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

In the Matter of the First Amended Accusation Against: Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D. Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 Respondent.	Case No.: 800-2019-051998

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 October 28, 2022.

IT IS SO ORDERED: September 29, 2022.

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

Richard E. Thorp, M.D., Chair
Panel B

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ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ
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Attorneys for Complainant

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

In the Matter of the First Amended Accusation Against: **LINHKIEU THI NGUYEN, M.D.** **3575 Euclid Ave., Ste. 100** **San Diego, CA 92105** **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886,** Respondent.	Case No. 800-2019-051998 OAH No. 2021110005 **STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AND DISCIPLINARY ORDER**

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

PARTIES

1. William Prasifka (Complainant) is the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California (Board). He brought this action solely in his official capacity and is represented in this matter by Rob Bonta, Attorney General of the State of California, by Rosemary F. Luzon, Deputy Attorney General.

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2. Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D. (Respondent) is represented in this proceeding by attorney Robert W. Frank, Esq., whose address is: Neil, Dymott, Frank, McCabe & Hudson APLC, 110 West A Street, Suite 1200, San Diego, CA 92101.

3. On or about July 2, 2003, the Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 to Respondent. The Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998, and will expire on September 30, 2022, unless renewed.

JURISDICTION

4. On or about March 22, 2022, First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998 was filed before the Board, and is currently pending against Respondent. The First Amended Accusation and all other statutorily required documents were properly served on Respondent on or about March 22, 2022, at her address of record. Respondent timely filed her Notice of Defense contesting the First Amended Accusation.

5. A true and correct copy of First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998 is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth herein.

ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS

6. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the charges and allegations in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998. Respondent has also carefully read, fully discussed with her counsel, and understands the effects of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order.

7. Respondent is fully aware of her legal rights in this matter, including the right to a hearing on the charges and allegations in the First Amended Accusation; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against her; the right to present evidence and to testify on her own behalf; the right to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws, having been fully advised of same by her attorney, Robert W. Frank, Esq.

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8. Having the benefit of counsel, Respondent voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and every right set forth above.

CULPABILITY

9. Respondent does not contest that, at an administrative hearing, Complainant could establish a *prima facie* case with respect to the charges and allegations in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998, and Respondent hereby gives up her rights to contest those charges. Respondent further agrees that she has thereby subjected her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 to disciplinary action.

10. Respondent agrees that if she ever petitions for early termination or modification of probation, or if an accusation and/or petition to revoke probation is filed against her before the Board, all of the charges and allegations contained in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998 shall be deemed true, correct, and fully admitted by Respondent for purposes of any such proceeding or any other licensing proceeding involving Respondent in the State of California.

11. Respondent agrees that her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 is subject to discipline and she agrees to be bound by the Board's probationary terms as set forth in the Disciplinary Order below.

CONTINGENCY

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

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13. This Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is intended by the parties herein to be an integrated writing representing the complete, final, and exclusive embodiment of the agreements of the parties in the above-entitled matter.

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

15. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that the Board may, without further notice or opportunity to be heard by the Respondent, issue and enter the following Disciplinary Order:

DISCIPLINARY ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 issued to Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D., is revoked. However, the revocation is stayed and Respondent is placed on probation for three (3) years from the effective date of the Decision on the following terms and conditions:

1. EDUCATION COURSE. Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and on an annual basis thereafter, Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for its prior approval educational program(s) or course(s) which shall not be less than 40 hours per year, for each year of probation. The educational program(s) or course(s) shall be aimed at correcting any areas of deficient practice or knowledge and shall be Category I certified. The educational program(s) or course(s) shall be at Respondent's expense and shall be in addition to the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of licensure. Following the completion of each course, the Board or its designee may administer an examination to test Respondent's knowledge of the course. Respondent shall provide proof of attendance for 65 hours of CME of which 40 hours were in satisfaction of this condition.

2. MEDICAL RECORD KEEPING COURSE. Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall enroll in a course in medical record keeping approved in advance by the Board or its designee. Respondent shall provide the approved course provider with any information and documents that the approved course provider may deem pertinent.

