

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

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BEFORE THE
LOUISIANA STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

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No. 20-I-694

IN THE MATTER OF:

CONSENT ORDER

CHANDRA M. KATTA, M.D.
(Credential No. MD.08484R),
Respondent

The above-entitled proceeding was docketed for investigation by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") following receipt of information relating to Chandra M. Katta, M.D. ("Dr. Katta"), a physician licensed to practice medicine in the State of Louisiana as evidenced by Credential No. MD.08484R. At all times material to the facts and matters alleged herein, Dr. Katta has been engaged in the practice of psychiatry in and around Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Dr. Katta's license previously was the subject of disciplinary action by the Board in a 1995 Consent Order imposing probation.¹ The Board then modified certain conditions of the probation related to prescribing in superseding consent orders entered in July 2001, September 2006, and April 2007.² Dr. Katta's license ultimately was reinstated without restriction in September 2013.³

¹ In 1995, the Board suspended Dr. Katta's license to practice medicine for five years, stayed all but six months of the suspension, and thereafter placed his license on probation for four and-a-half years, based on an investigation that revealed that Dr. Katta "had written and issued prescriptions for a variety of legally controlled dangerous substances, to a number of patients in suspicious quantities over an excessive period of time" when in many cases, his own charts "revealed objective evidence of substance abuse by the patients." See Consent Order, *In the Matter of Chandra M. Katta, M.D.*, No. 93-I-002-X, LA. STATE BD. OF MED. EXAM'RS (Aug. 24, 1995).

² Superseding Order, *In the Matter of: Chandra M. Katta, M.D.*, No. 93-I-002-X, LA. STATE BD. OF MED. EXAM'RS (July 25, 2001) (permitting Dr. Katta to order or prescribe, but not dispense, benzodiazepine in certain circumstances and otherwise permitting Dr. Katta to order medications for institutional or hospitalized in-patients under the permit or license of said institution or hospital); Second Superseding Order, *In the Matter of: Chandra M. Katta*, No. 93-I-002-X, LA. STATE BD. OF MED. EXAM'RS (Sept. 27, 2006) (permitting Dr. Katta to prescribe, but not dispense, any stimulant classified as a Schedule II controlled substance for the treatment of psychiatric conditions presented by his patients in connection with the practice of psychiatry that he performed "for Louisiana state related entities"); Third Superseding Order, *In the Matter of: Chandra M. Katta*, No. 93-I-002-X, LA. STATE BD. OF MED. EXAM'RS (Apr. 16, 2007) (removing the restriction in the Second Superseding Order regarding performance "for Louisiana state related agencies").

³ Order for Reinstatement of Unrestricted License, *In the Matter of Chandra M. Katta, M.D.*, No. 93-I-002-X, LA. STATE BD. OF MED. EXAM'RS (Sept. 26, 2013).

The Board initiated the present investigation upon the receipt of apparently reliable information from a representative of the Florida Parishes Juvenile Detention Center, alleging that, in July 2020, Dr. Katta prescribed medications to a minor patient while the minor was detained, without seeing or speaking to the minor.

Investigation of the captioned matter was assigned to Lawrence H. Cresswell, III, D.O., J.D., Director of Investigations for the Board. The investigation revealed that Dr. Katta prescribed the minor patient Prozac, Trileptal, and Risperidone without any direct communication with or examination of the patient. Rather, Dr. Katta prescribed the medications based on conversations with the patient's aunt and after reviewing descriptions of the patient's behavior and symptoms derived from patient's aunt and reports from other staff at the facility where Dr. Katta worked. The patient's aunt then delivered the prescriptions to the minor patient while he was in the detention center.

The complaint and the patient's records were reviewed by the Board's expert evaluator, who opined that Dr. Katta's treatment of the patient was below the standard of care, specifically in prescribing potentially dangerous medications without an evaluation, prescribing an inappropriately high initial dosage of Risperidone, and documenting an examination that never occurred.

Dr. Katta acknowledged that he did not evaluate (either in person, virtually, or over the phone) the patient prior to writing the prescriptions at issue. He explained that he was aware of the patient prior to issuing the prescriptions because the patient's guardian participated in a program aimed at providing caregivers with resources to reduce disruptive behavior, and also explained the patient's prior participation in this program. Dr. Katta believed that an evaluation was not possible prior to issuing the specific prescriptions, due to the patient's detention and the reported emergency conditions that, Dr. Katta believed, necessitated issuing the prescriptions. Dr. Katta submitted that issuance of the prescriptions was an isolated incident, and that he had not previously prescribed medications without clinical contact with a patient. Dr. Katta further stated that he is nearing retirement and primarily provides care for underserved and vulnerable patient groups and submitted eighteen letters of support from patients, employers, and co-workers.

