

IN THE MATTER OF	*	BEFORE THE
NATALIA L. DARLING, P.A.-C	*	MARYLAND STATE
Respondent	*	BOARD OF PHYSICIANS
License Number: C05948	*	Case Number: 2220-0261B
* * * * *	*	* * * * *

CONSENT ORDER

On September 25, 2020, Disciplinary Panel B ("Panel B") of the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the "Board") charged **NATALIA L. DARLING, P.A.-C** (the "Respondent"), License Number C05948, under the Maryland Physician Assistants Act (the "Act"), Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. ("Health Occ.") §§ 15-101 *et seq.* (2014 Repl. Vol. & 2019 Supp.). Panel B charged the Respondent with violating the following provisions of the Act under Health Occ. § 15-401 and Health Occ. § 15-402:

Health Occ. § 15-401. License required to practice as physician assistant

- (a) Except as otherwise provided in this title, a person may not practice, attempt to practice, or offer to practice as a physician assistant in the State unless the person has a license issued by the Board.
- (b) Except as otherwise provided in this title, a person may not perform, attempt to perform, or offer to perform any delegated medical act beyond the scope of the license and which is consistent with a delegation agreement filed with the Board.

Health Occ. § 15-402. Representations to the public; physician assistants

- (a) Except as otherwise provided in this title, a person may not represent or imply to the public by use of the title "licensed physician assistant", by other title, or by description of services, methods, or procedures that the person is licensed to practice as a physician assistant in the State.

- (b) Unless licensed to practice as a physician assistant under this title, a person may not use the words or terms "physician assistant", "licensed physician assistant", or "P.A."

On November 18, 2020, Panel B was convened as a Disciplinary Committee for Case Resolution ("DCCR") in this matter. Based on 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:

I. BACKGROUND

1. At all times relevant to these charges, the Respondent was employed as a physician assistant at a medical office (the "Office")¹ located in Montgomery County, Maryland. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice as a physician assistant on September 24, 2015, under License Number C05948. The Respondent's license is current through June 30, 2021.

II. THE DELEGATION AGREEMENT

2. A delegation agreement is a document executed by the primary supervising physician and physician assistant that has the contents required by Health Occ. § 15-302. On or about October 17, 2015, the Respondent submitted to the Board a delegation agreement (the "Delegation Agreement"), which was

¹ To ensure confidentiality, the names of any patients or health care facilities will not be identified in this Consent Order.

subsequently approved. On or about July 1, 2019, the Delegation Agreement terminated with the expiration of the Respondent's license.

III. THE APPLICATION

3. On or about October 22, 2019, the Respondent submitted an Application for Reinstatement of Physician Assistants license (the "Application") to the Board in which she disclosed that her license had expired on June 30, 2019. Under the Employment Activities section of the Application, the Respondent noted that she had been working at the Office from October of 2015 to "present." The Respondent further stated that her license had expired prior to submission of the Application due to what she termed an "administrative error." The Office informed the Board that the delay in identifying the pending expiration of the Respondent's license and extending such license was due to an administrative error on the Office's part.
4. On or about December 19, 2019, the Board reinstated the Respondent's license subject to the requirement that the Respondent submit an updated Delegation Agreement.
5. Based on information contained within the Respondent's Application, the Board initiated an investigation of this matter. In furtherance of the investigation, the Board subpoenaed ten (10) patient records from the Office. The results of the Board's investigation are set forth *infra*.

IV. INVESTIGATIVE ALLEGATIONS

6. On or about November 4, 2019, managerial personnel of the Office, in response to inquiry, sent the Board an email confirming that the Respondent had been working for the Office continuously without any "gap in employment."
7. On or about November 5, 2019, the Board received a letter from the Respondent that stated she continued to work at the Office after her license to practice expired and that the Respondent's daily employment activities included "providing telephonic medical advice" and "updating patient medical records."
8. On or about April 16, 2020, the Board received ten (10) patient medical records from the Office. Those records indicate that the Respondent provided medical care to patients after her license and the Delegation Agreement expired.

Patient A

9. On or about August 29, 2019, the Respondent treated Patient A for a cough with congestion. The Respondent diagnosed Patient A with acute obstructive laryngitis before providing prednisolone to Patient A for treatment. The Respondent signed Patient A's medical records with the initials "PA-C" after her signature.

Patient B

10. On or about September 30, 2019, the Respondent treated Patient B for a fever. The Respondent diagnosed Patient B with acute suppurative otitis

media without spontaneous rupture of ear drum. The Respondent prescribed amoxicillin to Patient B for treatment. The Respondent signed Patient B's medical records with the initials "PA-C" after her signature.

Patient C

11. On or about November 6, 2019, the Respondent performed a routine child health examination on Patient C without abnormal findings. Patient C received an intramuscular flu shot. The Respondent signed Patient C's medical records with the initials "PA-C" after her signature.

Patient D

12. On or about November 27, 2019, the Respondent treated Patient D for right ear pain. The Respondent diagnosed Patient D with swimmer's ear. The Respondent prescribed ofloxacin to Patient D for treatment. The Respondent's primary supervising physician noted in Patient D's records, "I agree with the above assessment and plan." The Respondent signed Patient D's medical records with the initials "PA-C" after her signature.
13. The Board's investigation determined that between July 1, 2019 and December 18, 2019, the Respondent practiced as a physician assistant without a valid license issued by the Board and that the Respondent practiced without a valid, Board-approved Delegation Agreement from July 1, 2019 through July 28, 2020. The patient medical records reviewed by the Board in this matter did not indicate any adverse outcomes related to the delivery of health care services nor indicate any patient harm, and the Board has

received no complaints related to the medical care provided by the Respondent.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Respondent's actions, as described above, constitute, practicing without a physician assistant license in violation of Health Occ. § 15-401 and representing that she is licensed to practice as a physician assistant in the State in violation of Health Occ. § 15-402.

ORDER

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

ORDERED that within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this Consent Order, the Respondent, Natalia L. Darling, P.A.-C, License No. C05948, shall pay a civil fine of \$1,000. 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. The Board will not renew or reinstate the Respondent's license if the Respondent fails to timely pay the fine to the Board; 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 or her designee 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 this Consent Order is a public document. *See* Health Occ. §§ 1-607, 14-411.1(b)(2) and Gen. Prov. § 4-333(b)(6).

Signature on File

12/02/2020
Date

Christine A. Farrelly
Executive Director
Maryland State Board of Physicians

CONSENT

I, Natalia L. Darling, P.A.-C, 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

11/24/24

Date

Natalia L. Darling, P.A.-C
Respondent


NOTARY

STATE OF Maryland

CITY/COUNTY OF Montgomery

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 24th day of November, 2020, before me, a Notary Public of the foregoing State and City/County, did personally appear Natalia L. Darling, P.A.-C, and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent Order was her voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESSETH my hand and seal.



Notary Public

My commission expires: 6/13/24



MICHAEL RIFFKIN
Notary Public, State of Maryland
County of Montgomery
My Commission Expires June 13, 2024