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

A medical record keeping course taken after the acts that gave rise to the charges in the First Amended Accusation, but prior to the effective date of the Decision may, in the sole discretion of the Board or its designee, be accepted towards the fulfillment of this condition if the course would have been approved by the Board or its designee had the course been taken after the effective date of this Decision.

Respondent shall submit a certification of successful completion to the Board or its designee not later than 15 calendar days after successfully completing the course, or not later than 15 calendar days after the effective date of the Decision, whichever is later.

3. PROFESSIONALISM PROGRAM (ETHICS COURSE). Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall enroll in a professionalism program, that meets the requirements of Title 16, California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 1358.1. Respondent shall participate in and successfully complete that program. Respondent shall provide any information and documents that the program may deem pertinent. Respondent shall successfully complete the classroom component of the program not later than six (6) months after Respondent's initial enrollment, and the longitudinal component of the program not later than the time specified by the program, but no later than one (1) year after attending the classroom component. The professionalism program shall be at Respondent's expense and shall be in addition to the Continuing Medical Education (CME) requirements for renewal of licensure.

A professionalism program taken after the acts that gave rise to the charges in the First Amended Accusation, but prior to the effective date of the Decision may, in the sole discretion of the Board or its designee, be accepted towards the fulfillment of this condition if the program would have been approved by the Board or its designee had the program been taken after the effective date of this Decision.

Respondent shall submit a certification of successful completion to the Board or its designee not later than 15 calendar days after successfully completing the program or not later than 15 calendar days after the effective date of the Decision, whichever is later.

4. MONITORING - PRACTICE. Within 30 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for prior approval as a practice monitor, the name and qualifications of one or more licensed physicians and surgeons whose licenses are valid and in good standing, and who are preferably American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) certified. A monitor shall have no prior or current business or personal relationship with Respondent, or other relationship that could reasonably be expected to compromise the ability of the monitor to render fair and unbiased reports to the Board, including but not limited to any form of bartering, shall be in Respondent's field of practice, and must agree to serve as Respondent's monitor. Respondent shall pay all monitoring costs.

The Board or its designee shall provide the approved monitor with copies of the Decision and First Amended Accusation, and a proposed monitoring plan. Within 15 calendar days of receipt of the Decision, First Amended Accusation, and proposed monitoring plan, the monitor shall submit a signed statement that the monitor has read the Decision and First Amended Accusation, fully understands the role of a monitor, and agrees or disagrees with the proposed monitoring plan. If the monitor disagrees with the proposed monitoring plan, the monitor shall submit a revised monitoring plan with the signed statement for approval by the Board or its designee.

Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and continuing throughout probation, Respondent's practice shall be monitored by the approved monitor. Respondent shall make all records available for immediate inspection and copying on the premises by the monitor at all times during business hours and shall retain the records for the entire term of probation.

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If Respondent fails to obtain approval of a monitor within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. Respondent shall cease the practice of medicine until a monitor is approved to provide monitoring responsibility.

The monitor shall submit a quarterly written report to the Board or its designee which includes an evaluation of Respondent's performance, indicating whether Respondent's practices are within the standards of practice of medicine, and whether Respondent is practicing medicine safely. It shall be the sole responsibility of Respondent to ensure that the monitor submits the quarterly written reports to the Board or its designee within 10 calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

If the monitor resigns or is no longer available, Respondent shall, within 5 calendar days of such resignation or unavailability, submit to the Board or its designee, for prior approval, the name and qualifications of a replacement monitor who will be assuming that responsibility within 15 calendar days. If Respondent fails to obtain approval of a replacement monitor within 60 calendar days of the resignation or unavailability of the monitor, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. Respondent shall cease the practice of medicine until a replacement monitor is approved and assumes monitoring responsibility.

In lieu of a monitor, Respondent may participate in a professional enhancement program approved in advance by the Board or its designee that includes, at minimum, quarterly chart review, semi-annual practice assessment, and semi-annual review of professional growth and education. Respondent shall participate in the professional enhancement program at Respondent's expense during the term of probation.

