

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

In the Matter of the First Amended
Accusation Against:

Alan William Hemming, M.D.

Physician's and Surgeon's
Certificate No. C 53758

Respondent.

Case No. 800-2017-037445

DECISION

The attached Stipulated Surrender of License 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 NOV 12 2021.
NOV 05 2021
IT IS SO ORDERED _____.

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA



William Prasifka
Executive Director

1 ROB BONTA
Attorney General of California
2 ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
3 CHRISTINE A. RHEE
Deputy Attorney General
4 State Bar No. 295656
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6 San Diego, CA 92186-5266
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8 *Attorneys for Complainant*

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

13 In the Matter of the First Amended Accusation
Against:

14 **ALAN WILLIAM HEMMING, M.D.**
15 **200 Hawkins Drive #400GH**
16 **Iowa City, IA 52242-1009**

17 **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate**
18 **No. C 53758,**

Respondent.

Case No. 800-2017-037445

OAH No. 2021020438

**STIPULATED SURRENDER OF
LICENSE AND DISCIPLINARY ORDER**

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

23 **PARTIES**

24 1. William Prasifka (Complainant) is the Executive Director of the Medical Board of
25 California (Board). He brought this action solely in his official capacity and is represented in this
26 matter by Rob Bonta, Attorney General of the State of California, by Christine A. Rhee, Deputy
27 Attorney General.

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CULPABILITY

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2 8. Respondent does not contest that, at an administrative hearing, Complainant could
3 establish a prima facie case with respect to the charges and allegations contained in First
4 Amended Accusation No. 800-2017-037445, and that he has thereby subjected his license to
5 disciplinary action.

6 9. Respondent agrees that if he ever petitions for reinstatement of his license, or if an
7 accusation and/or petition to revoke probation is filed against him before the Board, all of the
8 charges and allegations in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2017-037445 shall be deemed true,
9 correct, and fully admitted by Respondent for purposes of any proceeding or any other licensing
10 proceeding involving Respondent in the State of California.

11 10. Respondent is currently employed by the University of Iowa, where he has served as
12 a Professor of Surgery for Transplantation & Hepatobiliary Surgery and Surgical Director of the
13 Liver Transplant Program since 2019. Complainant acknowledges that Respondent's relocation
14 to Iowa renders implementation of the Board's probationary terms unfeasible.

15 11. Whereas probation cannot be successfully completed out of state for Respondent, and
16 whereas Respondent has no intention of returning to practice in California, Respondent desires to
17 voluntarily surrender his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 53758 in order to avoid the
18 unnecessary time and expense of a hearing.

19 12. Complainant acknowledges that the results of a December 5, 2017, comprehensive
20 neuropsychological examination conducted by the Vanderbilt Comprehensive Assessment
21 Program found him "fit to practice," subject to the discontinuation of self-directed Ambien use.
22 Complainant also acknowledges that approval of Respondent's clinical privileges at the
23 University of Iowa was contingent upon his undergoing random drug testing, counseling,
24 monitoring, and proctoring, all of which were successfully completed as of April 15, 2020.

25 13. Respondent understands that by signing this stipulation, he enables the Board to issue
26 an order accepting the surrender of his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate without further
27 process.

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CONTINGENCY

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14. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 2224, subdivision (b), the Executive Director of the Board has been delegated the authority to adopt or reject a stipulation for surrender of a Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate.

15. The parties agree that this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order shall be null and void and not binding upon the parties unless approved by the Executive Director on behalf of the Board. Respondent fully understands and agrees that in deciding whether or not to approve and adopt this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order, the Executive Director and/or the Board may receive oral and written communications from its staff and/or the Attorney General's Office. Communications pursuant to this paragraph shall not disqualify the Executive Director, the Board, any member thereof, and/or any other person from future participation in this or any other matter affecting or involving Respondent. In the event that the Executive Director on behalf of the Board does not, in his discretion, approve and adopt this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order, with the exception of this paragraph, it shall not become effective, shall be of no evidentiary value whatsoever, and shall not be relied upon or introduced in any disciplinary action by either party hereto. Respondent further agrees that should this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order be rejected for any reason by the Executive Director on behalf of the Board, Respondent will assert no claim that the Board, or any member thereof, was prejudiced by its/his/her review, discussion, and/or consideration of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order or of any matter or matters related hereto.

