

**BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of the Accusation)
Against:)
)
)
William Lee Phillips, M.D.)
)
Physician's and Surgeon's)
Certificate No. A98794)
)
Respondent)
_____)

Case No. 800-2016-023005

DECISION

The attached Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby adopted as the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, State of California.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on May 22, 2020

IT IS SO ORDERED April 23, 2020

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

By:



Kristina D. Lawson, J.D.

Panel B

1 XAVIER BECERRA
Attorney General of California
2 STEVEN D. MUNI
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
3 MEGAN R. O'CARROLL
Deputy Attorney General
4 State Bar No. 215479
1300 I Street, Suite 125
5 P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
6 Telephone: (916) 210-7543
Facsimile: (916) 327-2247
7 *Attorneys for Complainant*

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9
10 **BEFORE THE**
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
11 **DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**
12 **STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

13
14 In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

15 **WILLIAM LEE PHILLIPS, M.D.**
16 **Cardiology Kaiser Permanente**
2025 Morse Avenue, Station 2H
Sacramento, CA 95825

17 **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A**
98794

18
19 Respondent.

Case No. 800-2016-023005

OAH No. 2019020822

20
21 **STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AND**
DISCIPLINARY ORDER

22 IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by and between the parties to the above-
23 entitled proceedings that the following matters are true:

24 **PARTIES**

25 1. Christine Lally (Complainant), is the Deputy Director of the Medical Board of
26 California (Board). This action was brought by then-Complainant Kimberly Kirchmeyer,¹ solely

27
28 ¹Ms. Kirchmeyer became the Director of the Department of Consumer Affairs on October
28, 2019.

1 in her official capacity. Complainant is represented in this matter by Xavier Becerra, Attorney
2 General of the State of California, by Megan R. O'Carroll, Deputy Attorney General.

3 2. Respondent William Lee Phillips, M.D. (Respondent) is represented in this
4 proceeding by attorney Ann H. Larson, Esq., whose address is: 2420 Camino Ramon, Suite 202
5 San Ramon, CA 94583-4202.

6 3. On or about January 31, 2007, the Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate
7 No. A 98794 to William Lee Phillips, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's and Surgeon's
8 Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought in Accusation
9 No. 800-2016-023005, and will expire on December 31, 2020, unless renewed.

10 **JURISDICTION**

11 4. Accusation No. 800-2016-023005 was filed before the Board, and is currently
12 pending against Respondent. The Accusation and all other statutorily required documents were
13 properly served on Respondent on January 15, 2019. Respondent timely filed his Notice of
14 Defense contesting the Accusation.

15 5. A copy of Accusation No. 800-2016-023005 is attached as exhibit A and incorporated
16 herein by reference.

17 **ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS**

18 6. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the
19 charges and allegations in Accusation No. 800-2016-023005. Respondent has also carefully read,
20 fully discussed with counsel, and understands the effects of this Stipulated Settlement and
21 Disciplinary Order.

22 7. Respondent is fully aware of his legal rights in this matter, including the right to a
23 hearing on the charges and allegations in the Accusation; the right to confront and cross-examine
24 the witnesses against him; the right to present evidence and to testify on his own behalf; the right
25 to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of
26 documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other
27 rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws.

28

1 8. Respondent voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and
2 every right set forth above.

3 **CULPABILITY**

4 9. Respondent understands and agrees that the charges and allegations in Accusation
5 No. 800-2016-023005, if proven at a hearing, constitute cause for imposing discipline upon his
6 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate.

7 10. For the purpose of resolving the Accusation without the expense and uncertainty of
8 further proceedings, Respondent agrees that, at a hearing, Complainant could establish a factual
9 basis for the charges in the Accusation, and that Respondent hereby gives up his right to contest
10 those charges.

11 11. Respondent agrees that his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate is subject to
12 discipline and he agrees to be bound by the Board's imposition of discipline as set forth in the
13 Disciplinary Order below.

14 **CONTINGENCY**

15 12. This stipulation shall be subject to approval by the Medical Board of California.
16 Respondent understands and agrees that counsel for Complainant and the staff of the Medical
17 Board of California may communicate directly with the Board regarding this stipulation and
18 settlement, without notice to or participation by Respondent or his counsel. By signing the
19 stipulation, Respondent understands and agrees that he may not withdraw his agreement or seek
20 to rescind the stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it. If the Board fails
21 to adopt this stipulation as its Decision and Order, the Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary
22 Order shall be of no force or effect, except for this paragraph, it shall be inadmissible in any legal
23 action between the parties, and the Board shall not be disqualified from further action by having
24 considered this matter.