5. NOTIFICATION. Within seven (7) days of the effective date of this Decision, the Respondent shall provide a true copy of this Decision and First Amended Accusation to the Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer at every hospital where privileges or membership are extended to Respondent, at any other facility where Respondent engages in the practice of

medicine, including all physician and locum tenens registries or other similar agencies, and to the Chief Executive Officer at every insurance carrier which extends malpractice insurance coverage to Respondent. Respondent shall submit proof of compliance to the Board or its designee within 15 calendar days.

This condition shall apply to any change(s) in hospitals, other facilities or insurance carrier.

6. SUPERVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES. During probation, Respondent is prohibited from supervising physician assistants and advanced practice nurses.

7. OBEY ALL LAWS. Respondent shall obey all federal, state and local laws, all rules governing the practice of medicine in California and remain in full compliance with any court ordered criminal probation, payments, and other orders.

8. INVESTIGATION/ENFORCEMENT COST RECOVERY. Respondent is hereby ordered to reimburse the Board its costs of investigation and enforcement in the amount of $4,796.25 (four thousand seven hundred ninety-six dollars and twenty-five cents). Costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California. Failure to pay such costs shall be considered a violation of probation.

Any and all requests for a payment plan shall be submitted in writing by Respondent to the Board.

The filing of bankruptcy by respondent shall not relieve Respondent of the responsibility to repay investigation and enforcement costs.

9. QUARTERLY DECLARATIONS. Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the Board, stating whether there has been compliance with all the conditions of probation.

Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations not later than 10 calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

10. GENERAL PROBATION REQUIREMENTS.

Compliance with Probation Unit

Respondent shall comply with the Board's probation unit.

Address Changes

Respondent shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of Respondent's business and residence addresses, email address (if available), and telephone number. Changes of such addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business and Professions Code section 2021, subdivision (b).

Place of Practice

Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine in Respondent's or patient's place of residence, unless the patient resides in a skilled nursing facility or other similar licensed facility or the patient has been under Respondent's continuing care and is bed-bound such that the patient can only be seen at his or her place of residence.

License Renewal

Respondent shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's license.

Travel or Residence Outside California

Respondent shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty (30) calendar days.

In the event Respondent should leave the State of California to reside or to practice Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing 30 calendar days prior to the dates of departure and return.

11. INTERVIEW WITH THE BOARD OR ITS DESIGNEE. Respondent shall be available in person upon request for interviews either at Respondent's place of business or at the probation unit office, with or without prior notice throughout the term of probation.

12. NON-PRACTICE WHILE ON PROBATION. Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing within 15 calendar days of any periods of non-practice lasting more than 30 calendar days and within 15 calendar days of Respondent's return to practice. Non-practice is defined as any period of time Respondent is not practicing medicine as defined in Business and

Professions Code sections 2051 and 2052 for at least 40 hours in a calendar month in direct patient care, clinical activity or teaching, or other activity as approved by the Board. If Respondent resides in California and is considered to be in non-practice, Respondent shall comply with all terms and conditions of probation. All time spent in an intensive training program which has been approved by the Board or its designee shall not be considered non-practice and does not relieve Respondent from complying with all the terms and conditions of probation. Practicing medicine in another state of the United States or Federal jurisdiction while on probation with the medical licensing authority of that state or jurisdiction shall not be considered non-practice. A Board-ordered suspension of practice shall not be considered as a period of non-practice.

In the event Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation exceeds 18 calendar months, Respondent shall successfully complete the Federation of State Medical Boards' Special Purpose Examination, or, at the Board's discretion, a clinical competence assessment program that meets the criteria of Condition 18 of the current version of the Board's "Manual of Model Disciplinary Orders and Disciplinary Guidelines" prior to resuming the practice of medicine.

Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation shall not exceed two (2) years.

Periods of non-practice will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term.

Periods of non-practice for a Respondent residing outside of California will relieve Respondent of the responsibility to comply with the probationary terms and conditions with the exception of this condition and the following terms and conditions of probation: Obey All Laws; General Probation Requirements; Quarterly Declarations; Abstain from the Use of Alcohol and/or Controlled Substances; and Biological Fluid Testing.