16. The Executive Director shall have a reasonable period of time in which to consider and act upon this stipulation after receiving it. By signing this stipulation, Respondent fully understands and agrees that he may not withdraw his agreement or seek to rescind this stipulation prior to the time the Executive Director considers and acts upon it.

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1 **ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS**

2 17. This Stipulated Surrender and Disciplinary Order is intended by the parties herein to
3 be an integrated writing representing the complete, final, and exclusive embodiment of the
4 agreements of the parties in the above-listed matter.

5 18. The parties agree that copies of this Stipulated Surrender and Disciplinary Order,
6 including copies of the signatures of the parties, may be used in lieu of original documents and
7 signatures and, further, that such copies shall have the same force and effect as originals.

8 19. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that
9 the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following Order:

10 **DISCIPLINARY ORDER**

11 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 53758, issued
12 to Respondent Alan William Hemming, M.D., is surrendered and accepted by the Board.

13 1. The surrender of Respondent's Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate and the
14 acceptance of the surrendered license by the Board shall constitute the imposition of discipline
15 against Respondent. This stipulation constitutes a record of the discipline and shall become a part
16 of Respondent's license history with the Board.

17 2. Respondent shall lose all rights and privileges as a Physician and Surgeon in
18 California as of the effective date of the Board's Decision and Order.

19 3. Respondent shall cause to be delivered to the Board his pocket license and, if one was
20 issued, his wall certificate on or before the effective date of the Decision and Order.

21 4. If Respondent ever files an application for licensure or a petition for reinstatement in
22 the State of California, the Board shall treat it as a petition for reinstatement. Respondent must
23 comply with all the laws, regulations and procedures for reinstatement of a revoked or
24 surrendered license in effect at the time the petition is filed, and all of the charges and allegations
25 contained in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2017-037445 shall be deemed to be true, correct
26 and admitted by Respondent when the Board determines whether to grant or deny the petition.

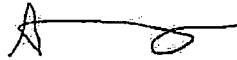
27 5. If Respondent should ever apply or reapply for a new license or certification, or
28 petition for reinstatement of a license, by any other health care licensing agency in the State of

1 California, all of the charges and allegations contained in First Amended Accusation, No. 800-
2 2017-037445 shall be deemed to be true, correct, and admitted by Respondent for the purpose of
3 any Statement of Issues or any other proceeding seeking to deny or restrict licensure.

4 ACCEPTANCE

5 I have carefully read the above Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order and
6 have fully discussed it with my attorney David Rosenberg, Esq. I understand the stipulation and
7 the effect it will have on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate. I enter into this Stipulated
8 Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree
9 to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

10
11 DATED: October 22nd, 2021


12 ALAN WILLIAM HEMMING, M.D.
13 Respondent

14 I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Alan William Hemming, M.D., the terms
15 and conditions and other matters contained in this Stipulated Surrender of License and
16 Disciplinary Order. I approve its form and content.

17 DATED: 10/22/21


18 DAVID ROSENBERG, ESQ.
19 Attorney for Respondent

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ENDORSEMENT

The foregoing Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Medical Board of California of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

DATED: October 22, 2021

Respectfully submitted,
ROB BONTA
Attorney General of California
ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ
Supervising Deputy Attorney General



CHRISTINE A. RHEE
Deputy Attorney General
Attorneys for Complainant

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Exhibit A

First Amended Accusation No. 800-2017-037445

1 ROB BONTA
Attorney General of California
2 ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
3 CHRISTINE A. RHEE
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8 *Attorneys for Complainant*

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

13 In the Matter of the First Amended Accusation
14 Against:
15 **ALAN WILLIAM HEMMING, M.D.**
200 Hawkins Drive #400GH
16 Iowa City, IA 52242-1009
17 **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate**
No. C 53758,
18 Respondent.

