

# WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF REGULATION & LICENSING



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STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

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IN THE MATTER OF THE DISCIPLINARY :  
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST : FINAL DECISION AND ORDER  
:  
DALE THOMAS BERTRAM, M.D., :  
RESPONDENT. : ORDER 0000804

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Division of Enforcement Case No. 10MED339

The parties to this action for the purposes of Wis. Stat. § 227.53 are:

Dale Thomas Bertram, M.D.  
1909 Main Street  
Cross Plains, WI 53528

Division of Enforcement  
Department of Regulation and Licensing  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

Wisconsin Medical Examining Board  
Department of Regulation and Licensing  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935

The parties in this matter agree to the terms and conditions of the attached Stipulation as the final decision of this matter, subject to the approval of the Medical Examining Board. The Board has reviewed this Stipulation and considers it acceptable.

Accordingly, the Board adopts the attached Stipulation and makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Dale Thomas Bertram, M.D., Respondent, DOB May 28, 1953, is licensed and currently registered by the Medical Examining Board to practice medicine and surgery in the State of Wisconsin, pursuant to license number 25540-20, which was first granted on October 28, 1983, and which expires on October 31, 2011. Respondent specializes in emergency medicine.

2. Respondent's address of record with the Department of Regulation and Licensing is 1909 Main Street, Cross Plains, Wisconsin 53528.

3. At all times relevant to this matter, Respondent was employed as a physician in the emergency department at Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital, in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin.

4. On September 27, 2010, at his own initiative, Respondent wrote a prescription for zolpidem in the name of an administrator at the emergency department where Respondent practiced. Respondent then asked the staff member to fill the prescription and give Respondent the zolpidem. Respondent explained that he could not prescribe the medication for himself because it was a controlled substance.

5. Respondent was aware that, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 961.38(5), physicians may not self-prescribe controlled substances. Respondent told the staff member that he was aware that what he asked was highly inappropriate.

6. The staff member refused to fill the prescription. Respondent destroyed the prescription and asked the staff member not to tell anyone about the matter.

7. Respondent admitted the conduct set forth in paragraphs 4-6, and said it was a momentary lapse of judgment.

8. On October 1, 2010, the chief executive officer of Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital notified Respondent that his employment was terminated as of that date.

9. Respondent has cooperated with the Board's investigation. He began taking sleep aids to deal with sleep deprivation associated with shift work. Eventually he developed anxiety and began using the zolpidem to address his anxiety. Respondent states he did not take the medication at work, but that his dependence on the drug "was becoming a problem." For a time Respondent relied on zolpidem he took from his wife's prescription.

10. Respondent acknowledges his dependence on zolpidem, which he has stopped taking. He currently attends counseling and AA/NA meetings. There is no evidence that Respondent was dependent on or addicted to any other controlled substances.

11. Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 961.20(2)(p), zolpidem is a Schedule IV controlled substance, for which a prescription is required under Wis. Stat. § 961.20(3).

12. Under the facts and circumstances of this case, Wis. Stat. § 961.20(2)(p) is a law, the facts of which substantially related to the practice of medicine.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Wisconsin Medical Examining Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 448.02(3), and has authority to enter into this stipulated resolution of this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. §§ 227.44(5) and 448.02(5).

2. Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 961.20(2)(p), zolpidem is a Schedule IV controlled substance for which a prescription is required pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 961.38(3).

3. Under the facts and circumstances of this case, Wis. Stat. § 961.38(3), is a violation of a law the circumstances of which are substantially related to the practice of medicine.

4. Respondent's conduct in attempting to aid and abet a violation of § 961.38(3), as set forth above, establishes that Respondent engaged in unprofessional conduct as that term is defined by Wis. Admin. Code § Med 10.02(2)(p), attempting to obtain controlled substances other than in the course of legitimate practice.

5. Respondent's conduct in attempting to aid and abet a violation of Wis. Stat. § 961.38(3) under the circumstances of this case as set forth above, is unprofessional conduct as defined by Wis. Admin Code § MED 10.02(2)(z).

