

**Texas Medical Board
Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, January 18, 2011**

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Houston doctor Julia Ward, M.D., suspended for illegal operation of pain clinic

On January 14, 2011, a disciplinary panel of the Texas Medical Board temporarily suspended the medical license of Julia Renee Ward, M.D., Lic. No. M5571, of Houston, after determining that Dr. Ward's continuation in the practice of medicine presents a continuing threat to the public welfare. The suspension is effective immediately.

The Order of Temporary Suspension (Without Notice of Hearing) was based on Dr. Ward's operation of a pain management clinic, Tejas Urgent Care Clinic, without the certification required by law; failure to practice medicine in an acceptable, professional manner; inappropriate prescribing of controlled substances; and unprofessional or dishonorable conduct.

Previously, the medical board denied certification of Tejas Clinic, located on West Little York Road in Houston, based on the clinic's partial ownership by a non-physician.

In October 2010, investigators with the medical board and Texas State Board of Pharmacy staked out the clinic and observed several vehicles, some with out-of-state license plates, dropping off and picking up small groups of patients throughout the day.

The patients were directed to Tejas Clinic and H&W Pharmacy by four men who appeared to be patrolling the parking lot, investigators said. The dropped-off patients would enter the clinic, exit about 20 minutes later, and then go to the pharmacy next door, H&W Pharmacy, to fill their prescriptions.

H&W Pharmacy's license has since been suspended by the Texas State Board of Pharmacy, as has the license of H&W pharmacist Victor Egbulefu.

Most of the prescriptions written by Dr. Ward were for hydrocodone, and a large number of prescriptions were for Xanax and Soma as well. The three drugs are a well-known combination commonly abused and diverted for sale to addicts.

The Temporary Suspension Hearing Without Notice took place under the Board's authority, granted by the Medical Practice Act, to suspend or restrict a physician's license without notice when it determines the physician's continuation in practice would constitute a continuing threat to the public welfare. The physician has the opportunity to have a Temporary Suspension Hearing With Notice at least 10 days after notice of the suspension just taken.

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