Case No. 800-2017-037445
FIRST AMENDED ACCUSATION

21 **PARTIES**

- 22 1. William Prasifka (Complainant) brings this First Amended Accusation solely in his
23 official capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of
24 Consumer Affairs (Board).
- 25 2. On or about July 29, 2009, the Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate
26 No. C 53758 to Alan William Hemming, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's and Surgeon's
27 Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will
28 expire on March 31, 2023, unless renewed.

JURISDICTION

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2 3. This First Amended Accusation, which supersedes the Accusation filed on October 5,
3 2020, is brought before the Board, under the authority of the following laws. All section
4 references are to the Business and Professions Code (Code) unless otherwise indicated.

5 4. Section 2227 of the Code states, in pertinent part:

6 (a) A licensee whose matter has been heard by an administrative law judge of
7 the Medical Quality Hearing Panel as designated in Section 11371 of the Government
8 Code, or whose default has been entered, and who is found guilty, or who has entered
9 into a stipulation for disciplinary action with the board, may, in accordance with the
10 provisions of this chapter:

11 (1) Have his or her license revoked upon order of the board.

12 (2) Have his or her right to practice suspended for a period not to exceed one
13 year upon order of the board.

14 (3) Be placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation
15 monitoring upon order of the board.

16 (4) Be publicly reprimanded by the board. The public reprimand may include a
17 requirement that the licensee complete relevant educational courses approved by the
18 board.

19 (5) Have any other action taken in relation to discipline as part of an order of
20 probation, as the board or an administrative law judge may deem proper.

21 ...

22 5. Section 2228.1 of the Code states, in pertinent part:

23 On and after July 1, 2019, except as otherwise provided in subdivision (c), the
24 board shall require a licensee to provide a separate disclosure that includes the
25 licensee's probation status, the length of probation, the probation end date, all
26 practice restrictions placed on the licensee by the board, the board's telephone
27 number, and an explanation of how the patient can find further information on the
28 licensee's probation on the licensee's profile page on the board's online license
information Internet Web site, to a patient or the patient's guardian or health care
surrogate before the patient's first visit following the probationary order while the
licensee is on probation pursuant to a probationary order made on and after July 1,
2019, in any of the following circumstances:

 (1) A final adjudication by the board following an administrative hearing or
admitted findings or prima facie showing in a stipulated settlement establishing any
of the following:

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 (B) Drug or alcohol abuse directly resulting in harm to patients or the extent
that such use impairs the ability of the licensee to practice safely.

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6. Section 2234 of the Code, states, in pertinent part:

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

...

(b) Gross negligence.

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

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

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

...

7. Section 2239 of the Code states, in pertinent part:

(a) The use or prescribing for or administering to himself or herself, of any controlled substance; or the use of any of the dangerous drugs specified in Section 4022, or of alcoholic beverages, to the extent, or in such a manner as to be dangerous or injurious to the licensee, or to any other person or to the public, or to the extent that such use impairs the ability of the licensee to practice medicine safely or more than one misdemeanor or any felony involving the use, consumption, or self-administration of any of the substances referred to in this section, or any combination thereof, constitutes unprofessional conduct.

...

8. Section 2266 of the Code states that the failure of a physician and surgeon to maintain adequate and accurate records relating to the provision of services to their patients constitutes unprofessional conduct.

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FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

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2 9. From 2009 to 2017, Respondent was the Chief of Transplantation & Hepatobiliary
3 Surgery and Director for the Center for Hepatobiliary Disease & Transplantation at the University
4 of California, San Diego (UCSD).

5 10. From approximately March 2015 through August 2017, Respondent filled
6 approximately 23 prescriptions for 30 tablets of 10 mg Ambien.¹

7 11. In 2016, Respondent wrote two prescriptions for Ambien for K.M., M.D., a work
8 colleague. Respondent never physically examined K.M. or documented his treatment of K.M. or
9 prescriptions given.

10 12. On or about September 20, 2017, UCSD received a notification that two livers were
11 available for Patient A² for possible transplantation. Patient A was a 58-year-old morbidly obese
12 woman with end-stage liver disease secondary to nonalcoholic steatohepatitis.³ Patient A's
13 MELD score⁴ was 40.