25 13. The parties understand and agree that Portable Document Format (PDF) and facsimile
26 copies of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, including PDF and facsimile
27 signatures thereto, shall have the same force and effect as the originals.
28

1 14. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that
2 the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following
3 Disciplinary Order:

4 **DISCIPLINARY ORDER**

5 **A. PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

6 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 98794 issued
7 to Respondent William Lee Phillips, M.D., shall be and is hereby publicly reprimanded pursuant
8 to California Business and Professions Code, section 2227, subdivision (a)(4). This public
9 reprimand, which is issued in connection with Respondent's care and treatment of a confidential
10 patient, is based on the facts and allegations as set forth in Accusation No. 800-2016-023005.

11 **B. EDUCATION COURSE**

12 Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall submit to
13 the Board or its designee for its prior approval educational program(s) or course(s) which shall
14 not be less than 25 hours. The educational program(s) or course(s) shall be Category 1 certified,
15 and shall cover medical topics including management of in-patient cardiac patient. The
16 educational program(s) or course(s) shall be at Respondent's expense and shall be in addition to
17 the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of licensure. Respondent
18 shall provide proof of attendance to the Board or its designee of satisfaction of this requirement.

19 Failure to successfully complete and provide proof of attendance to the Board or its
20 designee of the educational program(s) or course(s) within 12 months of the effective date of this
21 Decision, unless the Board or its designee agrees in writing to an extension of that time, shall
22 constitute general unprofessional conduct and may serve as the grounds for further disciplinary
23 action.

24 **C. MEDICAL RECORD KEEPING COURSE**

25 Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall enroll in a
26 course in medical record keeping approved in advance by the Board or its designee. Respondent
27 shall provide the approved course provider with any information and documents that the approved
28 course provider may deem pertinent. Respondent shall participate in and successfully complete

1 the classroom component of the course not later than six (6) months after Respondent's initial
2 enrollment. Respondent shall successfully complete any other component of the course within
3 one (1) year of enrollment. The medical record keeping course shall be at Respondent's expense
4 and shall be in addition to the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of
5 licensure.

6 Respondent shall submit a certification of successful completion to the Board or its
7 designee not later than 15 calendar days after successfully completing the course. Failure to
8 provide proof of successful completion of the course to the Board or its designee within twelve
9 (12) months of the effective date of this Decision, unless the Board or its designee agrees in
10 writing to an extension of that time, shall constitute general unprofessional conduct and may
11 serve as the grounds for further disciplinary action.

12 **ACCEPTANCE**

13 I have carefully read the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order and have fully
14 discussed it with my attorney, Ann Larson. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have
15 on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate. I enter into this Stipulated Settlement and
16 Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the
17 Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

18
19 DATED: 10/30/2019



WILLIAM LEE PHILLIPS, M.D.
Respondent

22 I have read and fully discussed with Respondent William Lee Phillips, M.D. the terms and
23 conditions and other matters contained in the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order.

24 I approve its form and content.

25 DATED: 11/1/2019



ANN LARSON, ESQ.
Attorney for Respondent

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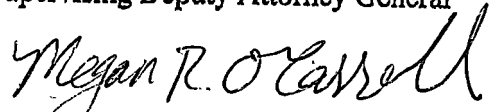
ENDORSEMENT

The foregoing Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Medical Board of California.

DATED: 11-4-2020

Respectfully submitted,

XAVIER BECERRA
Attorney General of California
STEVEN D. MUNI
Supervising Deputy Attorney General


MEGAN R. O'CARROLL
Deputy Attorney General
Attorneys for Complainant

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Exhibit A

Accusation No. 800-2016-023005

1 XAVIER BECERRA
Attorney General of California
2 STEVEN D. MUNI
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
3 MEGAN R. O'CARROLL
Deputy Attorney General
4 State Bar No. 215479
1300 I Street, Suite 125
5 P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
6 Telephone: (916) 210-7543
Facsimile: (916) 327-2247
7 *Attorneys for Complainant*

FILED
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
SACRAMENTO ~~JANUARY 15 2019~~
BY: *[Signature]* ANALYST

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9
10 BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
11 DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
12

13 In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

Case No. 800-2016-023005

14 William Lee Phillips, M.D.
Cardiology Kaiser Permanente
15 2025 Morse Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95825

ACCUSATION

16 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate
17 No. A 98794,

18 Respondent.

19
20 Complainant alleges:

21 PARTIES

22 1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in her official
23 capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer
24 Affairs (Board).

