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**CERTIFICATION BOARD**

March 16, 2004

Linda Johnson  
Pierce County DHS  
412 W Kinne St  
PO Box 670  
Ellsworth, WI 54011

Dear Ms. Johnson:

The Executive Committee of the Wisconsin Certification Board made the following Conclusion and Decision regarding your complaint against Tom Curler, CADCIIL.

**CONCLUSION**

A dual relationship occurs when a counselor is in a professional role with a person and at the same time is in another role with the same person. A counselor must refrain from a dual relationship that could reasonably be expected to impair the counselor's objectivity, competence, or effectiveness in performing his or her functions as a counselor, or otherwise risk exploitation or harm to the person with whom the professional relationship exists.

Counselors refrain from taking on a professional role when a personal relationship could reasonably be expected to (1) impair their objectivity, competence, or effectiveness in performing their functions as counselors or (2) expose the person or organization with whom the professional relationship exists to harm or exploitation.

When Tom Curler placed Kim (maiden name unknown) with whom he had a prior personal dating relationship into his outpatient group at Pierce County, Kim then became his client. Kim's therapeutic needs exceeded Mr. Curler's capabilities and created a conflict of interest between he and Kim, the Pierce County client. Mr. Curler knew or should have known in his role as a counselor that he must pursue advice and counsel from colleagues and supervisors and he should have made the effort with his supervisor to refer Kim, the client, to another professional who would provide the appropriate therapeutic approach for Kim, the client.

By not exploring alternative treatment for Kim with his supervisor at Pierce County, Mr. Curler performed client services in a manner which falls below the minimum standards of competence for the substance use disorder counseling profession; therefore, Mr. Curler engaged in conduct which does not meet the generally accepted standards of practice; and he failed to obtain an appropriate consultation or make an appropriate referral when the client's problem is beyond the counselor's area of training, expertise, competence, or scope of practice.

Mr. Curler has demonstrated to the Wisconsin Certification Board a history of his personal life interfering with his professionalism as a Certified Alcohol/Drug Counselor III both at Pierce County Human Services and in 2003 while employed at Arbor Place in Menomonie, Wisconsin.

Therefore, it is concluded by the Executive Committee that Tom Curler did breach the following Rules within the WCB *Counselor Code of Conduct* (Rev. 1996):

Rule 2.2 A counselor shall not engage in conduct which does not meet the generally accepted standards of practice.

Rule 2.4 A counselor shall not fail to obtain an appropriate consultation or make an appropriate referral when the client's problem is beyond the counselor's area of training, expertise, competence, or scope of practice.

Rule 4.1 A counselor shall not engage in any form of sexual contact/behavior with clients, nor engage in any form of sexual contact/behavior with former therapy clients for two years after the cessation or termination of professional services within the client's continuum of care. The prohibition shall apply with respect to any client/patient of the agency by which the counselor is employed, regardless of whether or not the client/patient is on the counselor's caseload.

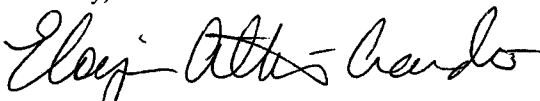
Rule 6.1 A counselor shall not develop, implement, or maintain exploitative relationships with current or past clients.

#### DECISION

Pursuant to Section V(A)(3) of the WCB *Counselor Code of Conduct* (Rev. 1996), Action by the Executive Committee, Tom Curler's WCB certification as an alcohol/drug counselor III is hereby Revoked.

The Executive Committee and I want to thank you for participation in this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at the Board office.

Sincerely,



Eloiza Alfaro-Acevedo  
Interim Executive Director

cc: file