14 13. On or about September 20, 2017, another colleague, J.B., M.D., spoke to Respondent
15 about the offers for Patient A. J.B. noticed that Respondent was having a hard time following
16 what she was saying. Despite J.B.'s explanation, Respondent could not differentiate between the
17 two offers and became angry. Later that day, J.B. turned down one of the livers after learning
18 that it was 40-50% fatty.

19 14. On or about the same day, Respondent received at least two separate emails notifying
20 him and the other members of the transplant team of the date and time of Patient A's liver
21 transplantation surgery, which was scheduled to take place the next day on September 21, 2017,
22 at 6:00 a.m.

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25 ¹ Ambien, brand name for zolpidem tartrate, is a sedative hypnotic and a Schedule IV
26 controlled substance pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 11057, subdivision (d).

27 ² Patient A's name is withheld to protect her privacy. Respondent is aware of Patient A's
28 identity.

³ Also known as nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

⁴ The Model for End State Liver Disease (MELD) score is a number ranging from 6 to 40
ranking a patient's severity of sickness and urgency in obtaining a liver transplant.

1 15. On or about September 20, 2017, J.B. emailed Respondent. Respondent replied on or
2 about September 21, 2017 at 3:00 a.m. J.B. responded by telling Respondent that the procedure
3 would begin at 6:00 a.m., and that Respondent should be there no later than 8:00 a.m.

4 16. On or about September 21, 2017 at approximately 8:00 a.m., despite being called and
5 texted, Respondent did not appear for Patient A's surgery. Respondent did not respond to his
6 colleagues' calls and texts. J.B. decided to move forward with the procedure with G.S., M.D.,
7 assisting.

8 17. At approximately 9:00 a.m., K.M., M.D., called and spoke to Respondent on the
9 phone. Respondent yelled at K.M. to bar J.B. from starting the procedure, as it was scheduled to
10 start at 10:00 a.m.

11 18. At approximately 9:45 a.m., Respondent appeared in the operating room. At that
12 point, J.B. and G.S. had completed approximately 90% of the hepatectomy.⁵ Respondent did not
13 have a surgical hat on and was told to go get one. Respondent scrubbed in and took over from
14 J.B. as lead surgeon. G.S. left the operating room.

15 19. During the procedure, Respondent complained about the retractor and incision. J.B.
16 observed Respondent cut through Patient A's pancreas looking for an artery. Respondent
17 repeatedly asked J.B. about the alternate liver J.B. had rejected, and was repeatedly told that it
18 was too fatty.

19 20. At some point during the procedure, Respondent stopped for a second and started
20 swaying. When asked if he was okay, Respondent said he was tired and that interns kept calling
21 him all night with questions. Respondent, however, was not on call the night before; J.B. was.

22 21. When Respondent continued with the procedure, he cut the right hepatic vein which
23 started to bleed profusely. J.B. tried to help with the bleeding but Respondent would not let her.
24 The anesthesiologist had to give the patient multiple units of blood. Respondent tried to stitch the
25 vein, but was unsuccessful in stopping the bleeding. At this point, Patient A was very unstable.
26 Respondent and J.B. tried to place the transplant liver in Patient A's body, but had difficulty
27 visualizing due to the bleeding pancreas.

28 ⁵ Surgical removal of the old liver.

1 22. While Respondent tried putting stitches in, they became tangled. Respondent sewed
2 veins closed and sewed things to the back wall. J.B. repeatedly told Respondent that he was
3 placing stitches in the wrong place. Respondent did not appear to understand.

4 23. Respondent unclamped the vena cava which caused more bleeding. Patient A coded
5 for approximately 20 minutes until her pressures came back. At another point during the
6 procedure, J.B.'s glove got caught under a clamp. Instead of cutting the glove or putting other
7 clamps on, Respondent released the clamp, causing the patient to bleed out from the heart.
8 Patient A coded and died.

9 24. As they were cleaning up, Respondent asked J.B. if she wanted him to talk to Patient
10 A's family. Respondent blamed J.B.'s placement of the retractor as the reason why the surgery
11 went so badly.