25 2. On or about January 31, 2007, the Medical Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's
26 Certificate Number A 98794 to William Lee Phillips, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's and
27 Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought
28 herein and will expire on December 31, 2020, unless renewed.

JURISDICTION

1
2 3. This Accusation is brought before the Board, under the authority of the following
3 laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code unless otherwise indicated.

4 4. Section 2227 of the Code provides that a licensee who is found guilty under the
5 Medical Practice Act may have his or her license revoked, suspended for a period not to exceed
6 one year, placed on probation and required to pay the costs of probation monitoring, or such other
7 action taken in relation to discipline as the Board deems proper.

8 5. Section 2234 of the Code, states:

9 “The board shall take action against any licensee who is charged with unprofessional
10 conduct. In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not
11 limited to, the following:

12 “(a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, assisting in or abetting the
13 violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of this chapter.

14 “(b) Gross negligence.

15 “(c) Repeated negligent acts. To be repeated, there must be two or more negligent acts or
16 omissions. An initial negligent act or omission followed by a separate and distinct departure from
17 the applicable standard of care shall constitute repeated negligent acts.

18 “(1) An initial negligent diagnosis followed by an act or omission medically appropriate for
19 that negligent diagnosis of the patient shall constitute a single negligent act.

20 “(2) When the standard of care requires a change in the diagnosis, act, or omission that
21 constitutes the negligent act described in paragraph (1), including, but not limited to, a
22 reevaluation of the diagnosis or a change in treatment, and the licensee’s conduct departs from the
23 applicable standard of care, each departure constitutes a separate and distinct breach of the
24 standard of care.

25 “(d) Incompetence.

26 “(e) The commission of any act involving dishonesty or corruption which is substantially
27 related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon.

28 “(f) Any action or conduct which would have warranted the denial of a certificate.

1 “(g) The practice of medicine from this state into another state or country without meeting
2 the legal requirements of that state or country for the practice of medicine. Section 2314 shall not
3 apply to this subdivision. This subdivision shall become operative upon the implementation of the
4 proposed registration program described in Section 2052.5.

5 “(h) The repeated failure by a certificate holder, in the absence of good cause, to attend and
6 participate in an interview by the board. This subdivision shall only apply to a certificate holder
7 who is the subject of an investigation by the board.”

8 6. Section 2220 of the Code states:

9 “Except as otherwise provided by law, the board may take action against all persons guilty
10 of violating this chapter. The board shall enforce and administer this article as to physician and
11 surgeon certificate holders, including those who hold certificates that do not permit them to
12 practice medicine, such as, but not limited to, retired, inactive, or disabled status certificate
13 holders, and the board shall have all the powers granted in this chapter for these purposes
14 including, but not limited to:

15 “(a) Investigating complaints from the public, from other licensees, from health care
16 facilities, or from the board that a physician and surgeon may be guilty of unprofessional conduct.
17 The board shall investigate the circumstances underlying a report received pursuant to Section
18 805 or 805.01 within 30 days to determine if an interim suspension order or temporary restraining
19 order should be issued. The board shall otherwise provide timely disposition of the reports
20 received pursuant to Section 805 and Section 805.01.

21 “(b) Investigating the circumstances of practice of any physician and surgeon where there
22 have been any judgments, settlements, or arbitration awards requiring the physician and surgeon
23 or his or her professional liability insurer to pay an amount in damages in excess of a cumulative
24 total of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) with respect to any claim that injury or damage was
25 proximately caused by the physician’s and surgeon’s error, negligence, or omission.

26 “(c) Investigating the nature and causes of injuries from cases which shall be reported of a
27 high number of judgments, settlements, or arbitration awards against a physician and surgeon.”

28 ///

1 previous cardiologist signed out to him. Upon taking over C.P.'s care, Respondent did not
2 contact Mercy Hospital's cardiothoracic surgical department to discuss the potential for an earlier
3 surgery in light of C.P.'s critical condition. Respondent did not evaluate the need for placing an
4 intra-aortic balloon pump with an urgent transfer to Mercy Medical Center where mechanical
5 revascularization would have been available in the event that C.P. decompensated.

6 12. The following day, Saturday, March 7, 2015, Respondent did not round on patient
7 C.P. Instead, Respondent relied on the information provided by an internal medicine physician
8 who did see C.P. The internal medicine physician noted C.P. had low urine output, and C.P. was
9 started on diuretics.

