
Secretary, Department of Health

PREPARED BY:

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NOTICE OF RIGHT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW

Pursuant to sections 120.60(6) and 120.68, Florida Statutes, the Department's findings of immediate danger, necessity, and procedural fairness shall be judicially reviewable. Review proceedings are governed by the Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. Such proceedings are commenced by filing one copy of a Petition for Review, in accordance with Florida Rule of Appellate Procedure 9.100, with the Department of Health and a second copy of the petition accompanied by a filing fee prescribed by law with the District Court of Appeal within thirty (30) days of the date this Order is filed.