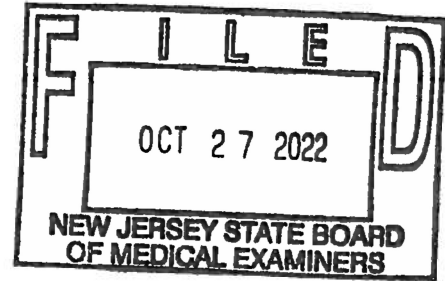


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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS &
DRUG CONTROL UNIT

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUSPENSION OR
REVOCAION OF THE LICENSE TO
PRACTICE MEDICINE AND SURGERY
AND NJ CDS REGISTRATION OF

Thomas Skorupski, D.O.
License No. #25MB07169300
NJ CDS Registration No. D07906600

Administrative Action

FINAL CONSENT ORDER

This matter was opened to the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") and Cari Fais, Acting Director of the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs (the "Director") upon receipt of a complaint alleging concerns with the prescribing practices of Thomas Skorupski, D.O. ("Respondent"). Respondent, a psychiatrist who received fellowship training in pain management, was allegedly prescribing dangerously high doses of opioids in combination with other Controlled Dangerous Substances ("CDS") to patients, some of whom had a history of addiction issues.

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

On February 23, 2021, the Enforcement Bureau ("EB") conducted an inspection of Respondent's private practice, Specialized Addiction Services, LLC, located inside his residence and reviewed several patient records. Investigators reportedly found the files in disarray and void of vital information about the patient's care, including documentation of the patient encounter, patient assessment, vitals, plan of care, diagnostic testing, and urine drug screen ("UDS") collection results.

During an interview with Respondent the same day, he informed investigators that he practiced general psychiatry and addiction medicine, as well as pain management. Respondent explained that, in addition to his private practice, he was also employed for six years as the Medical Director of an out-patient rehabilitation center. With respect to his approximately fifteen private clients, he admitted that he did not conduct UDS testing for medication compliance and was unaware if clients were using illicit drugs. He did not know the correct maximum daily Morphine Milligram Equivalent ("MME") value recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") and acknowledged prescribing opioids with daily MME values over 500 for some of these fifteen patients.

On February 23, 2022, Respondent appeared before a Preliminary Evaluation Committee ("PEC") of the Board for questioning. During Respondent's appearance, he was candid and acknowledged a variety of significant deficits in his treatment of the pain management patients in his private practice, including exceptionally poor record-keeping, failure to conduct any physical examinations during the pandemic from March 2020 until June 2021, failure to monitor patients for medication compliance or utilize medication contracts, and indiscriminately prescribing CDS even to patients with histories of addiction issues. Recognizing that his chronic pain patients would be better served by pain management physicians and other specialists, Respondent explained that

since the EB's investigation, he has stopped providing any pain management services and has not prescribed any opioids other than buprenorphine and vowed never to resume doing so.

The Board's investigation, including a review of Respondent's patient records and his testimony before the PEC, evidences that Respondent, a psychiatrist, acted inappropriately by prescribing a high volume of opioids to a limited number of patients. Specifically, the evidence shows that he prescribed CDS to certain patients for years without conducting proper diagnostic testing to support the high doses of addictive pain medications and failed to identify when it was necessary to refer the patient to a pain management physician or addiction specialist. If proven, the evidence would support a finding that Respondent engaged in repeated professional misconduct and indiscriminate prescribing of CDS, in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21 (e), (m) and (h), specifically N.J.A.C. 13:35-7.6. Furthermore, if proven, the evidence would support a finding that Respondent was prescribing CDS without a legitimate medical purpose in violation of N.J.A.C. 13:45H-7.4, which provides the basis under N.J.S.A. 24:21-12(a)(3) for the Director to suspend or revoke Respondent's New Jersey CDS registration.

The parties, desiring to resolve this matter without the need for a hearing, and it appearing that Respondent has read the terms of the within Final Consent Order and understands their meaning and effect and consents to be bound by same, and the Board and the Director finding that the within disposition adequately protects the public health, safety and welfare, and for good cause shown,

IT IS, therefore, on this 27th day of October, 2022

ORDERED THAT:

1. The license to practice medicine and surgery in the State of New Jersey issued to Respondent, Thomas Skorupski, D.O., License #25MB07169300, is suspended for a period of two years. Of those two years, Respondent shall serve the first twelve months as a period of active suspension, commencing upon the filing of this Final Consent Order. The remaining twelve months of suspension shall be stayed and served as a period of probation. The period of active suspension shall be tolled for any length of time that Respondent practices in another jurisdiction.