13. COMPLETION OF PROBATION. Respondent shall comply with all financial obligations (e.g., restitution, probation costs) not later than 120 calendar days prior to the completion of probation. Upon successful completion of probation, Respondent's certificate shall be fully restored.

14. VIOLATION OF PROBATION. Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of probation. If Respondent violates probation in any respect, the

Board, after giving Respondent notice and the opportunity to be heard, may revoke probation and carry out the disciplinary order that was stayed. If an Accusation, or Petition to Revoke Probation, or an Interim Suspension Order is filed against Respondent during probation, the Board shall have continuing jurisdiction until the matter is final, and the period of probation shall be extended until the matter is final.

15. LICENSE SURRENDER. Following the effective date of this Decision, if Respondent ceases practicing due to retirement or health reasons or is otherwise unable to satisfy the terms and conditions of probation, Respondent may request to surrender her license. The Board reserves the right to evaluate Respondent's request and to exercise its discretion in determining whether or not to grant the request, or to take any other action deemed appropriate and reasonable under the circumstances. Upon formal acceptance of the surrender, Respondent shall within 15 calendar days deliver Respondent's wallet and wall certificate to the Board or its designee and Respondent shall no longer practice medicine. Respondent will no longer be subject to the terms and conditions of probation. If Respondent re-applies for a medical license, the application shall be treated as a petition for reinstatement of a revoked certificate.

16. PROBATION MONITORING COSTS. Respondent shall pay the costs associated with probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which may be adjusted on an annual basis. Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California and delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar year.

17. FUTURE ADMISSIONS CLAUSE. If Respondent should ever apply or reapply for a new license or certification, or petition for reinstatement of a license, by any other health care licensing action agency in the State of California, all of the charges and allegations contained in First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998 shall be deemed to be true, correct, and admitted by Respondent for the purpose of any Statement of Issues or any other proceeding seeking to deny or restrict license.

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ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order and have fully discussed it with my attorney, Robert W. Frank, Esq. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886. I enter into this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

DATED: 07/27/2022

LINHKIEU THI NGUYEN, M.D.
Respondent

I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D., the terms and conditions and other matters contained in the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order. I approve its form and content.

DATED: 7-27-22

ROBERT W. FRANK, ESQ.
Attorney for Respondent

ENDORSEMENT

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

DATED: _____

Respectfully submitted,

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

ROSEMARY F. LUZON
Deputy Attorney General
Attorneys for Complainant

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ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order and have fully discussed it with my attorney, Robert W. Frank, Esq. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886. I enter into this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

DATED: _____ _____
LINHKIEU THI NGUYEN, M.D.
Respondent

I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D., the terms and conditions and other matters contained in the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order. I approve its form and content.

DATED: _____ _____
ROBERT W. FRANK, ESQ.
Attorney for Respondent

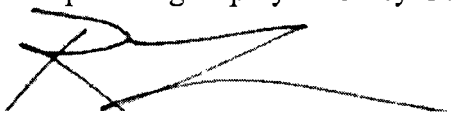
ENDORSEMENT

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

DATED: 7/28/22

Respectfully submitted,

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



ROSEMARY F. LUZON
Deputy Attorney General
Attorneys for Complainant

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Exhibit A

First Amended Accusation No. 800-2019-051998

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Attorneys for Complainant

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

In the Matter of the First Amended Accusation Against: **LINHKIEU THI NGUYEN, M.D.** **3575 Euclid Ave., Ste. 100** **San Diego, CA 92105** **Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886,** Respondent.	Case No. 800-2019-051998 **FIRST AMENDED ACCUSATION**

PARTIES

1. William Prasifka (Complainant) brings this First Amended Accusation solely in his official capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs (Board).

2. On or about July 2, 2003, the Medical Board issued Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 to Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D. (Respondent). The Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will expire on September 30, 2022, unless renewed.

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JURISDICTION

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

4. Section 2220 of the Code states:

> Except as otherwise provided by law, the board may take action against all persons guilty of violating this chapter. . .

