

IN THE MATTER OF	*	BEFORE THE
JONATHAN M. RATLIFF, M.D.	*	MARYLAND STATE
Respondent	*	BOARD OF PHYSICIANS
License Number: D0082519	*	Case Number: 2225-0066

* * * * *

CONSENT ORDER

On December 9, 2024, Disciplinary Panel A (“Panel A”) of the Maryland State Board of Physicians (the “Board”) charged **JONATHAN M. RATLIFF M.D.** (the “Respondent”), License Number D0082519, with violating the Maryland Medical Practice Act (the “Act”), Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. § 14-101 *et seq.* (2021 Repl. Vol. & 2023 Supp.).

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

Health Occ. § 14-404. Denials, reprimands, probations, suspensions, and revocations -- Grounds.

(a) *In general.* -- Subject to the hearing provisions of § 14-405 of this subtitle, a disciplinary panel, on the affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum of the disciplinary panel, may reprimand any licensee, place any licensee on probation, or suspend or revoke a license if the licensee:

...

(3) Is guilty of:

...

(ii) Unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine;

...

(4) Is professionally, physically, or mentally incompetent;

...

- (7) Habitually is intoxicated;
- ...
- (9) Provides professional services:
 - (i) While under the influence or alcohol; [and]
- ...
- (11) Willfully makes or files a false report in the practice of medicine[.]

On February 12, 2025, Panel A was convened as a Disciplinary Committee for Case Resolution (“DCCR”) in this matter. Based on negotiations occurring as a result of the DCCR, the Respondent agreed to enter into this Consent Order, consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Disciplinary Panel A finds:

BACKGROUND

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was and is licensed to practice medicine in the State of Maryland¹. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice medicine in Maryland on October 18, 2016, under License Number D0082519. The Respondent’s license is currently suspended.

2. The Respondent is board-certified in emergency medicine.

¹ The Respondent is also licensed in the District of Columbia. His medical licenses in California and Virginia are currently expired.

THE COMPLAINT

3. On or about August 15, 2024, the Board received a letter known as a Mandated 10-Day Report² (the “Report”) from the Respondent’s former employer (“Employer”), a Medical Practice Group in Maryland, stating that “[Employer] believes that Dr. Ratliff is currently unable to safely practice medicine. His employment with [Employer] was involuntarily terminated on July 25, 2024.”³

BOARD INVESTIGATION

4. On receipt of the Complaint, the Board initiated an investigation into the allegation. As part of its investigation, Board staff conducted interviews and subpoenaed records including the Respondent’s employment files, Respondent’s medical records, and medical records of patients.

5. The Board’s investigation revealed that the Respondent had missed work and that he had been suffering from alcohol dependency, affecting his health starting in 2021.

6. On or about December 12, 2023, the Respondent was assigned to work the Emergency Care Management (“ECM”) shift. His responsibilities included consulting with nurses and physicians regarding patient care and making decisions regarding the transfer of patients to appropriate facilities. During the shift, the Respondent was sent medical

² The Maryland Code Annotated, Health Occupations Article (“Health Occ.”) §§14-413(a)(1) and 14-414(a)(1) require that within 10 days of an action hospitals, related institutions, and alternative health systems (“facilities”) report any action taken against a licensed physician which denies, restricts, limits, changes, removes, terminates, suspends, or places any conditions or restrictions on the privileges and/or salaried or contractual employment of the physician for reasons that might be grounds for disciplinary action under provisions of Health Occ. §14-404.

³ To maintain confidentiality, the names of witnesses, facilities, employees, and patients will not be used in this document but will be provided to the Respondent upon request.

information and patient charts for review. However, his notes were incomplete, unclear and failed to address the questions posed to him and contained grammatical errors. The Respondent's notes lacked essential clinical information, including patient history, vital signs, and documentation of consults with the emergency room physicians, raising concern regarding the Respondent's ability to safely practice medicine.

7. On or about December 14, 2023, the Respondent was scheduled to work the ECM shift from 6 am to 4 pm. Around noon the Respondent abandoned his shift, ceased responding to calls, and staff were unable to reach him. The Respondent failed to notify anyone that he left his shift resulting in delays of patient treatment.

8. The Respondent was eventually contacted in the evening by his Chief Supervisor ("Physician A") and told his supervisor that he left work because his dog was sick. Physician A described the Respondent's behavior as incoherent, rambling, and repetitive, suggesting that the Respondent appeared to be under the influence. A welfare check was conducted by a co-worker physician ("Physician B"), who observed multiple empty wine bottles at the Respondent's residence and disposed of them.

9. On or about December 16, 2023, the Respondent was admitted to a health care facility for acute medical conditions. Per the local police authority, the Respondent's apartment was disheveled with multiple empty liquor bottles and unsanitary conditions.

10. The Employer therefore removed the Respondent from the work schedule and instructed him to seek treatment for his condition. After he was removed from the work schedule, the Respondent contacted his direct report supervisor ("Physician C") via text

messages and phone calls during which he exhibited signs of intoxication, including slurred speech, disorganized thinking and repetition.

