

BEFORE THE  
NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

In re:	)	
	)	
Ruben Rolando Salinas, M.D.,	)	CONSENT ORDER
	)	
Respondent.	)	

This matter is before the North Carolina Medical Board ("Board") regarding information provided to the Board concerning Ruben Rolando Salinas, M.D. ("Dr. Salinas"). Dr. Salinas 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. Salinas was first issued a license to practice medicine by the Board on or about August 22, 2002, license number 200201161.

At all times relevant hereto, Dr. Salinas practiced psychiatry in New Bern, North Carolina.

Dr. Salinas has a history with the Board including allegations of deficient or unprofessional physician-patient communication, substandard care, prescribing issues, and unprofessional conduct.

On November 29, 2016, the Board sent Dr. Salinas a private letter of concern based on a complaint received from a patient that Dr. Salinas failed to show up for scheduled appointments, communicate with the patient, and/or timely refill prescriptions. The Board encouraged Dr. Salinas to have reliable administrative support to ensure coverage at his practice.

On March 30, 2017, the Board issued a public letter of concern based on concerns that Dr. Salinas' care of a patient, for whom he prescribed Suboxone and Ritalin, fell below the standard of care. Specifically, Dr. Salinas failed to conduct an appropriate initial assessment and follow-up visits, drug screenings, substance abuse counseling, or review the North Carolina Controlled Substance Reporting System. In addition, Dr. Salinas had a working relationship with the patient which created a potential dual role boundary violation. The Board also noted that Dr. Salinas did not have authorization by the Drug Enforcement Agency to prescribe Suboxone for the treatment of addiction.

On September 29, 2017, the Board sent Dr. Salinas a private letter of concern based on a complaint that Dr. Salinas was inappropriately prescribing a controlled substance to a patient with a history of substance abuse issues. The Board urged

Dr. Salinas to use more vigilance in prescribing to avoid overlapping refills.

On September 27, 2018, the Board sent Dr. Salinas a private letter of concern based on a complaint that Dr. Salinas failed to timely complete an evaluation report, which caused delay in a patient's care. At the time of the letter, Dr. Salinas told the Board that he changed office procedures to avoid delays in providing records.

In November 2019, the Board received two complaints regarding Dr. Salinas.

The first complaint was from an employee of a business neighboring Dr. Salinas' office. The complainant alleged that Dr. Salinas regularly arrived late to his office or not at all. Dr. Salinas' patients were left waiting outside his office for long periods of time leading to disruption and disturbances outside Dr. Salinas' office and the neighboring businesses.

The second complaint was received from a former patient ("Patient A") and the spouse of Patient B, who is also a former patient of Dr. Salinas. Patient A alleged that Dr. Salinas hired Patient B as his office manager and secretary while she was a patient of Dr. Salinas. Further, Patient A alleged that Dr. Salinas failed to release Patient A's medical records in a timely manner.

The Board obtained Patient A's medical records from Dr. Salinas and submitted the records to an independent reviewing expert. The reviewing expert opined that Dr. Salinas' care of Patient A failed to conform to the standards of acceptable and prevailing medical practice. Specifically, the reviewing expert explained that Dr. Salinas created a boundary violation by hiring Patient B in violation of clear ethical guidelines established by the American Psychiatric Association.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Dr. Salinas acknowledges that his 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) which is grounds under that section of the North Carolina General Statutes for the Board to annul, suspend, revoke, condition, or limit Dr. Salinas' license to practice medicine issued by the Board.

#### PROCEDURAL STIPULATIONS

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

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

Dr. Salinas acknowledges that he has read and understands this Consent Order and enters into it voluntarily.

Dr. Salinas 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. Salinas' consent, it is ORDERED that:

1. Dr. Salinas is hereby REPRIMANDED.
2. Dr. Salinas agrees that he will not employ any current or former patients. Dr. Salinas further agrees that he will not provide medical care for any person he employs.
3. Dr. Salinas shall complete the Professional/Problem-Based Ethics ("ProBE") course, an education course offered by the Center for Personalized Education for Professionals ("CPEP"), within six (6) months of the date of this Consent Order. Dr. Salinas shall submit evidence of the completion of the ProBE course to the Board's Compliance Coordinator, North Carolina Medical Board, P.O. Box 20007, Raleigh, NC 27619-0007 or [compliance@ncmedboard.org](mailto:compliance@ncmedboard.org) within five (5) days of receiving his final report.
4. Dr. Salinas shall obey all laws. Likewise, he shall obey all rules and regulations involving the practice of medicine.

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

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

7. If Dr. Salinas fails to comply with any of the terms 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 grounds, after any required notice and hearing, for the Board to annul, suspend, or revoke his license to practice medicine and to deny any application he might make in the future or then have pending for a license to practice medicine.

8. This Consent Order shall take effect immediately upon its execution by both Dr. Salinas and the Board, and it shall continue in effect until specifically ordered otherwise by the Board.

9. Dr. Salinas hereby waives any requirement under any law or rule that this Consent Order be served on him.

10. Upon execution by Dr. Salinas 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 24th day of July, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

By:

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Bryant A. Murphy, M.D.  
President

Consented to this the 22 day of July, 2020.

Ruben Rolando Salinas M.D.  
Ruben Rolando Salinas, M.D.

State of North Carolina

County of Craven

I, Shanavia M. Williams, do hereby certify that Ruben Rolando Salinas, 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 22 day of July, 2020.

Shanavia M. Williams  
Notary Public

(Official Seal)

My Commission Expires: 02/24/2025