As evidenced by his subscription hereto, Dr. Katta acknowledges the substantial accuracy of the foregoing information and that proof of such information upon administrative evidentiary hearing would establish sufficient cause to take action with respect to his license pursuant to the Louisiana Medical Practice Act pursuant to La. R.S. 37:1285(A)(6),⁴ and (13)⁵.

Recognizing his right to notice and administrative adjudication of any charges that may be asserted against him in these proceedings, at which time Dr. Katta would be entitled to be

⁴ The Board may take action against a medical license for "[p]rescribing, dispensing, or administering legally controlled substances or any dependency-inducing medication without legitimate medical justification therefor or in other than a legal or legitimate manner[.]" La. R.S. 37:1285(A)(6).

⁵ The Board may take action against a medical license for "[u]nprofessional conduct, including but not limited to, . . . intentionally falsifying or fraudulently altering records, or failing to create or maintain medical records." La. R.S. 37:1285(A)(13); *see also* La. Admin. Code tit. 46, pt. XLV, § 7603(A)(10) ("*Failing to Create or Maintain Medical Records*—a physician shall create and maintain adequate and legible patient records. In addition, a physician shall: a. not falsely create or alter a medical record or destroy a medical record except as authorized by law[.]").

represented by legal counsel, to call witnesses and to present evidence on his own behalf in defense or in mitigation of the charges made and to a decision thereon by the Board based upon written findings of fact and conclusions of law pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955–65, Dr. Katta, nonetheless, hereby waives his right to notice and formal adjudication and pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955(D) consents to entry of the Order set forth hereinafter. Dr. Katta acknowledges that he hereby waives any right to which he may be entitled pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, La. R.S. 49:951 *et seq.*, or which may be afforded to him by any other law to contest or appeal his agreement to or the force and effect of the Board's investigation or this Order in any court or other forum. By his subscription hereto, Dr. Katta also hereby authorizes the Investigating Officer designated by the Board with respect hereto to present this Order to the Board for its consideration and to fully disclose to and discuss with the Board the nature and results of the investigation and he waives any objection to such disclosures under La. R.S. 49:960. Dr. Katta expressly acknowledges that the disclosure of such information to the Board by the Investigating Officer shall be without prejudice to the Investigating Officer's authority to proceed with the adjudication of an administrative complaint against him or to the Board's capacity to adjudicate such complaint should the Board decline to approve this Order.

Based upon the information provided, and upon the recommendation of the Investigating Officer, the Board hereby concludes that, consistent with its mandate under La. R.S. 37:1261, the interests of public health, safety, and welfare will be effectively served by entry of the Order set forth hereinafter by consent. Accordingly, in consideration of the foregoing and pursuant to the authority vested in the Board by La. R.S. 37:1285 and La. R.S. 49:955(D);

IT IS ORDERED that the license of Chandra M. Katta, M.D., is hereby **OFFICIALLY REPRIMANDED** for the conduct described above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Dr. Katta's license to practice medicine in the State of Louisiana as evidenced by Credential No. MD.08484R, be placed **ON PROBATION** for a period of one (1) year (the "probationary period") from the effective date of this Consent Order, conditioned upon and subject to Dr. Katta's acceptance of and strict compliance with the following terms, conditions, and restrictions:

- (1) **On-site Practice Monitoring.** Within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this order, Dr. Katta shall enter into a contract or arrangement with a Practice Monitor, who has been pre-approved in writing by the Board or its designee to review Dr. Katta's medical practice on-site during the probationary period. The Practice Monitor shall work in conjunction with the Board or its designee to develop parameters for monitoring Dr. Katta's practice, including on-site monitoring and a review of Dr. Katta's patient records and charts. The Practice Monitor shall review no less than fifteen (15) medical records quarterly and provide quarterly written reports to the Board or its designee attesting to whether Dr. Katta's medical practice falls within established standards of care and whether Dr. Katta is performing sufficient examinations before prescribing medications. Any and all fees, costs or expenses incurred by Dr. Katta in connection with this monitoring requirement shall be borne by Dr. Katta.