11. In April 2024, as a condition for the Respondent's return to work, the Employer referred him to a program (the "Program") for an independent evaluation to assess his fitness to practice medicine safely. On or about May 23, 2024, the clinical team at the Program concluded that the Respondent, "is not currently safe to practice and he needs sustained, intensive . . . treatment" to address his condition.

12. In July 2024, Physician A reported that she had received calls from the Respondent in the middle of the night and that he appeared intoxicated during the conversations.

13. The Respondent failed to comply with the conditions for his return to work and he was terminated on July 25, 2024.

14. In a letter dated September 4, 2024, Board staff requested that the Respondent provide a response to the assertion in the Report that he was involuntarily terminated due to concerns regarding his ability to practice medicine safely.

15. The Respondent, through legal counsel, submitted a response to the Board dated September 11, 2024, in which he acknowledged his alcohol dependence and stated that he was undergoing treatment for his condition.

16. On or about October 1, 2024, the Respondent was interviewed by the Board. During the interview, he acknowledged suffering from alcoholism and another medical condition, admitted to consuming large amounts of alcohol, and stated that he had sought

treatment for his condition. He also acknowledged that that he abandoned his December 14, 2023, shift without notifying anyone that he was leaving.

17. On or about August 22, 2023, the Respondent completed his 2023 license renewal application (the “Application”) and electronically submitted it to the Board. Part 2 of the Application contains a section titled “Character and Fitness Questions,” requiring the Respondent to answer “YES” or “NO” to a series of questions for the period since July 21, 2021. The Respondent answered “NO” to Question 10, which states “Do you currently have any condition or impairment (including but not limited to, substance abuse, alcohol abuse, or a physical, mental, emotional, or nervous disorder or condition) that in any way affects your ability to practice your profession in a safe, competent, ethical and professional manner?”

18. At the conclusion of the application, the Respondent certified that he personally reviewed all responses to the items in the application and that the information he provided was true and accurate to the best of his knowledge.

19. Five days after completing the Application, on or about August 27, 2023, the Respondent was evaluated at a medical facility for a medical condition where he reported that he has been drinking heavily for the past week, drinking a few bottles of wine per day.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, Panel A concludes as a matter of law that the Respondent is guilty of unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(3)(ii); Is professionally, physically, or mentally incompetent, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(4); Is habitually is intoxicated, in violation of

Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(7); Provides professional services while under the influence of alcohol, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(9)(i); and Willfully made or filed a false report or record in the practice of medicine, in violation of Health Occ. § 14-404(a)(11).

ORDER

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

ORDERED that the Respondent is **REPRIMANDED**; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent's license to practice medicine is **SUSPENDED**⁴ for a minimum of **ONE (1) YEAR**; and it is further

ORDERED that during the suspension⁵, the Respondent shall comply with the following terms and conditions of the suspension:

⁴ If the Respondent's license expires during the period of the suspension, the suspension and any conditions will be tolled.

⁵ (a) During the suspension period, the Respondent shall not:

- (1) practice medicine;
- (2) take any actions after the effective date of this Order to hold himself or herself out to the public as a current provider of medical services;
- (3) authorize, allow or condone the use of the Respondent's name or provider number by any health care practice or any other licensee or health care provider;
- (4) function as a peer reviewer for the Board or for any hospital or other medical care facility in the state;
- (5) prescribe or dispense medications; or
- (6) perform any other act that requires an active medical license.

(b) The Respondent shall establish and implement a procedure by which the Respondent's patients may obtain their medical records without undue burden and notify all patients of that procedure; and

(c) The Respondent shall notify in writing all athletic trainers with whom there is an evaluation and treatment protocol, all physician assistants with whom there is a delegation agreement, and all Naturopathic Doctors with whom there is a collaboration agreement that all Evaluation and Treatment Protocols for Athletic Trainers, all Delegation Agreements for Physician Assistants, and all collaboration agreements are terminated.

The Respondent shall enroll in the Maryland Professional Rehabilitation Program (MPRP) as follows:

