

**IN THE MATTER OF  
ELIZABETH FONDONG**

**Respondent**

**Unlicensed**

**\* BEFORE THE MARYLAND  
\* STATE BOARD OF  
\* PHYSICIANS  
\* Case Number: 2223-0075 B**

\* \* \* \* \*

**CONSENT ORDER**

On November 30, 2023, Disciplinary Panel B (“Panel B”) of the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the “Board”) charged **ELIZABETH FONDONG** (the “Respondent”), unlicensed, under the Maryland Naturopathic Medicine Act (the “Act”), Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. §§ 14-5F-01 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2022 Supp.).

Panel B charged the Respondent with violating the following provisions of the Act:

**§ 14-5F-01. Definitions.**

- (j) “Naturopathic doctor” means an individual who practices naturopathic medicine.
- (k) (1) “Naturopathic medicine” means the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of human health conditions, injury, and disease using only patient education and naturopathic therapies and therapeutic substances recognized by the Council of Naturopathic Medical Education.  
(2) “Naturopathic medicine” includes:
  - (i) Counseling;
  - (ii) The practice of the mechanical sciences of healing, including mechanotherapy, articular manipulation, corrective and orthopedic gymnastics, hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, and phototherapy;
  - (iii) The practice of the material sciences of healing, including nutrition, phytotherapy, treatment by natural substances, and external applications; and

- (iv) Prescribing, dispensing, and administering nonprescription and prescription drugs and devices listed in the formulary.

**§ 14-5F-29. Unlicensed practice prohibited.**

- (a) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, an individual may not practice, attempt to practice, or offer to practice naturopathic medicine in this State without a license.

**§ 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”[.]

On March 27, 2024, Panel B was convened as a Disciplinary Committee for Case Resolution (“DCCR”) in this matter. Based on the negotiations occurring as a result of this DCCR, the Respondent agreed to enter into this Consent Order, consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Order, and Consent.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Panel B finds the following:

**I. Background**

1. The Respondent has never been licensed to practice naturopathic medicine in the State of Maryland. She has never been licensed or certified by any health occupations licensing board in Maryland.

2. The Respondent operates a business (the “Respondent’s Business”) located

in Westminster, Maryland where, among other things, the Respondent sells supplements. The Respondent's Business also has a website (the "Respondent's Business Website").

## **II. The Complaint**

3. On or about February 21, 2023, the Board received a complaint (the "Complaint") from an individual (the "Complainant")<sup>1</sup> alleging that the Respondent was a natural health practitioner "identifying as a medical doctor." The Complainant filed the Complaint with the Board to inquire as to whether the Respondent was a licensed physician in Maryland.

4. The Board conducted an investigation into the Complaint.

## **III. The Board Investigation**

5. The Board investigation included, but was not limited to, reviewing the Respondent's publicly accessible social media; an unannounced site visit (the "Site Visit")<sup>2</sup> to the Respondent's Business; subpoenaing various records, including, but not limited to, the Respondent's records for her clients; conducting an under-oath interview with the Respondent (the "Respondent's Interview") and speaking with clients of the Respondent.

6. An expert (the "Expert"), Board certified in naturopathic medicine, reviewed the pertinent documents in the Board's investigative file and opined that the Respondent represented to the public that she is a naturopathic doctor and practiced naturopathic medicine.

7. The Expert's opinion is based on, at least in part, the Respondent's: use of

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<sup>1</sup> For confidentiality reasons, the names of individuals referenced herein, will not be disclosed in this document.

<sup>2</sup> The Board conducted the Site Visit pursuant to Health Occ. § 14-206(d)(1)(ii).

the titles “naturopathic doctor” and “doctor”; statements regarding her credentials; and practices at the Respondent’s Business, as described below.

### **The Respondent’s Use of the Title “Naturopathic Doctor” and “Doctor”**

8. On or about May 15, 2020, a publicly available video (the “Video”) was posted online where the Respondent was interviewed and stated, among other things, “I’m a naturopathic doctor.”

