

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION**

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL)	
REGULATION of the State of Illinois,)	
DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION,)	
)	Complainant,
v.)	No. 2021-10874
SANDEEP N GAONKAR, M.D.,)	
License No. 036.099362,)	Respondent.

ORDER

This matter having come before the Illinois State Medical Board of the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation of the State of Illinois, Division of Professional Regulation, and the Board having made certain Recommendation to the Director of the Division of Professional Regulation; and the Division of Professional Regulation having complied with all required notices; and the time allowed for filing of a Motion for Rehearing/Reconsideration before the Director of the Division of Professional Regulation having now passed.

Now, therefore, I, Camile Lindsay, Acting Director of the Division of Professional Regulation of the State of Illinois, do hereby adopt the Recommendation of the Illinois State Medical Board in this matter.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that SANDEEP N GAONKAR, M.D., Illinois Physician and Surgeon License No. 036.099362, shall be immediately suspended for a minimum of 1 year.. Respondent shall immediately surrender said licenses and all other indicia of licensure to the Division of Professional Regulation of the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation of the State of Illinois. If Respondent fails to comply with this order, the Department shall seize

said license. This Order shall become effective fourteen (14) calendar days after the Director's signature, as dated and signed below.

This Order is a final administrative decision. You have a right to judicial review of all final administrative decisions of the Department, pursuant to the provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure, Administrative Review Law ("Law"), 735 ILCS 5/3-103, and the rules adopted pursuant to the Law. Any action filed pursuant to the Law shall name the following parties as Defendants at the specified address: Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation and Camile Lindsay as Acting Director of the Division of Professional Regulation, 555 West Monroe Street, 5th Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60661. The effective date of this Order is the date when it is signed by the Director unless otherwise stated.

DATED THIS 2nd day of March, 2024.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
SECRETARY MARIO TRETO, JR.



Acting Director Camile Lindsay
Division of Professional Regulation

Case No. 2021-10874
License No. 036.099362

RECEIVED

By Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation/Clerk of the Court at 10:17 am, Jan 22, 2024

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION)	
OF THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL)	
AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION,)	Complainant,
v.)	Case No. 2021-10874
SANDEEP N GAONKAR, M.D.,)	
License No. 036.099362,)	
License No. [REDACTED])	Respondent.

TWENTY DAY NOTICE

To: SANDEEP N GAONKAR MD
[REDACTED]
via email at [REDACTED]

Please take notice that the Illinois State Medical Board (“Board”), after considering evidence presented in the above case, has recommended that Respondent’s Physician and Surgeon License be indefinitely suspended for a minimum of 1 year. A copy of the Board’s Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Recommendation, and if applicable, a copy of the Administrative Law Judge’s Recommendation and Report, are attached hereto.

You are hereby notified that you have **twenty (20) days** from the date this notice is mailed to file with the Division of Professional Regulation of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (“Department”) your written Motion for a Rehearing. Said Motion shall specify the particular ground for a rehearing. Said Motion should be sent to:

Chief Administrative Law Judge
via email at FPR.ChiRecords@Illinois.gov

The Director may grant oral argument on this Motion if she deems it necessary for a clearer understanding of the issues presented. The Department shall have twenty (20) days to file a response to said Motion and Respondent shall have ten (10) days after the Department’s response is due to file a reply, unless otherwise ordered by the Director.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION
SECRETARY MARIO TRETO, JR.

[REDACTED]
Daniel Valentin
Staff Attorney | Medical Prosecutions Unit
Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
555 W. Monroe St., Suite 500
Chicago, Illinois 60661
Phone: 312-793-0073 | Email: daniel.valentin@illinois.gov

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DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL)	
REGULATION of the State of Illinois,)	
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		No. 2021-10874
SANDEEP N GAONKAR, M.D.,)	
License No. 036.099362,)	
License No. [REDACTED]	Respondent.)

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE DIRECTOR**

Now comes the Illinois State Medical Board (“Board”) of the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation of the State of Illinois, Division of Professional Regulation (“Department”), and, after reviewing the pleadings in this matter, a majority of its members hereby make the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendation to the Director of the Department.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent is the holder of a Certificate of Licensure as a Physician and Surgeon in the State of Illinois, License No. 036.099362, which is currently in “Active” status.
2. At all relevant times herein, Respondent practiced medicine in the State of Illinois as a psychiatrist.
3. On or about November 29, 2021, the Department received a mandatory report regarding Respondent’s care and treatment of Patient M.B.

4. On September 13, 2023, the Department filed a formal Complaint against Respondent. The Department sent the Complaint to his email address of record, along with a Notice of Preliminary Hearing.
5. The referenced Notice of Preliminary Hearing advised Respondent as it follows:
 - a. a preliminary hearing was set for October 30, 2023, at 1:00PM;
 - b. appearance was mandatory;
 - c. Respondent was required to file a signed answer to the Complaint within twenty (20) days of the mailing date of the notice;
 - d. failure to file a signed answer may subject Respondent to being held in default, and the Board may assume the allegations of the Complaint to be true and will issue a recommendation based upon those facts without a hearing being held.
6. By October 30, 2023, Respondent failed to answer the complaint within twenty (20 days), and also failed to appear, either in person or by counsel, for the scheduled preliminary hearing.
7. On October 30, 2023, Chief Administrative Law Judge Donald W. Seasock ordered the matter to be continued on January 8, 2024, and ordered Respondent to file an answer or otherwise plead to the Complaint on or before December 11, 2023.
8. The Court's Order of October 30, 2023 was served to Respondent at his email address of record, and advised him that failure to attend or to file an answer shall result in the transferring of the matter to the Board on the pleadings and the entry of a finding in favor of the Department on the allegations.