- (a) Within 5 business days, the Respondent shall contact MPRP to schedule an initial consultation for enrollment;
- (b) Within 15 business days, the Respondent shall enter into a Participant Rehabilitation Agreement and Participant Rehabilitation Plan with MPRP;
- (c) the Respondent shall fully and timely cooperate and comply with all MPRP's referrals, rules, and requirements, including, but not limited to, the terms and conditions of the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement(s) and Participant Rehabilitation Plan(s) entered with MPRP, and shall fully participate and comply with all therapy, treatment, evaluations, and screenings as directed by MPRP;
- (d) the Respondent shall sign and update the written release/consent forms requested by the Board and MPRP, including release/consent forms to authorize MPRP to make verbal and written disclosures to the Board and to authorize the Board to disclose relevant information from MPRP records and files in a public order. The Respondent shall not withdraw his release/consent;
- (e) the Respondent shall also sign any written release/consent forms to authorize MPRP to exchange with (i.e., disclose to and receive from) outside entities (including all of the Respondent's current therapists and treatment providers) verbal and written information concerning the Respondent and to ensure that MPRP is authorized to receive the medical records of the Respondent, including, but not limited to, mental health and drug or alcohol evaluation and treatment records. The Respondent shall not withdraw his release/consent;
- (f) that if, upon the authorization of MPRP, the Respondent transfers to a rehabilitation program in another state, the Respondent's failure to comply with any term or condition of that state's [the out-of-state's] rehabilitation program, constitutes a violation of this Consent Order. The Respondent shall also sign any out-of-state written release/consent forms to authorize the Board to exchange with (i.e., disclose to and receive from) the out-of-state program verbal and written information concerning the Respondent, and to ensure that the Board is authorized to receive the medical records of the Respondent, including, but not limited to, mental

health and drug or alcohol evaluation and treatment records. The Respondent shall not withdraw the release/consent;

- (g) the Respondent's failure to comply with any of the above terms or conditions including terms or conditions of the Participant Rehabilitation Agreement(s) or Participant Rehabilitation Plan(s) constitutes a violation of this Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent shall not apply for early termination of suspension; and it is further

ORDERED that after the minimum period of suspension imposed by the Consent Order has passed and if MPRP finds, and notifies the Board, that the Respondent is safe to return to the practice of medicine, the Respondent may submit a written petition to the disciplinary panel to terminate the suspension of the Respondent's license. The Respondent may be required to appear before the disciplinary panel to discuss his or her petition for termination. If the disciplinary panel determines that it is safe for the Respondent to return to the practice of medicine, the suspension will be terminated through an order of the disciplinary panel, and the disciplinary panel may impose any terms and conditions it deems appropriate on the Respondent's return to practice, including, but not limited to, probation and/or continuation of the Respondent's enrollment in MPRP. If the disciplinary panel determines that it is not safe for the Respondent to return to the practice of medicine, the suspension shall be continued through an order of the disciplinary panel for a length of time determined by the disciplinary panel, and the disciplinary panel may impose any additional terms and conditions it deems appropriate; and it is further

ORDERED that following the termination of suspension the Respondent is placed on **PROBATION**⁶ for a minimum of **TWO (2) YEARS** with continued enrollment in MPRP and any other conditions determined by the panel; and it is further

ORDERED that the Respondent shall not apply for early termination of probation; and it is further

ORDERED that, after the Respondent has complied with all terms and conditions of probation and the minimum period of probation imposed by the Consent Order has passed, the Respondent may submit to the Board a written petition for termination of probation. After consideration of the petition, the probation may be terminated through an order of the disciplinary panel. The Respondent may be required to appear before the disciplinary panel to discuss his petition for termination. The disciplinary panel may grant the petition to terminate the probation, through an order of the disciplinary panel, if the Respondent has complied with all probationary terms and conditions and there are no pending complaints relating to the charges; and it is further

ORDERED that a violation of probation constitutes a violation of the Consent Order; and it is further

ORDERED that, if the Respondent allegedly fails to comply with any term or condition imposed by this Consent Order, the Respondent shall be given notice and an opportunity for a hearing. If the disciplinary panel determines there is a genuine dispute as to a material fact, the hearing shall be before an Administrative Law Judge of the Office of

⁶ If the Respondent's license expires during the period of the probation, the suspension and any conditions will be tolled.

Administrative Hearings followed by an exceptions process before a disciplinary panel; and if the disciplinary panel determines there is no genuine dispute as to a material fact, the Respondent shall be given a show cause hearing before a disciplinary panel; and it is further

ORDERED that after the appropriate hearing, if the disciplinary panel determines that the Respondent has failed to comply with any term or condition imposed by this Consent Order, the disciplinary panel may reprimand the Respondent, place the Respondent on probation with appropriate terms and conditions, or suspend with appropriate terms and conditions, or revoke the Respondent's license to practice medicine in Maryland. The disciplinary panel may, in addition to one or more of the sanctions set forth above, impose a civil monetary fine on the Respondent; and it is further

ORDERED that this Consent Order shall not be amended or modified and future requests for modification will not be considered; 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 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 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).

03/11/2025
Date

Signature On File

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

I, Jonathan Ratliff, M.D., 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

3/3/2025
Date

Jonathan Ratliff, M.D.
Respondent

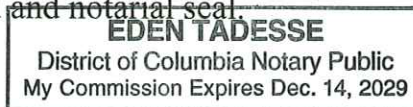
NOTARY

STATE OF Washington, DC

CITY/COUNTY OF District of Columbia

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 03 day of March 2025, before me, a Notary Public of the foregoing State and City/County, personally appeared Jonathan Ratliff, M.D., and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent Order was his voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESSETH my hand and notarial seal.



Eden Tadesse
Notary Public

My Commission expires: Dec. 14, 2029