2. Respondent's New Jersey CDS registration No. D07906600, pursuant to the authority of the Director under N.J.S.A. 24:21-9 et seq., is permanently limited as follows: Respondent shall not prescribe any Schedule II medications, including narcotic painkillers such as, oxycodone, fentanyl, hydrocodone, methadone, OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin and all other opioids. In addition, Respondent shall not prescribe gabapentin for pain, which is a prescription legend drug that is included in the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program. These prescribing restrictions are independent of any action taken by the Board, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") or any other law enforcement or licensing authority. A copy of this Final Consent Order, signed by the Director, will be filed with the Division's Drug Control Unit.

3. Pursuant to N.J.S.A 24:21-12(f), the Director shall promptly notify the DEA of the entry of this Final Consent Order.

4. Prior to the Board reinstating Respondent's medical license after the period of active suspension, Respondent shall undergo a full evaluation and assessment of his knowledge of both general psychiatry and addiction medicine by a Board-approved assessment program. The assessment shall include an evaluation of Respondent's knowledge base of, and his ability to safely and competently engage in the general practice of psychiatry and addiction medicine. Respondent shall fully and satisfactorily complete all of the requirements of the evaluation and the entirety of

any recommendations the assessment entity may make with regard to additional evaluations, practice restrictions, monitoring and/or educational programs.

5. The Board and the Attorney General will have full and complete access to any communications between Respondent and the assessment entity, and will have full and complete access to any reports, recommendations, or evaluations issued by the assessment entity or by any consultant the assessment entity recommends, including but not limited to the release of the assessment report, any medical or neuropsychological evaluations, and any reports with regard to professional education and practice restrictions, if any. Respondent hereby authorizes the assessment entity to provide copies of any recommendations, evaluations, or reports to the Board and the Attorney General simultaneously with their provision to Respondent. In addition, the Board, as well as its agents and employees, including but not limited to the Medical Director of the Board or his/her designee, may communicate directly with the assessment entity with regard to Respondent's participation in any evaluation or assessment, monitoring plan, or educational program.

6. Respondent specifically acknowledges that the Board may seek to introduce any recommendations, evaluations, or reports issued by the assessment entity as evidence during the course of any future disciplinary proceedings.

7. The Attorney General and the Board may provide to the assessment entity whatever information they may possess with regard to Respondent. Such submission may include a copy of this Final Consent Order as well as the February 23, 2022 PEC transcript. Respondent shall be responsible for all costs associated with the assessment.

8. In the event Respondent seeks reinstatement following the period of active suspension, he shall complete and file an application for reinstatement with the Board. The Board

may advise the Attorney General and any victims/complainants of the application for reinstatement and consider any information submitted in response to such notification. Prior to any reinstatement, Respondent shall appear before a Committee of the Board to discuss his fitness to practice psychiatry and his future practice plans.

9. Upon reinstatement of Respondent's license to practice medicine, he shall be limited to practicing medicine in a supervised, institutional setting, like Blue Crest Recovery Center, where there is oversight by other medical professionals. He is barred from the private practice of medicine, including, but not limited to any pain management practice. This limitation shall remain in place for the duration of his medical career.

10. During the period of active suspension, Respondent shall cease and desist all patient contact at any location in New Jersey and the rendering of medical care, including the issuance of any prescriptions for, or dispensation of, medications of any kind, including but not limited to CDS.

11. During the period of active suspension, Respondent shall not enter the institutional facilities, Blue Crest Recovery Center and Essex County Hospital, in which he previously worked during business hours when patients may be present. Respondent is also barred from seeing any patients at his home.

12. During the period of active suspension, Respondent shall not charge, receive or share in any fee for professional services rendered by others. Respondent shall be permitted to collect accounts receivable with respect to professional services that he rendered prior to the entry of this Final Consent Order.

13. Within ten days of the filing of this Final Consent Order, Respondent is to notify Antonia Winstead, Executive Director, New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners, 140 East

Front Street, P.O. Box 183, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0183 as to where his patient records are secured, and how patients may obtain them.

14. During the period of active suspension, Respondent shall be precluded from managing, overseeing, supervising or influencing the practice of medicine or provision of healthcare activities, including by testifying as an expert witness or acting as a consultant expert, in the State of New Jersey.

