

BEFORE THE
NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

In re:)	
)	
Vicki Olivia Morrow, M.D.,)	CONSENT ORDER
)	
Respondent.)	

This matter is before the North Carolina Medical Board ("Board") regarding information provided to the Board concerning Vicki Olivia Morrow, M.D. ("Dr. Morrow"). Dr. Morrow makes the following admissions and the Board makes the following findings and conclusions:

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Board is a body duly organized under the laws of North Carolina and is the proper party to bring this proceeding under the authority granted to it in Article 1 of Chapter 90 of the North Carolina General Statutes and the rules and regulations promulgated thereto.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Dr. Morrow was first issued a license to practice medicine by the Board on or about August 16, 2012, license number 2012-01667.

At all times relevant hereto, Dr. Morrow practiced psychiatry in Westfield, North Carolina.

In April 2015, Dr. Morrow began providing psychotherapy and medication management to Patient A. Dr. Morrow and Patient A were

approximately the same age and attended high school together. Dr. Morrow reports she was not friends with Patient A in high school.

Patient A suffered from the following diagnoses: Bipolar Disorder; Substance Abuse Disorder (alcohol severe); and cirrhosis of the liver. When Dr. Morrow began treating Patient A, he was dying from end stage liver disease. Dr. Morrow also diagnosed Patient A with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and polysubstance abuse. She prescribed him Adderall® (amphetamine) and Xanax® (alprazolam).

In January 2016, Dr. Morrow began interacting with Patient A practically every day or every other day. Dr. Morrow saw Patient A in his home, and in her home. She gave Patient A her personal phone number and they spoke frequently on the phone, sometimes more than once a day. She drove Patient A to the bank and on other errands. She drove him to medical appointments. When Patient A's mother was hospitalized, Dr. Morrow drove Patient A to the hospital so he could visit his mother.

On February 23, 2016, Dr. Morrow drove Patient A to the bank. At the bank, Patient A withdrew \$9,900.00 from his retirement account to pay for past psychotherapy sessions. The amount paid to Dr. Morrow by Patient A exceeded the amount owed by Patient A.

By February 23, 2016, Dr. Morrow claimed she conducted approximately forty (40) psychotherapy sessions with Patient A. These sessions were many times the result of her daily interactions

with Patient A. However, prior to February 23, Dr. Morrow never presented any invoices or bills for her services.

Patient A died in June 2016.

Dr. Morrow's conduct departed from standards of acceptable and prevailing medical practice and the ethics of the profession.

Dr. Morrow blurred the lines of the physician-patient relationship and violated the ethics of the psychiatric profession.

Dr. Morrow prescribed Xanax® to Patient A despite his history of severe alcohol use disorder and indications that he continued to abuse alcohol. It is below the standard of care to prescribe Xanax® to a patient who continues to abuse alcohol. If Xanax® is to be prescribed to a patient under these circumstances, the need and rationale for the prescription should be carefully documented and the drug should be prescribed at a low dose. Dr. Morrow prescribed Xanax® to Patient A without adequately documenting the rationale for the drug and without documenting she discussed the potential harm of the drug to Patient A. This was below the standard of care.

Dr. Morrow failed to document a recommendation of ongoing treatment for Patient A's alcohol use disorder. This failure was below the standard of care.

As a result of the Board's inquiry, Dr. Morrow has taken continuing medical education courses regarding maintaining proper

patient boundaries and the prescribing of benzodiazepines. Dr. Morrow has also made reimbursement of a portion of her fees to the beneficiary of Patient A's retirement plan.

On April 11, 2018, Dr. Morrow placed her North Carolina medical license on inactive status.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Dr. Morrow's conduct, as described above, constitutes unprofessional conduct, including, but not limited to, departure from, or the failure to conform to, the standards of acceptable and prevailing medical practice, or the ethics of the medical profession, within the meaning of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-14(a)(6) and grounds exist under this section of the North Carolina General Statutes for the Board to annul, suspend, revoke, condition or limit Dr. Morrow's license to practice medicine or to deny any application she might make in the future.

PROCEDURAL STIPULATIONS

Dr. Morrow acknowledges and agrees that the Board has jurisdiction over her and over the subject matter of this case.

Dr. Morrow knowingly waives her right to any hearing and to any judicial review or appeal in this case.

Dr. Morrow, with advice of legal counsel, acknowledges that she has read and understands this Consent Order and enters into it voluntarily.

Dr. Morrow desires to resolve this matter without the need for more formal proceedings.

The Board has determined that it is in the public interest to resolve this case as set forth below.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, with Dr. Morrow's consent, it is ORDERED that:

1. Dr. Morrow's North Carolina license to practice medicine is hereby REPRIMANDED for the above described conduct.

2. Dr. Morrow shall obey all laws. Likewise, she shall obey all rules and regulations involving the practice of medicine.

3. Dr. Morrow shall meet with the Board or members of the Board for an investigative interview at such times as requested by the Board.

4. Upon request, Dr. Morrow shall provide the Board with any information the Board deems necessary to verify compliance with the terms and conditions of this Consent Order.

5. If Dr. Morrow fails to comply with any of the terms and conditions of this Consent Order that failure shall constitute unprofessional conduct within the meaning of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-14(a)(6) and shall be additional grounds for the Board to suspend or revoke her license or to deny any application she might make in the future or then have pending for a license.

6. This Consent Order shall take effect immediately upon its execution by both Dr. Morrow and the Board, and it shall

continue in effect until specifically ordered otherwise by the Board.

7. Dr. Morrow hereby waives any requirement under any law or rule that this Consent Order be served on her.

8. Upon execution by Dr. Morrow and the Board, this Consent Order shall become a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Statutes and shall be subject to public inspection and dissemination pursuant to the provisions thereof. Additionally, it will be reported to persons, entities, agencies and clearinghouses as required and permitted by law including, but not limited to, the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Practitioner Data Bank.

By Order of the North Carolina Medical Board this the 25th day of May, 2018.

NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

By:



Timothy E. Lietz, M.D.
President

Consented to this the 18 day of APRIL, 2018.

Vicki Olivia Morrow M.D.
Vicki Olivia Morrow, M.D.

State of PA

County of Philadelphia

I, ELIZABETH FARRELL, do hereby certify that Vicki Olivia Morrow, M.D. personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.

Witness my hand and official seal this the 18 day of APRIL, 2018.

Elizabeth Farrell
Notary Public

(Official Seal)

My Commission Expires: 04/20/2018