9. On or about April 27, 2023, the Board conducted the Site Visit where, upon arrival, the Respondent greeted Board staff wearing a white physician-style lab coat and introduced herself as “Doctor Liz.”<sup>3</sup>

10. The Respondent refers to herself as “Dr. Liz” on the Respondent’s Business Website.

### **The Respondent’s Statements Regarding Her Credentials**

11. In the Video, the Respondent stated:

I hold a [Doctor of Philosophy] in natural medicine,<sup>4</sup> I’m a functional medicine practitioner, I am also board certified in the American Association of Drugless Practitioners.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Respondent’s Practices at the Respondent’s Business**

12. The Respondent provides clients with medical intake forms which request extensive detail regarding medical history.

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<sup>3</sup> Board staff identified themselves to the Respondent and hand-delivered the Respondent a letter which notified her of the Complaint, requested her written response, and contained multiple subpoenas for documents.

<sup>4</sup> A Doctor of Philosophy in natural medicine is not a clinical degree nor is the possessor of such a degree eligible for licensure as a naturopathic doctor in the State of Maryland.

<sup>5</sup> American Association of Drugless Practitioners certification is not accepted as grounds for licensure in any jurisdiction that licenses naturopathic doctors in the United States or Canada.

13. The Respondent also conducts laboratory testing on clients and makes treatment recommendations to clients based on the testing, including, but not limited to, recommendations for supplements to address health conditions.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

Based on the Findings of Fact, Disciplinary Panel B of the Board concludes as a matter of law that the Respondent's actions, while unlicensed, constitute: practicing, attempting to practice, and/or offering to practice naturopathic medicine in this State without a license, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-5F-29; representing to the public by title, by description of services, methods or procedures, or otherwise, that she is licensed by the Board to practice naturopathic medicine, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-5F-30(a)(1); and using the term "naturopathic doctor", in violation of Health Occ. § 14-5F-30(a)(2).

### **ORDER**

It is thus by Disciplinary Panel B of the Board, hereby:

**ORDERED** that within **3 YEARS**, the Respondent shall pay a civil fine of **\$30,000**. The payment shall be by money order or bank certified check made payable to the Maryland Board of Physicians and mailed to P.O. Box 37217, Baltimore, Maryland 21297, and it is further

**ORDERED** that the effective date of the Consent Order is the date the Consent Order is signed by the Executive Director of the Board or her designee. The Executive Director signs the Consent Order on behalf of the disciplinary panel which has imposed the terms and conditions of this Consent Order, and it is further

**ORDERED** that the Respondent is responsible for all costs incurred in fulfilling the terms and conditions of this Consent Order; and it is further

**ORDERED** that this Consent Order is a public document. *See* Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. §§ 1-607, 14-411.1(b)(2) and Gen. Prov. § 4-333(b)(6).

04/23/2024  
Date

## *Signature On File*

Christine A. Farrelly, Executive Director  
Maryland State Board of Physicians

### CONSENT

I, Elizabeth Fondong, acknowledge that I have consulted with counsel before signing this document.

By this Consent, I agree to be bound by this Consent Order and all its terms and conditions and understand that the disciplinary panel will not entertain any request for amendments or modifications to any condition.

I assert that I am aware of my right to a formal evidentiary hearing, pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 14-405 and Md. Code Ann., State Gov't §§ 10-201 *et seq.* concerning the pending charges. I waive this right and have elected to sign this Consent Order instead.

I acknowledge the validity and enforceability of this Consent Order as if entered after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have had the right to counsel, to confront witnesses, to give testimony, to call witnesses on my behalf, and to all other substantive and procedural protections as provided by law. I waive those procedural

and substantive protections. I acknowledge the legal authority and the jurisdiction of the disciplinary panel to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this Consent Order. I voluntarily enter into and agree to comply with the terms and conditions set forth in the Consent Order as a resolution of the charges. I waive any right to contest the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Order set out in the Consent Order. I waive all rights to appeal this Consent Order.

I sign this Consent Order, without reservation, and fully understand the language and meaning of its terms.

## *Signature On File*

04-14-24  
Date

Elizabeth Fondong  
Respondent

### NOTARY

STATE OF MARYLAND

CITY/COUNTY OF CARROLL

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 14 day of APRIL 2024, before me, a Notary Public of the foregoing State and City/County, **Elizabeth Fondong** personally appeared and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent Order was her voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESSTH my hand and notarial seal.

  
Notary Public

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