15. Respondent shall divest himself from any current and future financial interest in or benefit derived from the practice of medicine until further Order of the Board.

16. Respondent is hereby assessed a penalty in the amount of \$10,000. A Certificate of Debt reflecting the \$10,000 due and owing shall be filed pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 to protect the judgment. In addition, but not in lieu of the filing of the Certificate of Debt, the Board will allow the amount owed to be paid in 18 equal monthly installments of \$ 555.55 through April 2024. Each payment shall be due on the first business day of each month, commencing on November 1, 2022. In the event that a monthly payment is not received within five days of its due date, the entire balance shall become due and owing. Respondent may prepay at any time. Interest on all financial assessments shall accrue in accordance with Rule of Court 4:42-11. All payments shall be made by certified bank check, certified check, wire transfer or money order, payable to the State of New Jersey and forwarded to the attention of Antonia Winstead, Acting Executive Director, Board of Medical Examiners, 140 East Front Street, 2nd floor, Trenton, New Jersey 08608. Any payment in a form other than those noted in this Paragraph will be rejected and returned to the sender.

17. Respondent shall return his original New Jersey license, current biennial registration and CDS registration to the New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners, 140 E. Front Street, P.O. Box 183, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0183.

18. Respondent shall immediately send all of his remaining prescription blanks, along with a cover memorandum indicating that he will no longer be writing prescriptions and asking that his prescription blanks be destroyed pursuant to standard operating procedures, to Monique Evans, Executive Director, Drug Control Unit, P.O. Box 45045, Newark, NJ 07101.

19. Respondent shall comply with the attached "Directives Applicable to Any Medical Board Licensee who is Disciplined or Whose Surrender of Licensure or Cessation of Practice has been Ordered or Agreed Upon."

20. Any practice in the State in violation of the above conditions shall constitute grounds for discipline for violation of a Board Order and professional misconduct pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1.4.

21. The parties hereby stipulate that entry of this Final Consent Order is without prejudice to further action, investigation, and prosecution by this Board, the Attorney General, the Drug Control Unit, the Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs or other law enforcement resulting from Respondent's conduct not addressed by the terms of this Order.

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

By: _____

Cari Fais

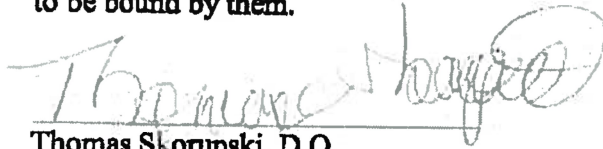
Cari Fais,
Acting Director

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL
EXAMINERS

By: Otto F. Sabando, D.O.

Otto Sabando, D.O.
Board President


I have read the within Final Consent Order,
understand its terms and agree
to be bound by them.



Thomas Skorupski, D.O.

Dated: 10/7/22

Consent is hereby given
as to the form and entry of
this Final Consent Order.


Guillermo J. Beades, Esq.
Attorney for the Respondent

Dated: 10/13/22

**DIRECTIVES APPLICABLE TO ANY MEDICAL BOARD LICENSEE
WHO IS DISCIPLINED OR WHOSE SURRENDER OF LICENSURE
OR CESSATION OF PRACTICE HAS BEEN ORDERED OR AGREED UPON**

APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON AUGUST 12, 2015

All licensees who are the subject of a disciplinary order or surrender or cessation order (herein after, "Order") of the Board shall provide the information required on the addendum to these directives. Failure to provide the information required may result in further disciplinary action for failing to cooperate with the Board, as required by N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1 et seq: Paragraphs 1 through 4 below shall apply when a licensee is suspended, revoked, has surrendered his or her license, or entered into an agreement to cease practice, with or without prejudice, whether on an interim or final basis. Paragraph 5 applies to licensees who are the subject of an order which, while permitting continued practice, contains probationary terms or monitoring requirement.

1. Document Return and Agency Notification

The licensee shall promptly forward to the Board office at Post Office Box 183, 140 East Front Street, 2nd floor, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0183, the original license, current biennial registration and, if applicable, the original CDS registration. In addition, if the licensee holds a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) registration, he or she shall promptly advise the DEA of the licensure action. (With respect to suspensions of a finite term, at the conclusion of the term, the licensee may contact the Board office for the return of the documents previously surrendered to the Board. Prior to the resumption of any prescribing of controlled dangerous substances, the licensee shall petition the Director of Consumer Affairs for a return of the CDS registration if the basis for discipline involved CDS misconduct. In addition, at the conclusion of the term, the licensee should contact the DEA to advise of the resumption of practice and to ascertain the impact of that change upon his/her DEA registration.)

