

IN THE MATTER OF

* BEFORE THE

LINDA POTTS

* MARYLAND STATE

Respondent

* BOARD OF PHYSICIANS

License Number: (Unlicensed)

* Case Number: 2224-0007 B

* * * * *

CHARGES UNDER THE MARYLAND NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE ACT

Disciplinary Panel B (“Panel B”) of the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the “Board”) hereby charges **LINDA POTTS** (the “Respondent”), unlicensed, under the Maryland Naturopathic Medicine Act (the “Act”), codified at Md. Code Ann., Health Occupations (“Health Occ.”) §§ 14-5F-01 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2023 Supp.).

The pertinent provisions under the Act provide:

§ 14-5F-30. Unauthorized practice – Representations to public.

- (a) Unless an individual is licensed to practice naturopathic medicine, the individual may not:
 - (1) Represent to the public by title, by description of services, methods, or procedures, or otherwise, that the individual is licensed by the Board to practice naturopathic medicine;
 - (2) Use the title “doctor of naturopathic medicine”, “doctor of naturopathy”, “naturopathic doctor”, or “naturopath”; or
 - (3) Use the initials “N.D.”, “ND”, “NMD”, or “N.M.D.” after the name of the individual.

ALLEGATIONS OF FACT¹

Disciplinary Panel B bases its charges on the following facts that it has reason to believe are true.

I. BACKGROUND AND COMPLAINT

1. The Respondent is not and never has been licensed to practice naturopathic medicine in the State of Maryland. The Respondent has been a licensed registered nurse in the State of Maryland since April 20, 1981.

2. On July 12, 2023, the Board received an anonymous complaint that the Respondent was representing to the public that she was a “Board-Certified Doctor of Natural Medicine.”

3. After receiving the Complaint, the Board initiated an investigation of the Respondent.

II. BOARD INVESTIGATION

4. As part of its investigation, the Board obtained relevant business records and patient records from the Respondent. Board investigators also received a written response from and conducted an under-oath interview with the Respondent. The Board also retained a licensed Naturopathic Doctor (the “Expert”) to opine in part as to whether the Respondent is representing to the public that she is licensed to practice naturopathic medicine.

5. At all relevant times, the Respondent is the owner and operator of a wellness center (the “Center”) located in Washington County, Maryland. Advertising materials for

¹ The allegations set forth in these charges are intended to provide the Respondent with reasonable notice of the asserted facts. They are not intended as, and do not necessarily represent, a complete description of the evidence, either documentary or testimonial, to be offered against the Respondent in connection with this matter.

the Wellness Center describe its mission as “Creating Optimal Health with Proven Results for Physical, Mental, Emotion and Spiritual Wellness.”

6. The public website for the Center describes the Respondent as “Dr. Linda D. Potts, DCRC, RN, MBA, MBE, Board Certified Doctor of Natural Medicine.” The Center offers comprehensive wellness consultations, energy healing, emotional balancing, sensitivity elimination, weight loss, detoxification and pain management. The Center states it works with patients who have been diagnosed with Lyme disease, fibromyalgia, cancer complications, chronic pain, neurological issues, depression, anxiety, digestive issues, and weight loss.

7. In her written response, the Respondent states in 2013 she “became a Board-Certified Doctor of Natural Medicine with the American Naturopathic Medical Certification Board after completing the doctorate program from Trinity School of Natural Health and taking the exam,” and remains in good standing.

8. Since March 1, 2016, the State of Maryland requires an individual to be licensed by the Board before the individual may practice naturopathic medicine in the State.² The Respondent never has been licensed to practice naturopathic medicine in the State of Maryland.

9. Despite not being licensed, the Expert opines that “the Respondent has represented to the public that she is a naturopathic doctor[.]”

10. The Expert opines that the Respondent does not possess the qualifications to even apply for a Maryland naturopathic doctor license. First, the doctorate program

² Health Occ. § 14-5F-10.

completed by the Respondent from the Trinity School of Natural Health is not accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education. As such, the Respondent is not qualified to sit for the Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examination (NPLEX). Second, the American Naturopathic Medical Certification Board is not affiliated with the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners (the body that administers the NPLEX examination). Therefore, certifications from the American Naturopathic Medical Certification Board are not accepted as grounds for licensure by any jurisdiction that licenses naturopathic doctors in the United States and Canada.

11. As the Respondent is not eligible to be and is not licensed to practice naturopathic medicine in Maryland, she is not permitted to use the titles “doctor of naturopathic medicine”, “doctor of naturopathy”, “naturopathic doctor”, “naturopath”, or the initials “N.D.”, “ND”, or “N.D.M.” Despite this prohibition, since March 1, 2016, the Respondent states that patients refer to her as “Dr. Potts” or “Dr. Linda.” The Respondent also refers to herself as “Dr. Linda Potts” or “Dr. Potts” on the Center’s website, on the Respondent’s informed consent form, in emails with patients, and in treatment plans.

12. After March 1, 2016, the Respondent also uses the initials “ND” in reference to herself and otherwise represents herself to be a naturopathic doctor. This includes displaying in her office a Doctor of Naturopathy degree from the Trinity School of Natural Health; displaying in her office a certification document from the American Naturopathic Medical Certification Board; providing receipts to patients with the initials “ND” following her name; and providing treatment plans to patients identifying herself as “Dr. Linda Potts, Board Certified ND.”

13. In summary, the Expert concludes that the Respondent “is not licensed to practice naturopathic medicine in Maryland, but nonetheless has... represented to the public that she is a licensed naturopathic doctor, using protected terms...She has done so in the knowledge that she is not permitted to do so, taking some, but not enough, steps to make it clear to consumers that she is not a licensed naturopathic doctor[.]”

NOTICE OF POSSIBLE SANCTIONS

If, after a hearing, a disciplinary panel of the Board finds that there are grounds for action under Health Occ. § 14-5F-30(a)(1), (2) and/or (3), the disciplinary panel may levy a civil fine of not more than \$50,000.

NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE FOR CASE RESOLUTION

The Respondent may appear before Disciplinary Panel B, serving as the Disciplinary Committee for Case Resolution (“DCCR”) in this matter, on **Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.**, at the Board’s offices, 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215. The nature and purpose of the DCCR is described in the attached letter to the Respondent.

If the case cannot be resolved at the DCCR, a pre-hearing conference and a hearing will be scheduled before an Administrative Law Judge at the Office of Administrative Hearings, 11101 Gilroy Road, Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, Md. Code Ann., State Gov’t §§ 10-201 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. and 2023 Supp.).

**ANTHONY G. BROWN
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MARYLAND**

February 5, 2024

Gregory L. Lockwood

Date

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