12 25. As she was waiting for the social worker, J.B. observed Respondent wandering
13 around and asking where the operating room was. J.B. spoke to Patient A's family without
14 Respondent.

15 26. Due to Respondent's aberrant behavior during Patient A's surgery, UCSD summarily
16 suspended Respondent's privileges and conducted an internal investigation. On or about October
17 3, 2017, Respondent told UCSD investigators that he believed his behavior during Patient A's
18 procedure was a reaction to taking Ambien the night before. Respondent stated that he had taken
19 one dose of Ambien on the evening of September 20, 2017, with a possible second dose
20 sometime thereafter.

21 **FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

22 **(Use or Administration of a Controlled Substance to Himself in Such a Manner as to be**
23 **Dangerous or Injurious to the Extent that Such Use Impairs the Ability of the Licensee to**
24 **Practice Medicine Safely)**

25 27. Respondent has subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C 53758 to
26 disciplinary action under section 2227 and 2234, as defined by section 2239, of the Code, in that
27 he used or administered Ambien to himself in such a manner as to be dangerous or injurious to
28 the extent that such use impaired his ability to practice medicine safely, as more particularly

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1 alleged in paragraphs 9 through 26, above, which are hereby incorporated by reference and re-
2 alleged as if fully set forth herein.

3 **SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**
4 **(Gross Negligence)**

5 28. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No.
6 C 53758 to disciplinary action under section 2227 and 2234, as defined by section 2234,
7 subdivision (b), of the Code, in that he committed gross negligence in the care and treatment of
8 Patient A, as more particularly alleged hereinafter:

9 29. Paragraphs 9 through 27, above, are hereby incorporated by reference and re-alleged
10 as if fully set forth herein.

11 30. Respondent committed gross negligence which includes, but is not limited to, the
12 following:

- 13 a. Respondent performed a liver transplantation procedure on Patient A while in
14 an altered state; and
15 b. Respondent failed to communicate with Patient A's family immediately after
16 the surgical procedure.

17 **THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**
18 **(Repeated Negligent Acts)**

19 31. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No.
20 C 53758 to disciplinary action under section 2227 and 2234, as defined by section 2234,
21 subdivision (c), of the Code, in that he committed gross negligence in the care and treatment of
22 Patient A, as more particularly alleged hereinafter:

23 32. Paragraphs 9 through 30, above, are hereby incorporated by reference and re-alleged
24 as if fully set forth herein.

25 33. Respondent committed repeated negligent acts, which include, but are not limited to,
26 the following:

- 27 a. Respondent failed to effectively communicate with his transplant team
28 regarding Patient A's liver transplant surgery; and

1 b. Respondent committed negligence by writing Ambien prescriptions for his
2 colleague K.M. without documenting an exam or creating any other related medical
3 records.

4 **FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**
5 **(Failure to Maintain Adequate and Accurate Records)**

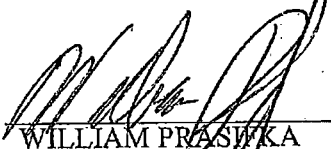
6 34. Respondent has further subjected his Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No.
7 C53758 to disciplinary action under section 2227 and 2234, as defined by section 2266, of the
8 Code, in that he failed to maintain adequate and accurate records with regards to his treatment of
9 his colleague, K.M., as more particularly alleged in paragraphs 11 and 33, above, which are
10 hereby incorporated by reference and re-alleged as if fully set forth herein.

11 **PRAYER**

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

- 14 1. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. C53758, issued to
15 Respondent Alan William Hemming, M.D.;
- 16 2. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Respondent Alan William Hemming,
17 M.D.'s authority to supervise physician assistants and advanced practice nurses;
- 18 3. Ordering Respondent Alan William Hemming, M.D., if placed on probation, to pay
19 the Board the costs of probation monitoring;
- 20 4. Ordering Respondent Alan William Hemming, M.D., if placed on probation, to
21 disclose the disciplinary order to patients pursuant to section 2228.1 of the Code; and
- 22 5. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

23
24 DATED: OCT 06 2021

25 
26 WILLIAM PRASZKA
27 Executive Director
28 Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant