

2005 Press Releases

Thursday, April 7, 2005

Medical Board Suspends License of William Scott Blessing, M.D., of Dallas

A panel of the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners suspended the license of William Scott Blessing, M.D., license number E0820, after determining that Dr. Blessing's continuation in the practice of medicine presents a continuing threat to the public welfare. The suspension is effective immediately.

The temporary suspension hearing took place yesterday (Wednesday) under the Board's authority, granted by S.B. 104 of the 78th Legislature, 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 action is the 17th taken by the board since the Legislature granted the new authority in 2003. (See below for summaries of previous actions.)

The action was based on the following: On February 27, Dr. Blessing allegedly assaulted his wife, threatened her with a gun and told her he was going to kill her. She reported the assault to the Highland Park Department of Public Safety, and a warrant was issued for Dr. Blessing's arrest. Dr. Blessing threatened to kill a detective who contacted him and anyone who stepped on his property. The Dallas Tactical Swat Team was called and after a period of negotiation Dr. Blessing surrendered. He was arrested and charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Dr. Blessing reports that he has been diagnosed as Manic Depressive Type 2. The police report indicates that the doctor's wife and psychiatrist informed the police that Dr. Blessing had not been taking his medications.

When he renewed his annual registration, Dr. Blessing failed to inform the Board of his manic depressive disorder and answered "no" to a question asking if he was currently under the care of a physician for a condition that could impair his medical judgment or ability to practice. He also replied "no" to a question asking if he had ever had his medical privileges monitored, revoked or suspended. His privileges at North Hills Hospital were suspended on March 3. In addition, the Board has learned that Dr. Blessing has had a prior DWI that was not reported. Filing false information with the Board is a violation of the Medical Practice Act.

The length of a temporary suspension is indefinite and it remains in effect until the board takes further action.

Background on TMB's temporary suspension without notice authority:

Since the 78th Legislature passed SB 104 in 2003, a provision of which granted the Board the authority to temporarily suspend or restrict a physician's license without notice when the physician's continuing in practice would present a threat to the public welfare, the Board has taken such 16 actions prior to Dr. Blessing's suspension, including the following:

- On June 20, 2003, a Dallas physician's office was raided by local, state and federal law enforcement officials based on information regarding non-therapeutic prescribing, medically unnecessary prescribing and possible patient harm, including deaths, as a result of his prescribing activity. The panel determined that the doctor had violated several provisions of the Medical Practice Act, including prescribing dangerous drugs and

controlled substances to persons who are known or should have been known to be drug abusers.

- On September 18, 2003, action was taken against a Luling general practitioner based on allegations relating to improper nontherapeutic prescribing, prescribing with an expired DPS registration, and failure to provide medical records as required to support the long-term prescribing of narcotics, controlled substances and dangerous drugs to patients.
- On December 5, 2003, action was taken against a Houston physician based on allegations that the physician employed and/or associated with another physician who was under an Order of Temporary Suspension, thereby aiding and abetting the unlicensed practice of medicine. The panel found that employing or associating with a physician who has been found to be a continuing threat to the public welfare constitutes a real danger to the health of patients and to the public.
- On March 23, 2004, the board suspended the interventional cardiology privileges of an El Paso physician based on allegations that the physician acted unprofessionally or dishonorably by performing unnecessary cardiac procedures and that he failed to meet the standard of care in the treatment of certain patients.
- On May 14, 2004, the board suspended the license of an Arlington child psychiatrist based on allegations that included sexual misconduct with adolescent patients. The panel's determination was made after review of written statements from victims and their family members, police reports, hospital reports, and documentation and reports made to various Texas regulatory agencies.
- On June 29, 2004, a Center physician's license was suspended after his arrest by the Deer Park Police Department and charges by the Harris County District Attorney's Office for possession of a controlled substance. The arrest took place after Deer Park police observed the physician slumped over the steering wheel of his car. The officers found cocaine, marijuana, drug paraphernalia and other drugs and cash in the vehicle. Witness statements advised the Board that the doctor's health and mental stability had deteriorated in the past few months and that he presented "a harm to himself and others."
- On September 10, 2004, a Baytown physician's license was suspended after he and his wife were using cocaine, and his wife died of an overdose. The physician admitted to the drug use and confessed to cleaning up the house before the police arrived. The confession was videotaped.
- On October 11, 2004, a Hunt physician's license was suspended for failure to comply with an Agreed Order entered in October 2002 that revoked his license, stayed the revocation, and placed him on probation for 10 years in order to monitor substance abuse problems. The Agreed Order required regular drug screening, and the physician, in disregard of the order, failed to provide specimens for screening on numerous occasions. The action was also taken because the physician was terminated from his employment at a residential treatment facility for allegations of having sex with a patient.
- On October 15, 2004, a Houston physician's license was suspended based on her indictment for providing narcotic medications to individuals for cash payments, writing prescriptions to individuals whose names were taken from the telephone book, and writing prescriptions for individuals with whom she had never established a doctor-patient relationship. The physician has since been convicted of Medicare fraud.
- On November 19, 2004, the license of a North Richland Hills physician was suspended based on evidence of his continued abuse of drugs and alcohol. He had been hospitalized on multiple occasions for alcohol abuse, and was suspended from Garland Hospital.
- On December 6, 2004, the license of a Plano physician was suspended based on allegations that he diverted an associate's triplicate prescription pad to prescribe medications to himself and family members; he wrote false and fictitious prescriptions; and his hospital staff privileges were summarily suspended and that he presented a real danger to the health of his patients or to the public through his lack of competence, impaired status, and failure to adequately care for his patients.
- On February 18, 2005, the license of a Waxahachie physician was suspended based on his being arrested and charged with sexual assault on a patient upon whom he had

performed a colonoscopy. Physical evidence collected from the patient confirmed the presence of semen, and DNA analysis matched the known DNA profile of the physician.

- Also on February 18, the license of a Granbury physician was suspended based on a history of alcohol abuse. The physician reported that he had closed his practice and was offered an agreed order surrendering his license, but he failed to respond to the offeror or otherwise respond to Board communications.
- Also on February 18, the license of a San Antonio physician was suspended because he is a known drug abuser who was found in possession of cocaine and prescription drugs. He was arrested for possession of cocaine on December 12, 2004. He had a history of drug abuse and had been the subject of two previous board orders for substance abuse.
- On March 18, 2005, the license of a Houston plastic surgeon was suspended after he was arrested for driving while intoxicated. After a hit-and-run accident in which two pedestrians were seriously injured, the physician was followed to his residence by an off-duty police officer. He failed a field sobriety test and was arrested and charged with felony intoxicated assault and failure to stop and render aid. He had been the subject of a previous agreed order for writing prescriptions for family members. He had been arrested for DWI in May, 2004, and failed to report this arrest to the board.
- On April 1, 2005, the license of a Plano pediatrician was suspended after the physician's car was observed by Dallas police officers pulling away from a known crack house. When he failed to signal, an officer activated his red lights and attempted a traffic stop. The physician disregarded the lights, drove away, and attempted several maneuvers to evade the officers. During the chase, the physician's car collided with a car on the freeway. When police officers directed him to exit his vehicle, he put his car in reverse and rammed the police car. Officers broke his car window and he was arrested. Police found a substance that later tested positive for cocaine in the vehicle. The physician had been under an order as a Physician in Training for offenses including petty theft and DWI, and was licensed under a nondisciplinary agreed order.

-

The Texas State Board of Medical Examiners, the state agency that regulates physicians, physician assistants, surgical assistants and acupuncturists, provides consumer protection through licensure, investigation and disciplinary action. The Board, under President Lee S. Anderson, M.D., and Executive Director Donald W. Patrick, M.D., J.D., and mandated by Senate Bill 104 of the 78th Legislature, is strengthening and accelerating the disciplinary process for licensees who fail to meet the required standards of professional proficiency and behavior.

Media contact Public Information Officer Jill Wiggins at
jill.wiggins@tmb.state.tx.us or (512) 305-7018

Non-media contact: (512) 305-7030 or (800) 248-4062

Open records requests for orders may be made to

or write to:

Texas State Board of Medical Examiners
MC 251
P.O. Box 2018
Austin, TX 78768-2018

To receive press releases by e-mail: jill.wiggins@tmb.state.tx.us