10 13. On Sunday, March 8, 2015, C.P.'s condition deteriorated both by clinical standards
11 and by laboratory test results. He became more obtunded and lethargic and had episodes of
12 hypotension. He developed respiratory acidosis. At 8:21 a.m., C.P. had a markedly abnormal
13 arterial blood gas with a pH of 7.21, a partial pressure of carbon dioxide of 62, and a partial
14 pressure of oxygen of 66. The internal medicine physician contacted Respondent to inform him
15 of these concerning developments. C.P. was, by this time, receiving BiPap treatment for
16 progressive respiratory insufficiency. Respondent attributed the acidosis and carbon dioxide
17 retention C.P. exhibited to be due to underlying obstructive sleep apnea.

18 14. Respondent physically saw C.P. for the first time on Sunday, March 8, 2015 at
19 approximately 2:00 p.m. Respondent observed C.P. to be asleep and did not attempt to wake him.
20 Respondent did not document this visit. Respondent did not believe that C.P. required a higher
21 level of care, an intra-aortic balloon pump, or revascularization at this time. The internal
22 medicine physician contacted Respondent later Sunday evening to inquire whether he felt higher
23 levels of care or the intra-aortic balloon pump was required, but Respondent indicated that this
24 was not necessary.

25 15. Respondent did not round on C.P. the following morning, Monday, March 9, 2015.
26 He was in a separate area of the hospital when he was notified that C.P. was in cardiogenic shock
27 with laboratory evidence of florid congestive heart failure. C.P. had a markedly elevated BNP,
28 acute renal failure with an elevation in creatinine from 1.4 at baseline to 3.2, shock liver with

1 markedly elevated liver enzymes, metabolic acidosis with an increasing anion gap and a drop in
2 bicarbonate levels. The plan was to perform an intra-aortic balloon pump, but C.P. died before
3 the procedure could be completed.

4 16. Respondent was grossly negligent in his care and treatment of C.P. for his acts
5 including, but not limited to, the following:

6 a. Failing to respond to C.P.'s clinical deterioration and abnormal laboratory tests on the
7 morning of March 8, 2015 with evaluation for an urgent intervention and transfer;

8 b. Failing to respond to the additional information about C.P.'s condition and the
9 internal medicine physician's request for evaluation of possible intra-aortic balloon placement
10 and transfer to a higher level of care on the evening of March 8, 2015; and

11 c. Missing multiple opportunities to recognize and act on the impending cardiogenic
12 shock.

13 SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

14 (Repeated Negligence)

15 17. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2234, subdivision (c), of
16 the Code, in that he was repeatedly negligent in the care and treatment C.P. The circumstances
17 are as follows:

18 18. Paragraphs 8 through 16, above, are incorporated by reference and repeated as if fully
19 set forth.

20 19. Respondent was repeatedly negligent in his care and treatment of C.P. for his acts
21 including, but not limited to, the following:

22 a. Failing to respond to C.P.'s clinical deterioration and abnormal laboratory tests on the
23 morning of March 8, 2015 with evaluation for an urgent intervention and transfer;

24 b. Failing to respond to the additional information about C.P.'s condition and the
25 internal medicine physician's request for evaluation of possible intra-aortic balloon placement
26 and transfer to a higher level of care on the evening of March 8, 2015;

27 c. Missing multiple opportunities to recognize and act on the impending cardiogenic
28 shock;

1 d. Failing to contact Mercy Medical Center to discuss and evaluate earlier surgery or
2 transfer on the evening of Friday March 6, 2015;

3 e. Failing to round on C.P. on Saturday, March 7, 2015 despite his dire clinical
4 condition; and

5 f. Failing to round on C.P. on Monday morning, March 9, 2015.

6 **THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

7 **(Inadequate Records)**

8 20. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2266 of the Code by failing
9 maintain adequate and accurate records relating to the provision of medical care to C.P.

10 21. Paragraphs 8 through 19, above are incorporated by reference and repeated as if fully
11 set forth.

12 **PRAYER**

13 WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged,
14 and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision:


15 1. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number A 98794,
16 issued to William Lee Phillips, M.D.;

17 2. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of William Lee Phillips, M.D.'s authority
18 to supervise physician assistants and advanced practice nurses;

19 3. Ordering William Lee Phillips, M.D., if placed on probation, to pay the Board the
20 costs of probation monitoring; and

21
22 4. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

23
24 DATED:
25 January 15, 2019

26 
27 KIMBERLY KIRCHMEYER
28 Executive Director
Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant

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