6. Respondent is therefore subject to discipline pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 448.02(3).

### ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the license of Dale Thomas Bertram, M.D., to practice medicine and surgery in the State of Wisconsin is **SUSPENDED** for an indefinite period as follows:

#### SUSPENSION

- A.1. The license of Dale Thomas Bertram, M.D., to practice medicine and surgery in the State of Wisconsin is **SUSPENDED** for an indefinite period.
- A.2. Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine and surgery in any capacity unless the suspension is stayed and he is in full compliance with this Order. Respondent shall mail or physically deliver all indicia of registration to the Department Monitor within 14 days of the effective date of this Order.
- A.3. Upon a showing by Respondent of continuous, successful compliance for a period of at least **three (3) years** with the terms of this Order, including at least 600 hours of active practice for every year the suspension is stayed, the Board may grant a petition by the Respondent under paragraph D.4. for return of full licensure. At the Board's discretion, the 3-year period may be started anew for every violation of any provision of Sections C or D of this Order.
- A.4. The Board may, on its own motion or at the request of the Department Monitor, grant full licensure at any time.

#### STAY OF SUSPENSION

- B.1. The suspension is hereby stayed based upon Respondent having provided proof, which has been determined by the Board or its designee to be sufficient, that Respondent is in compliance with the provisions of Sections C and D of this Order.

- B.2. The Board or its designee may, without hearing, remove the stay upon receipt of information that Respondent is in violation of any provision of Sections C or D of this Order. The Board may, in conjunction with any removal of any stay, prohibit Respondent for a specified period of time from seeking a reinstatement of the stay under paragraph B.4.
- B.3. This suspension becomes reinstated immediately upon notice of the removal of the stay either by:
  - (a) Mailing to Respondent's last-known address provided to the Department of Regulation and Licensing pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 440.11; or
  - (b) Actual notice to Respondent or Respondent's attorney.
- B.4. The Board or its designee may reinstate the stay, if provided with sufficient information that Respondent is in compliance with the Order and that it is appropriate for the stay to be reinstated. Whether to reinstate the stay shall be wholly in the discretion of the Board or its designee.
- B.5. If Respondent requests a hearing on the removal of the stay, a hearing shall be held using the procedures set forth in Wis. Admin. Code ch. RL 2. The hearing shall be held in a timely manner with the evidentiary portion of the hearing being completed within 60 days of receipt of Respondent's request, unless waived by Respondent. Requesting a hearing does not stay the suspension during the pendency of the hearing process.

#### LIMITATIONS/RESTRICTIONS

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the license of Dale Thomas Bertram, M.D., to practice medicine and surgery in the State of Wisconsin is LIMITED/RESTRICTED as set forth in Wis. Stat. § 448.02(3)(e), and as follows:

#### Treatment Required

- C.1. Respondent shall enter into and continue, in a drug and alcohol treatment program with a Treater acceptable to the Board or its designee. Pathway Clinic in Prairie du Sac and Gateway Recovery Services are Treaters acceptable to the Board. Respondent shall participate in, cooperate with, and follow all treatment recommended by Treater.
- C.2. Respondent shall immediately provide Treater with a copy of this Final Decision and Order and all other subsequent orders.
- C.3. Treater shall be responsible for coordinating Respondent's rehabilitation, drug monitoring and treatment program as required under the terms of this Order, and shall immediately report any relapse, violation of any of the terms and conditions of this Order, and any suspected unprofessional conduct, to the Department Monitor (See D.1., below). If Treater is unable or unwilling to serve as Treater, Respondent shall immediately seek approval of a successor Treater by the Board or its designee.
- C.4. The rehabilitation program shall include individual and/or group therapy sessions at a frequency to be determined by Treater. Therapy may end only upon a determination by the Board or its designee after receiving a petition for modification as required by D.4., below.

- C.5. Treater shall submit formal written reports to the Department Monitor on a quarterly basis, as directed by the Department Monitor. These reports shall assess Respondent's progress in the drug and alcohol treatment program. Treater shall report immediately to the Department Monitor any violation or suspected violation of this Order.

#### Releases

- C.6. Respondent shall provide and keep on file with Treater, all treatment facilities and personnel, laboratories and collections sites current releases complying with state and federal laws. The releases shall allow the Board, its designee, and any employee of the Department of Regulation and Licensing, Division of Enforcement to: (a) obtain all urine, blood and hair specimen screen results and patient health care and treatment records and reports, and (b) discuss the progress of Respondent's treatment and rehabilitation. Copies of these releases shall immediately be filed with the Department Monitor.

#### AA/NA Meetings

- C.7. Respondent shall attend Alcoholic Anonymous meetings or an equivalent program for recovering professionals, at the frequency recommended by Treater. Respondent shall arrange for written verification of attendance at such meetings to be reported monthly to Treater and the Department Monitor. Said verification shall be in the form acceptable to the Department Monitor.

#### Sobriety

- C.8. Respondent shall abstain from all personal use of alcohol.
- C.9. Respondent shall abstain from all personal use of controlled substances as defined in Wis. Stat. § 961.01(4), and all mood-altering or psychoactive substances, except when prescribed, dispensed or administered by a practitioner for a legitimate medical condition. Respondent shall disclose Respondent's drug and alcohol history and the existence and nature of this Order to the practitioner prior to the practitioner ordering the controlled substance. Respondent shall at the time the controlled substance is ordered immediately sign a release in compliance with state and federal laws authorizing the practitioner to discuss Respondent's treatment with, and provide copies of treatment records to, Treater and the Board or its designee.
- C.10. Respondent shall abstain from all use of over-the-counter medications or other substances which may mask consumption of controlled substances or of alcohol, create false positive screening results, or interfere with Respondent's treatment and rehabilitation.
- C.11. Within 24 hours of ingestion or administration, Respondent shall report to Treater and the Department Monitor all medications and drugs, over-the-counter or prescription, taken by Respondent, shall identify the person or persons who prescribed, dispensed, administered or ordered said medications or drugs, and shall provide the Department Monitor with a copy of the prescription. If Respondent has not provided a release as required by C.9 above, within 24 hours of a request by Treater or the Board or its designee, Respondent shall provide releases in compliance with state and federal laws. The releases shall

authorize the person who prescribed, dispensed, administered or ordered the medication to discuss Respondent's treatment with, and provide copies of treatment records to, the requester.

#### Drug and Alcohol Screens

- C.12. Respondent shall enter into and continue in a drug and alcohol monitoring program which is approved by the Department pursuant to Wis. Adm. Code § RL 7.11 ("Approved Program"). A list of Approved Programs is available from the Department Monitor.
- C.13. At the time Respondent enrolls in the Approved Program, Respondent shall review all of the rules and procedures made available by the Approved Program. Failure to comply with all requirements for participation in drug and alcohol monitoring established by the Approved Program – including any positive test for any controlled substance or alcohol – is a substantial violation of this Order. The requirements shall include:
- (a) Contact with the Approved Program as directed on a daily basis, including vacations, weekends and holidays.
  - (b) Production of a urine specimen at a collection site designated by the Approved Program within five (5) hours of notification of a test.
- C.14. The Approved Program shall require the testing of urine specimens at a frequency of not less than **48 times per year**, for the first year of this Order. After the first year, the frequency may be reduced only upon a determination by the Board or its designee after receiving a petition for modification as required by D.4., below.
- C.15. The Department Monitor, Board or Board designee shall determine the tests to be performed upon the specimens. If any urine, blood or hair specimen is positive or suspected positive for any controlled substances or alcohol, Respondent shall promptly submit to additional tests or examinations as the Treater or the Board or its designee shall determine to be appropriate to clarify or confirm the positive or suspected positive test results.
- C.16. In addition to any requirement of the Approved Program, the Board or its designee may require Respondent to do any or all of the following: (a) submit additional urine specimens, (b) submit blood, hair or breath specimens, (c) furnish any specimen in a directly witnessed manner.
- C.17. All confirmed positive test results shall be presumed to be valid. Respondent must prove by a preponderance of the evidence an error in collection, testing or other fault in the chain of custody.
- C.18. The Approved Program shall submit information and reports to the Department Monitor in compliance with the requirements of Wis. Adm. Code § RL 7.11.