5. Section 2227 of the Code states:

> (a) A licensee whose matter has been heard by an administrative law judge of the Medical Quality Hearing Panel as designated in Section 11371 of the Government Code, or whose default has been entered, and who is found guilty, or who has entered into a stipulation for disciplinary action with the board, may, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter:
>
> (1) Have his or her license revoked upon order of the board.
>
> (2) Have his or her right to practice suspended for a period not to exceed one year upon order of the board.
>
> (3) Be placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation monitoring upon order of the board.
>
> (4) Be publicly reprimanded by the board. The public reprimand may include a requirement that the licensee complete relevant educational courses approved by the board.
>
> (5) Have any other action taken in relation to discipline as part of an order of probation, as the board or an administrative law judge may deem proper.
>
> . . .

6. Section 2234 of the Code states:

> 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:
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> . . .
>
> (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.

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(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 2266 of the Code states:

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.

8. Unprofessional conduct under section 2234 of the Code is conduct which breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession, or conduct which is unbecoming a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which demonstrates an unfitness to practice medicine. (*Shea v. Board of Medical Examiners* (1978) 81 Cal.App.3d 564, 575.)

COST RECOVERY

9. Section 125.3 of the Code states:

(a) Except as otherwise provided by law, in any order issued in resolution of a disciplinary proceeding before any board within the department or before the Osteopathic Medical Board, upon request of the entity bringing the proceeding, the administrative law judge may direct a licensee found to have committed a violation or violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case.

(b) In the case of a disciplined licensee that is a corporation or a partnership, the order may be made against the licensed corporate entity or licensed partnership.

(c) A certified copy of the actual costs, or a good faith estimate of costs where actual costs are not available, signed by the entity bringing the proceeding or its designated representative shall be prima facie evidence of reasonable costs of investigation and prosecution of the case. The costs shall include the amount of investigative and enforcement costs up to the date of the hearing, including, but not limited to, charges imposed by the Attorney General.

(d) The administrative law judge shall make a proposed finding of the amount of reasonable costs of investigation and prosecution of the case when requested pursuant to subdivision (a). The finding of the administrative law judge with regard to costs shall not be reviewable by the board to increase the cost award. The board may reduce or eliminate the cost award, or remand to the administrative law judge if the proposed decision fails to make a finding on costs requested pursuant to subdivision (a).

(e) If an order for recovery of costs is made and timely payment is not made as directed in the board's decision, the board may enforce the order for repayment in any appropriate court. This right of enforcement shall be in addition to any other rights the board may have as to any licensee to pay costs.

(f) In any action for recovery of costs, proof of the board's decision shall be conclusive proof of the validity of the order of payment and the terms for payment.

(g) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the board shall not renew or reinstate the license of any licensee who has failed to pay all of the costs ordered under this section.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the board may, in its discretion, conditionally renew or reinstate for a maximum of one year the license of any licensee who demonstrates financial hardship and who enters into a formal agreement with the board to reimburse the board within that one-year period for the unpaid costs.

(h) All costs recovered under this section shall be considered a reimbursement for costs incurred and shall be deposited in the fund of the board recovering the costs to be available upon appropriation by the Legislature.

(i) Nothing in this section shall preclude a board from including the recovery of the costs of investigation and enforcement of a case in any stipulated settlement.

(j) This section does not apply to any board if a specific statutory provision in that board's licensing act provides for recovery of costs in an administrative disciplinary proceeding.

FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Repeated Negligent Acts)

10. Respondent has subjected her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234, as defined by section 2234, subdivision (c), of the Code, in that she committed repeated negligent acts in her care and treatment of Patient A,[1] as more particularly alleged hereinafter:

11. Between in or about 2014, and April 2018, Respondent saw Patient A for her primary care needs. On or about October 2, 2018, at 12:48 p.m., Patient A passed away. According to the death certificate for Patient A, the immediate cause of death was cardiopulmonary arrest. The death certificate also listed spontaneous intracranial hemorrhage and accelerated hypertension as conditions leading to the cause of death.

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[1] References to "Patient A" herein are used to protect patient privacy.

12. Despite commencing treatment of Patient A in or about 2014, Respondent's certified medical records failed to include any records of Patient A's first visit in 2014 or records of any subsequent visits by Patient A in 2014.

