

AUG 18 2022

BEFORE THE VIRGINIA BOARD OF MEDICINE

IN RE: JEFFREY HALE MORSE, M.D.
License Number: 0101-035684
Case Number: 217832

CONSENT ORDER

JURISDICTION AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Virginia Board of Medicine (“Board”) and Jeffrey Hale Morse, M.D., as evidenced by their signatures hereto, in lieu of proceeding to an informal conference, enter into the following Consent Order affecting Dr. Morse’s license to practice medicine in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Jeffrey Hale Morse, M.D., was issued License Number 0101-035684 to practice medicine on July 14, 1983, which is scheduled to expire on March 31, 2024.
2. Dr. Morse violated Virginia Code § 54.1-2915(A)(3) and (13) in his care and treatment of Patient A, a 64-year-old-female for major depressive disorder (“MDD”) and obsessive-compulsive disorder (“OCD”). Specifically:
 - a. Dr. Morse first saw Patient A at Practice 2 on June 18, 2021. In the treatment note for that visit, Dr. Morse noted that Patient A’s last visit was on April 19, 2021, at Practice 1, Dr. Morse’s prior practice location; however, no records of Patient A’s prior treatment with Dr. Morse were included in her records at Practice 2.
 - b. On June 18, 2021, Dr. Morse documented, “psychiatrist decreased Wellbutrin XL from 450 mg to 300 mg during course of TMS [presumably, transcranial magnetic stimulation (“TMS”)] treatments.” There is no information in Dr. Morse’s treatment record for Patient A to reflect consultation or coordination with the psychiatrist providing TMS treatments to Patient A.

c. In an interview with a Senior Investigator for the Virginia Department of Health Professions (“Investigator”) on May 24, 2022, Dr. Morse stated that Patient A was diagnosed with “treatment resistive” major depression that has not been responsive to medication. Dr. Morse stated that Patient A “has been placed on new medication and weaned off old medication.” However, there is no documentation in Patient A’s treatment record as to which medications were been tried, found to be unsuccessful, or planned to be tried in the future. At the June 18, 2021 visit, Patient A’s pharmacologic treatment included two anti-depressants (Prozac and Wellbutrin) and two anti-psychotics (Rexulti and Seroquel).

d. On July 16, 2021, Dr. Morse described the severity of Patient’s A’s MDD and OCD as “moderate and unchanged[;]” however, his treatment plan indicated that he increased the dose of Prozac (from 20mg to 40mg daily) and “refilled” Patient A’s prescription for Xanax (C-IV) for one month without refills, with no indication for such prescribing.

e. On October 1, 2021, Dr. Morse documented the need to “check blood work” at Patient A’s next appointment, which did not occur at Patient A’s November 24, 2021 treatment visit. Again on December 28, 2021, Dr. Morse documented the plan to “check blood work at next appointment.” In the interview with the Investigator, Dr. Morse admitted he did not send patients for lab work as he should have because “the paperwork process was complicated.”

3. Dr. Morse violated Virginia Code § 54.1-2915(A)(12), (13), and (18) and 18 VAC 85-20-28(B)(2) of the Regulations Governing Regulations Governing the Practice of Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, Podiatry, and Chiropractic in that he terminated the practitioner-patient relationship and/or made himself unavailable without documented notice his patients and without assisting the patient in obtaining the services of another practitioner. Specifically:

a. By letter dated December 7, 2021, and served on December 10, 2021, the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration (“DEA”) issued an Order to Show Cause and Immediate Suspension of Registration to Dr. Morse. This action was based upon findings that Dr. Morse prescribed controlled substances without conducting a proper medical evaluation, identifying a legitimate diagnosis to justify such prescription, ordering or performing diagnostic tests, or ascertaining the health risks of such prescribing to the specific patient. Controlled substances prescribed by Dr. Morse included Adderall (C-II), diazepam, alprazolam, lorazepam, clonazepam, and zolpidem (all C-IV).

b. On December 10, 2021, Dr. Morse was notified by the Operations Manager/Credentialing Specialist for his practice that he was required to take a leave of absence, effective immediately, to resolve the DEA issues. Dr. Morse made no attempt to notify his patients of this absence, or inquire as to how the practice intended to provide such notification.

c. On January 11, 2022, Dr. Morse notified his practice that he had “decided to retire at this point rather than fight the DEA.” Again, Dr. Morse made no attempt to ensure the continuity of care for his patients after this “retirement.”

d. In an interview with the Investigator on February 16, 2022, the Operations Manager/Credentialing Specialist explained that the only other prescriber at the practice, a mental health nurse practitioner (“MHNP”), would not assume care for most of Dr. Morse’s patients due to “Dr. Morse’s prescribing habits.”

e. On February 16, 2022, the Clinical Manager of Dr. Morse’s practice advised the Investigator that “a lot of patients were in distress because of Dr. Morse’s prescribing, as no other provider would continue his level of care.” The Clinical Manager also advised that Dr. Morse failed to provide any information about the patients to aid in the transfer of care.

f. When Patient A contacted Dr. Morse's practice in January 2022, to obtain refills of prescribed medications, she was reportedly informed that Dr. Morse was no longer at the practice, the MHNP was "very overwhelmed," and that Patient A should contact her primary care physician, or seek treatment from an emergency department or community services board due to Dr. Morse's unavailability.

4. By electronic mail communication to the Board, dated June 13, 2022, Dr. Morse indicated he had retired and wanted to surrender his medical license, as he no longer needed it.

CONSENT

Jeffrey Hale Morse, M.D., by affixing his signature to this Consent Order, agrees to the following:

1. I have been advised to seek advice of counsel prior to signing this document;
2. I am fully aware that without my consent, no legal action can be taken against me or my license except pursuant to the Virginia Administrative Process Act, Virginia Code § 2.2-4000 *et seq.*;
3. I acknowledge that I have the following rights, among others: the right to an informal fact-finding conference before the Board; and the right to representation by counsel;
4. I waive my right to an informal conference;
5. I neither admit nor deny the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law contained herein but waive my right to contest such Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and any sanction imposed hereunder in any future judicial or administrative proceeding in which the Board is a party;
6. I consent to the entry of the following Order affecting my license to practice medicine in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Virginia Board of Medicine hereby ORDERS as follows:

1. The Board accepts the VOLUNTARY PERMENANT SURRENDER of Dr. Morse's license to practice medicine in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. The license will be recorded as PERMANENTLY SURRENDERED.
3. Jeffrey Hale Morse is not eligible for renewal or reinstatement of his license at any future date.

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 2.2-4023 and 54.1-2400.2, the signed original of this Order shall remain in the custody of the Department of Health Professions as a public record, and shall be made available for public inspection and copying upon request.

FOR THE BOARD

Wm L. Hynes, MD
Jennifer Deschenes, J.D., M.S.
Deputy Executive Director
Virginia Board of Medicine
ENTERED: 8/22/22

DHP – MAILROOM

AUG 18 2022

SEEN AND AGREED TO:

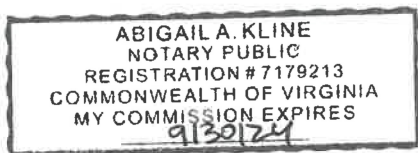
Jeffrey Hale Morse MD
Jeffrey Hale Morse, M.D.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

COUNTY/CITY OF Norfolk, TO WIT:

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a notary public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia at large, on

this 11th day of August, 2022.



Abigail A. Kline
Notary Public

My commission expires:

9/30/24

Registration No.:

7179213