2. Practice Cessation

The licensee shall cease and desist from engaging in the practice of medicine in this State. This prohibition not only bars a licensee from rendering professional services, but also from providing an opinion as to professional practice or its application, or representing him/herself as being eligible to practice. (Although the licensee need not affirmatively advise patients or others of the revocation, suspension, surrender or cessation, the licensee must truthfully disclose his/her licensure status in response to inquiry.) The licensee subject to the order

is also prohibited from occupying, sharing or using office space in which another licensee provides health care services. The licensee subject to the order may contract for, accept payment from another licensee for rent at fair market value for office premises and/or equipment. In no case may the licensee subject to the order authorize, allow or condone the use of his/her provider number by any health care practice or any other licensee or health care provider. In situations where the licensee has been subject to the order for less than one year, the licensee may accept payment from another professional who is using his/her office during the period that the licensee is (suspended), subject to the order for the payment of salaries for office staff employed at the time of the Board action.

A licensee whose license has been revoked, suspended or subject to a surrender or cessation order for one (1) year or more must immediately take steps to remove signs and take affirmative action to stop advertisements by which his/her eligibility to practice is represented. The licensee must also take steps to remove his/her name from professional listings, telephone directories, professional stationery, or billings. If the licensee's name is utilized in a group practice title, it shall be deleted. Prescription pads bearing the licensee's name shall be destroyed. A destruction report form obtained from the Office of Drug Control (973-504-6558) must be filed. If no other licensee is providing services at the location, all medications must be removed and returned to the manufacturer, if possible, destroyed or safeguarded. (In situations where a license has been suspended for less than one year, prescription pads and medications need not be destroyed but must be secured in a locked place for safekeeping.)

3. Practice Income Prohibitions/Divestiture of Equity Interest in Professional Service Corporations and Limited Liability Companies

A licensee subject to the order shall not charge, receive or share in any fee for professional services rendered by him/herself or others while barred from engaging in the professional practice.¹ The licensee may be compensated for the reasonable value of services lawfully rendered and disbursements incurred on a patient's behalf prior to the effective date of the Board order.

¹This bar on the receipt of any fee for professional services is not applicable to cease and desist orders where there are no findings that would be a basis for Board action, such as those entered adjourning a hearing.

A licensee who is a shareholder in a professional service corporation organized to engage in the professional practice, whose license is revoked, surrendered or suspended or who is ordered to cease practice for a term of one (1) year or more shall be deemed to be disqualified from the practice within the meaning of the Professional Service Corporation Act. (N.J.S.A. 14A:17-11). A disqualified licensee shall divest him/herself of all financial interest in the professional service corporation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 14A:17-13(c). A disqualified licensee who is a member of a limited liability company organized pursuant to N.J.S.A. 42:1-44, shall also divest him/herself of all financial interest. Such divestiture of the licensee's interest in the limited liability company or professional service corporation shall occur within 90 days following the entry of the order rendering the licensee disqualified to participate in the applicable form of ownership. Upon divestiture, a licensee shall forward to the Board a copy of documentation forwarded to the Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services demonstrating that the interest has been terminated. If the licensee is the sole shareholder in a professional service corporation or sole member of the limited liability company, the corporation must be dissolved within 90 days of the licensee's disqualification unless it is lawfully transferred to another licensee and documentation of the valuation process and consideration paid is also provided to the Board.

4. Medical Records

If, as a result of the Board's action, a practice is closed or transferred to another location, the licensee shall ensure that (during the three (3) month period) immediately following the effective date of the disciplinary order, a message will be delivered to patients calling the former office premises, advising where records may be obtained. The message should inform patients of the names and telephone numbers of the licensee (or his/her attorney) assuming custody of the records. The same information shall also be disseminated by means of a notice to be published at least once per month for three (3) months in a newspaper of general circulation in the geographic vicinity in which the practice was conducted. If the licensee has a website, a notice shall be posted on the website as well.

At the end of the three month period, the licensee shall file with the Board the name and telephone number of the contact person who will have access to medical records of former patients. Any change in that individual or his/her telephone number shall be promptly reported to the Board. When a patient or his/her representative requests a copy of his/her medical record or asks that record be forwarded to another health care provider, the licensee shall promptly provide the record without charge to the patient.