- (2) **Continuing Medical Education.** Within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the effective date of this Order, Dr. Katta shall provide confirmation that he has registered for, attended, and successfully completed continuing medical education courses in each of the following areas (a) proper prescribing of controlled substances, (b) medical ethics and professionalism, and (c) medical record keeping. Such courses must be acceptable to and have been approved by the Board or its designee in writing prior to Dr. Katta's registering for and completing such course.
- (3) **Payment of Fine.** Within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the effective date of this Order, Dr. Katta will pay to the Board a fine in the amount of Five Thousand and no/100 Dollars (\$5,000.00).
- (4) **Notification of Order and Authorization.** Dr. Katta shall provide a copy of this Consent Order to each hospital, clinic, facility or other employer or prospective employer at which or for whom he provides services as a physician in this state, and upon request of the Board's probation officer Dr. Katta shall immediately execute and provide, as may be necessary, authorization to obtain any and all peer review records or other employment records pertaining to Dr. Katta from any hospital, institution or other health care entity where Dr. Katta has or has had privileges.
- (5) **Cooperation with Board's Probation and Compliance Officer.** Dr. Katta shall immediately notify the Board's Probation and Compliance Officer of any change in his current home and professional addresses and telephone numbers and he shall direct all matters required pursuant to this Order to the attention of the Probation and Compliance Officer, with whom he shall cooperate on all matters and inquiries pertaining to his compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order, specifically including without limitation providing cooperation and assistance to the Board or its designee in obtaining any records required under this Consent Order.
- (6) **Absence from the State/Practice/Effect on Probation.** Should Dr. Katta at any time be absent from the state of Louisiana, relocate to and/or take up residency in another state or country, or discontinue practicing as a physician, for a period of thirty (30) days or more, he will so advise the Board in writing. In such instance, the probation ordered herein and all terms, conditions and restrictions thereof shall be deemed interrupted and extended and shall not commence again until Dr. Katta notifies the Board in writing that he has resumed the practice of medicine in Louisiana.
- (7) **Probation Monitoring Fee.** For each year of the probation, Dr. Katta shall pay the Board an annual probation monitoring fee of Three Hundred (\$300.00) Dollars. Payment of the initial fee shall be due not later than sixty (60) days from the effective date of this Order.
- (8) **Effect of Violation/Sanction.** By his subscription hereto, Dr. Katta acknowledges that his receipt of written notification that the Board has received reliable information

indicating his failure to comply with the requirements set forth by this Order in any respect shall, without the need for formal hearing or for providing him with any right to which he may otherwise be entitled pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, La. R.S. 49:951, *et seq.*, or which otherwise may be afforded to him by law, constitute his irrevocable consent to the immediate suspension of his license to practice medicine in this state pending a hearing before the Board and the conclusion of the administrative proceeding by issuance of a final decision following administrative adjudication of such charges.

(9) Certification of Compliance with Probationary Terms. At least sixty (60) days prior to the conclusion of the probationary period imposed herein, Dr. Katta shall provide the Board with an affidavit certifying that he has complied with each of the terms of probation imposed by this Order. The probationary period and all of its terms and conditions shall be, and shall be deemed to be, extended and continued in full force and effect pending Dr. Katta compliance with the requirements of this provision.

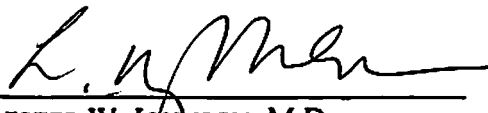
(10) Effective Date. This Consent Order shall be effective as of the date it is approved and accepted by the Board as shown by the signature of the Board's representative below.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any violation of or failure of strict compliance with any of the terms set forth by this Order by Dr. Katta shall be deemed adequate and sufficient cause, upon proof of such violation or failure, for such other action against Dr. Katta's license to practice medicine in the state of Louisiana as the Board may deem appropriate as if such violations were enumerated among the causes provided in La. R.S. 37:1285.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Consent Order shall be, and shall be deemed to be, a public record.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 27th day of June, 2022.

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By: 
LESTER W. JOHNSON, M.D.
President

*Acknowledgement and Consent
Follows on Next Page*

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT
AND CONSENT**

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

I, CHANDRA M. KATTA, M.D., hereby acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to seek the advice and guidance of legal counsel with respect to this Consent Order and that all of its terms and conditions have been fully explained to me and/or that I fully understand them. I further acknowledge that I approve, accept and consent to entry of the above and foregoing Order without duress and of my own free will and accord, this 12th day of APRIL, 2022.

Chandra M. Katta, M.D.
CHANDRA M. KATTA, M.D.

WITNESSES:

Thesia Jones
Signature

Thesia Jones
Typed Name

125 W. Ardenwood Dr.
Street Address

Baton Rouge, LA 70806
City/State/Zip Code

Karuna Katta
Signature

KARUNA KATTA
Typed Name

2742 SHORE BEND AVE
Street Address

BATON ROUGE, LA-70810
City/State/Zip Code

Sworn to and subscribed before me this
12th day of APRIL, 2022, in the
presence of the two stated witnesses.

[Signature]
Notary Public (Signature)

Name: →

Notary/Bar No.: →

Commission expires: AT DEATH

ANGELE MIXSON
Louisiana Notary ID # 139225
Commissioned for Life