13. Respondent's first progress note for Patient A is for a visit that took place on or about December 16, 2015. The progress note for this visit referenced a flu vaccine that Patient A was given on or about February 5, 2015. It also referenced a gynecological history review that was performed on or about November 11, 2015. However, Respondent has no records of any visits by Patient A in 2015 other than the December 16, 2015 visit, including any records of the visits during which the flu vaccine was given and the gynecological history review was performed.

14. On or about November 14, 2016, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. The progress note for this visit referenced a mammogram that Patient A had done in or about November 2014, as well as labs performed in or about August 2015. However, Respondent failed to keep records of the mammogram or labs. During the visit, Patient A's blood pressure was noted to be 142/94. According to Respondent, her custom would have been to instruct Patient A to monitor her blood pressure at home and recommend lifestyle changes to diet and exercise before putting her on blood pressure medication. Respondent, however, failed to document these instructions and recommendations in her progress note.

15. On or about May 4, 2016, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. Respondent failed to review and sign off on this encounter until on or about November 15, 2016.

16. On or about January 25, 2017, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. Respondent failed to maintain a copy of the progress note for this visit in her certified medical records. In addition, Respondent failed to review or sign off on this encounter. According to the progress note for this visit, Patient A's blood pressure was documented as 145/82.[2] However, Respondent added this value to the progress note on or about October 2, 2018, at 8:28 p.m., after Patient A's death. In making this addition, Respondent failed to retain the blood pressure reading initially

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[2] The normal range for blood pressure levels is less than 120/80 mm Hg.

obtained at the visit. Further, the progress note included a list of medications containing losartan[3] and prazosin,[4] which had fill dates occurring in the future, *i.e.*, in August 2018, and September 2018, respectively. According to Respondent, she did not know Patient A was taking prazosin. Nor did Respondent know that Patient A was taking losartan until after Patient A passed away.

17. On or about April 5, 2017, Respondent saw Patient A for a follow-up visit. Respondent failed to maintain a copy of the progress note for this visit in her certified medical records. In addition, Respondent failed to review and sign off on this encounter until on or about June 8, 2017.

18. On or about September 20, 2017, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. The progress note for this visit included a list of medications containing prazosin 2 mg, which was filled on or about September 1, 2017. According to Respondent, she did not always review the medication list and she did not know Patient A was taking prazosin, even though prazosin was included on the medication list for Patient A.

19. On or about October 25, 2017, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. The progress notes for this visit included a list of medications containing prazosin 2 mg, which was filled on or about September 28, 2017. According to Respondent, she did not always review the medication list and she did not know Patient A was taking prazosin, even though prazosin continued to be included on the medication list for Patient A.

20. On or about December 7, 2017, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. The progress note for this visit included a list of medications again containing prazosin 2 mg, which was filled on or about November 22, 2017. According to Respondent, she did not always review the medication list and she did not know Patient A was taking prazosin, even though prazosin continued to be included on the medication list for Patient A.

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[3] Losartan is a prescription medication used alone or in combination with other medications to treat high blood pressure.

[4] Prazosin is also a prescription medication used alone or in combination with other medications to treat high blood pressure. Other uses of prazosin include the treatment of sleep problems associated with post-traumatic stress disorder.

21. On or about April 2, 2018, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. Respondent did not review and sign off on this encounter until on or about October 30, 2018, after Patient A's death. In addition, the progress note included a list of medications containing losartan and prazosin, which had fill dates occurring in the future, *i.e.*, in August 2018, and September 2018, respectively. According to Respondent, she did not know Patient A was taking prazosin. Nor did Respondent know that Patient A was taking losartan until after Patient A passed away.