9. Respondent did not attend to the status hearing of January 8, 2024, and he also failed to answer or otherwise plead to the Department's Complaint by December 11, 2023.
10. On January 8, 2023, Administrative Law Judge Molly Hagemann ordered that Respondent be held in default and deemed admitted the allegations in the Complaint and transferred the matter to the Board for deliberation on the pleadings.
11. The Board finds the allegations of the Complaint to be true and accurate.

CARE AND TREATMENT OF PATIENT M.B.

12. From 2009 to March 2013, Patient M.B. had a known history of psychiatric conditions, such as anxiety, depression, alcohol abuse, opiate abuse, and suicidal attempts.
13. From 2009 to March 2013, Barry Rabin, M.D., treated Patient M.B. psychiatric conditions with Alprazolam, (brand name: Xanax) a benzodiazepine classified as a Schedule IV controlled substance.
14. From March 18, 2013, to March 22, 2013, Patient M.B., who was 29 years old at the time, was admitted by Respondent as a psychiatric inpatient patient to Provena Mercy Medical Center, a hospital located in Aurora, Illinois.
15. On or about March 22, 2013, Respondent discharged Patient M.B. from Provena Mercy Medical Center without a discharge prescription of benzodiazepines.

16. On or about March 23, 2013, Patient M.B. suffered from abrupt benzodiazepine withdrawal seizures which led the patient to suffer a fall and permanent injuries such as compression fracture of lumbar spine.
17. Continued use of benzodiazepines, including Alprazolam, may lead to clinically significant physical dependence.
18. Abrupt discontinuation or rapid dosage reduction of Alprazolam after continued use, may precipitate acute withdrawal reactions that include seizures and can be life-threatening.
19. To reduce the risk of withdrawal reactions, psychiatrists should use a gradual taper to discontinue alprazolam or reduce the dosage upon a patient-specific plan.
20. Through the course of care of Patient M.B., Respondent deviated from the accepted standards of care, ethics, and professionalism in his treatment of this patient as it follows:
 - a. Respondent failed to document his decision or a clinical reasoning for tapering or discontinuing benzodiazepine treatment to Patient M.B, despite his known history of seizures and benzodiazepines use.
 - b. Respondent failed to properly reconcile or document medication error on the discharge medication list.
 - c. By abruptly discontinuing treatment with benzodiazepines in a patient with history of long-term benzodiazepine and alcohol use, Respondent placed Patient M.B. at high risk for delirium tremens (DT) within 3-5 days form last use of alcohol and medication such as benzodiazepines.

- d. Respondent acts and/or omissions caused, or materially contributed, to Patient M.B. seizures and subsequent spine injuries.

21. The foregoing acts and/or omissions of Respondent are in violation of, and grounds for revocation, suspension, or other discipline of Respondent's Physician and Surgeon license pursuant to 225 ILCS 60/22(A), subsections (4), (5), (17), (33), (37), and (41); 68 Ill. Admin. Code 1285.240; 720 ILCS 570/304; and 20 ILCS 2105/2105-130.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Department has jurisdiction over the subject matter and the parties in this matter pursuant to 225 ILCS 60/36.
2. Respondent's acts and/or omissions constitute multiple infractions to the Medical Practice Act of 1987.
3. Respondent's acts and/or omissions constitute multiple deviations from the accepted standards of care, ethics, and professionalism as Respondent abruptly discontinued treatment with benzodiazepines in Patient M.B, a patient with a history of long-term benzodiazepine and alcohol use, without a valid clinical reason for doing so.
4. Respondent's acts and/or omissions constitute gross negligence because such acts or omissions were a deviation from the accepted standards of care that caused, or materially contributed, to Patient M.B. seizures and subsequent spine injuries.
5. The foregoing acts and/or omissions of Respondent are in violation of, and grounds for revocation, suspension, or other discipline of Respondent's Physician and Surgeon license

pursuant to 225 ILCS 60/22(A), subsections (4), (5), (17), (33), (37), and (41); 68 Ill. Admin. Code 1285.240; 720 ILCS 570/304; and 20 ILCS 2105/2105-130.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the aforementioned Findings of Facts and Conclusions of Law, the Board recommends to the Director of the Department that the Certificate of Registration as a Physician and Surgeon of SANDEEP N GAONKAR, M.D., License No. 036.099362, be indefinitely suspended for a minimum of 1 year.

DATED THIS 7 DAY OF January, 2024.



CHAIRPERSON

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

MEMBER _____

State of Illinois)
) Case No. 2021-10874
County of Cook)

Under penalties, as provided by law pursuant to Section 1-109 of the Illinois Code of Civil Procedure, the undersigned certifies that I caused the attached Twenty Day Notice to be sent by email pursuant to Department of Professional Regulation Law, 20 ILCS 2105/2105-7, before 5:00 pm CST on the 22 day of January, 2024, to person(s) at the address(es) listed on the attached documents.

.....

Affiant

From: Valentin, Daniel
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: 2021-10874 Gaonkar - Twenty Day Notice
Date: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:21:00 AM
Attachments: 2021-10874 Gaonkar - 20 Days Notice and FOE 1.22.24 (stamped).pdf
image001.png

Dr. Gaonkar,

Please see attached.

Att.,

Daniel Valentin
Staff Attorney of Medical Prosecutions
Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
555 W. Monroe St., Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60661
Office: 312-793-0073
Email: Daniel.Valentin@illinois.gov
Website: <https://www.idfpr.com>



IDFPR

Illinois Department of
Financial and Professional Regulation

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