#### Controlled Substance Privileges

C.19. This Order does not impose any limitations on Respondent's prescribing, dispensing, administering or ordering of controlled substances, and makes no representations concerning collateral consequences of this Order on Respondent's privileges with other agencies or entities, including the Drug Enforcement Administration.

#### Reporting Required

- C.20. It is the responsibility of Respondent to promptly notify the Department Monitor of any suspected violations of any of the terms and conditions of this Order.
- C.21. Respondent shall provide a copy of this Final Decision and Order and all other subsequent orders immediately to supervisory personnel where Respondent is engaged in the practice of medicine or surgery as defined at Wis. Stat. § 448.01(9).
- C.22. It is Respondent's responsibility to arrange for written reports from her employer or practice partner(s) to be provided to the Department Monitor on a quarterly basis, as directed by the Department Monitor. These reports shall assess Respondent's work performance, and shall include the number of hours of active practice worked during that quarter.
- C.23. Respondent shall arrange for agreement by his employer or practice partner(s) to immediately report to the Board and to the Treater any conduct or condition of Respondent that may constitute a violation of this Order or a danger to the public.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

##### Department Monitor

- D.1. Any requests, petitions, reports and other information required by this Order shall be mailed, e-mailed, faxed or delivered to:

Department Monitor  
Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing  
Division of Enforcement  
1400 East Washington Avenue  
P.O. Box 8935  
Madison, WI 53708-8935  
Fax: (608) 266-2264  
Telephone: (608) 267-3817

##### Required Reporting by Respondent

- D.2. Respondent is responsible for compliance with all of the terms and conditions of this Order, including the timely submission of reports by others. Respondent shall promptly notify the Department Monitor of any failures of the Treater, treatment facility, Approved Program or collection sites to conform to the terms and conditions of this Order. Respondent shall promptly notify the Department Monitor of any violations of any of the terms and conditions of this Order by Respondent. Additionally, every three (3) months,

the Respondent shall notify the Department Monitor of the Respondent's compliance with the terms and conditions of the Order, and shall provide the Department Monitor with a current address and home telephone number.

- D.3. Respondent shall report to the Board any change of employment status, residence, address or telephone number within five (5) days of the date of a change.

Change of Treater or Approved Program by Board

- D.4. If the Board or its designee determines the Treater or Approved Program has performed inadequately or has failed to satisfy the terms and conditions of this Order, the Board or its designee may direct that Respondent continue treatment and rehabilitation under the direction of another Treater or Approved Program.

Petitions for Modification of Limitations or Termination of Order

- D.5. Respondent may petition the Board for modification of the terms of this Order or termination, however, no such petition for modification shall occur earlier than one year from the date of this Order, no such petition shall be made any earlier than three months from the date the Board has acted on the last such petition, and no such petition for termination shall occur other than in compliance with paragraph A.3. Any such petition for modification shall be accompanied by a written recommendation from Respondent's Treater expressly supporting the specific modifications sought. Denial of a petition in whole or in part shall not be considered a denial of a license within the meaning of Wis. Stat. § 227.01(3)(a), and Respondent shall not have a right to any further hearings or proceedings on the denial.

Costs of Compliance

- D.6. Respondent shall be responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in conjunction with the monitoring, screening, supervision and any other expenses associated with compliance with the terms of this Order. Being dropped from a program for non-payment is a violation of this Order.

Costs of Proceeding

- D.7. Respondent shall pay costs of \$450.00 to the Department of Regulation and Licensing, within ninety (90) days of this Order. In the event Respondent fails to timely submit full payment of costs, Respondent's license SHALL BE SUSPENDED, without further notice or hearing, until Respondent has paid them in full, together with any accrued interest.

Additional Discipline

D.8. In addition to any other action authorized by this Order or law, violation of any term of this Order may be the basis for a separate disciplinary action pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 448.02(3).

This Order is effective on the date of signing.

Wisconsin Medical Examining Board

By: Skals MS MBA 4/20/11  
A Member of the Board Date