22. On or about April 25, 2018, Respondent had a visit with Patient A. Respondent failed to review and sign off on this encounter until on or about October 2, 2018, at 8:20 p.m., after Patient A's death. According to the progress note for this visit, Patient A's blood pressure was documented as 135/74. However, Respondent added this value to the progress note on or about October 2, 2018, at 7:48 p.m., after Patient A's death. Respondent also added the following notation: "1st BP 141/97 and repeat manually 135/74." Respondent added this note on or about October 2, 2018, at 7:47 p.m. In making these additions, Respondent failed to retain the blood pressure reading initially obtained at the visit. Further, the progress note included a list of medications containing losartan and prazosin, which had fill dates occurring in the future, *i.e.*, in August 2018, and September 2018, respectively. According to Respondent, she did not know Patient A was taking losartan until after Patient A passed away. Respondent also did not know that Patient A was taking prazosin, even though prazosin continued to be included on the medication list for Patient A.

23. During the timeframe of Respondent's care and treatment of Patient A, Respondent was aware that Patient A was seeing an outside psychiatric provider. According to Respondent, she requested Patient A's psychiatric records from this provider, however, Respondent's chart for Patient A does not include her request for these records.

24. Respondent committed repeated negligent acts in her care and treatment of Patient A, which included, but were not limited to the following:

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A. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to maintain complete medical records for Patient A, including documentation of Patient A's first visit with Respondent in or about 2014 and any subsequent visits in 2014 and 2015 until on or about December 16, 2015; the administration of a flu vaccine on or about February 5, 2015; the gynecological history review performed on or about November 11, 2015; the mammogram performed in or about November 2014; labs performed in or about August 2015; visits occurring on or about January 25, 2017, and April 5, 2017; and Respondent's request for Patient A's records from an outside psychiatric provider.

B. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to document her recommendations and instructions for treating and managing Patient A's elevated blood pressure readings obtained during in-office visits.

C. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to timely sign and close the record of Patient A's May 4, 2016 visit, until more than six months later, *i.e.*, on or about November 15, 2016.

D. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing altogether to sign and close the record of Patient A's January 25, 2017 visit.

E. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to timely sign and close the record of Patient A's April 5, 2017 visit, until more than two months later, *i.e.*, on or about June 8, 2017.

F. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to timely sign and close the record of Patient A's April 2, 2018 visit, until more than six months later, *i.e.*, on or about October 30, 2018, after Patient A's death.

G. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to timely sign and close the record of Patient A's April 25, 2018 visit, until more than five months later, *i.e.*, on or about October 2, 2018, after Patient A's death.

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H. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to document the blood pressure reading initially obtained during Patient A's January 25, 2017 visit.

I. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to document the blood pressure reading initially obtained during Patient A's April 25, 2018 visit.

J. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to recognize, amend, and correct the automated editing of Patient A's medication list for the January 25, 2017 progress note, even though the list included two medications, losartan and prazosin, with fill dates occurring in the future.

K. Respondent failed in her documentation of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to recognize, amend, and correct the automated editing of Patient A's medication list for the April 25, 2018 progress note, even though the list included two medications, losartan and prazosin, with fill dates occurring in the future.

L. Respondent failed in her management of Patient A's care and treatment by failing to review and become aware of Patient A's medications prescribed by outside providers, including prazosin and losartan.

SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Failure to Maintain Adequate and Accurate Medical Records)

25. Respondent has subjected her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234, as defined by section 2266, of the Code, in that she failed to maintain adequate and accurate records regarding her care and treatment of Patient A, as more particularly alleged in paragraphs 11 through 24, above, which are hereby incorporated by reference and re-alleged as if fully set forth herein.

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THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(General Unprofessional Conduct)

26. Respondent has subjected her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886 to disciplinary action under sections 2227 and 2234 of the Code, in that she has engaged in conduct which breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession, or conduct which is unbecoming to a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which demonstrates an unfitness to practice medicine, as more particularly alleged in paragraphs 11 through 25, above, which are hereby incorporated by reference and realleged as if fully set forth herein.

PRAYER

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

1. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 83886, issued to Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D.;

2. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D.'s authority to supervise physician assistants, pursuant to section 3527 of the Code, and advanced practice nurses;

3. Ordering Respondent Linhkieu Thi Nguyen, M.D., to pay the Board the costs of the investigation and enforcement of this case, and if placed on probation, the costs of probation monitoring; and

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

DATED: MAR 22 2022

WILLIAM PRASIFKA
Executive Director
Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant

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