5. Probation/Monitoring Conditions

With respect to any licensee who is the subject of any order imposing a probation or monitoring requirement or a stay of an active suspension, in whole or in part, which is conditioned upon compliance with a probation or monitoring requirement, the licensee shall fully cooperate with the Board and its designated representatives, including the Enforcement Bureau of the Division of Consumer Affairs, in ongoing monitoring of the licensee's status and practice. Such monitoring shall be at the expense of the disciplined practitioner.

(a) Monitoring of practice conditions may include, but is not limited to, inspection of the professional premises and equipment, and inspection and copying of patient records (confidentiality of patient identity shall be protected by the Board) to verify compliance with the Board Order and accepted standards of practice.

(b) Monitoring of status conditions for an impaired practitioner may include, but is not limited to, practitioner cooperation in providing releases permitting unrestricted access to records and other information to the extent permitted by law from any treatment facility, other treating practitioner, support group or other individual/facility involved in the education, treatment, monitoring or oversight of the practitioner, or maintained by a rehabilitation program for impaired practitioners. If bodily substance monitoring has been ordered, the practitioner shall fully cooperate by responding to a demand for breath, blood, urine or other sample in a timely manner and providing the designated sample.

6. Payment of Civil and Criminal Penalties and Costs.

With respect to any licensee who is the subject of any order imposing a civil penalty and/or costs, the licensee shall satisfy the payment obligations within the time period ordered by the Board or be subject to collection efforts or the filing of a certificate of debt. The Board shall not consider any application for reinstatement nor shall any appearance before a committee of the Board seeking reinstatement be scheduled until such time as the Board ordered payments are satisfied in full. (The Board at its discretion may grant installment payments for not more than a 24 months period.)

As to the satisfaction of criminal penalties and civil forfeitures, the Board will consider a reinstatement application so long as the licensee is current in his or her payment plans.

**NOTICE OF REPORTING PRACTICES OF BOARD
REGARDING DISCIPLINARY ORDERS/ACTIONS**

All Orders filed by the New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners are "government records" as defined under the Open Public Records Act and are available for public inspection, copying or examination. See N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1, et seq., N.J.S.A. 52:14B-3(3). Should any inquiry be made to the Board concerning the status of a licensee who has been the subject of a Board Order, the inquirer will be informed of the existence of the Order and a copy will be provided on request. Unless sealed or otherwise confidential, all documents filed in public actions taken against licensees, to include documents filed or introduced into evidence in evidentiary hearings, proceedings on motions or other applications conducted as public hearings, and the transcripts of any such proceedings, are "government records" available for public inspection, copying or examination.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:9-22, a description of any final board disciplinary action taken within the most recent ten years is included on the New Jersey Health Care Profile maintained by the Division of Consumer Affairs for all licensed physicians. Links to copies of Orders described thereon are also available on the Profile website. See <http://www.njdoctorlist.com>.

Copies of disciplinary Orders entered by the Board are additionally posted and available for inspection or download on the Board of Medical Examiners' website.
See <http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/bme>.

Pursuant to federal law, the Board is required to report to the National Practitioner Data Bank (the "NPDB") certain adverse licensure actions taken against licensees related to professional competence or conduct, generally including the revocation or suspension of a license; reprimand; censure; and/or probation. Additionally, any negative action or finding by the Board that, under New Jersey law, is publicly available information is reportable to the NPDB, to include, without limitation, limitations on scope of practice and final adverse actions that occur in conjunction with settlements in which no finding of liability has been made. Additional information regarding the specific actions which the Board is required to report to the National Practitioner Data Bank can be found in the NPDB Guidebook issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in April 2015. See <http://www.npdb.hrsa.gov/resources/npdbguidebook.pdf>.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A.45:9-19.13, in any case in which the Board refuses to issue, suspends, revokes or otherwise places conditions on a license or permit, the Board is required to notify each licensed health care facility and health maintenance organization with which a licensee is affiliated and every other board licensee in this state with whom he or she is directly associated in private medical practice.

In accordance with an agreement with the Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, a list of all disciplinary orders entered by the Board is provided to the Federation on a monthly basis.

From time to time, the Press Office of the Division of Consumer Affairs may issue press releases including information regarding public actions taken by the Board.

Nothing herein is intended in any way to limit the Board, the Division of Consumer Affairs or the Attorney General from disclosing any public document.