

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



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STATE OF WISCONSIN
BEFORE THE MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF THE DISCIPLINARY	:	
PROCEEDINGS AGAINST	:	
	:	FINAL DECISION AND ORDER
SUSAN J. FRAZIER, M.D.,	:	
RESPONDENT.	:	ORDER 0001365

Division of Enforcement Case No. 11MED249

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

Susan J. Frazier, M.D.
Memorial Health Center Rib Lake Clinic
P.O. Box 338
1121 Highway 102
Rib Lake, WI 54470

Division of Enforcement
Department of Safety and Professional Services
1400 East Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708-8935

Wisconsin Medical Examining Board
Department of Safety and Professional Services
1400 East Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708-8935

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

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 considered it acceptable.

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

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Susan J. Frazier, M.D. ("Respondent"), date of birth June 20, 1958, is licensed by the Wisconsin Medical Examining Board and currently registered to practice medicine and surgery in the state of Wisconsin pursuant to license number 34972-20. Her medical license was first granted in Wisconsin on November 18, 1993.

2. Respondent's last address reported to the Department of Safety and Professional Services is Memorial Health Center Rib Lake Clinic, P.O. Box 338, 1121 Highway 102, Rib Lake, WI, 54470.

3. At all times relevant to this matter, Respondent was employed as a physician at New Richmond Clinic, and exercising her hospital privileges at Westfields Hospital in New Richmond, Wisconsin. Respondent was Patient C.D.'s prenatal care physician throughout her pregnancy in 2008.

4. On September 1, 2008, Patient C.D., then 39 weeks pregnant with her first child, presented to Westfields Hospital at 9:55 p.m. reporting spontaneous rupture of membranes. Patient C.D. was admitted to the Labor and Delivery area where nursing personnel monitored her overnight.

5. On September 2, 2008, while under Respondent's care, the following events occurred:

- a. At 6:45 a.m., the standard protocol for Pitocin augmentation began.
- b. At 3:00 p.m., Patient C.D. was six centimeters dilated and complained of pain levels that ranged from six to eight on a 10-point scale. Intrathecal pain medication was administered for the pain.
- c. At 3:45 p.m., Patient C.D. was eight centimeter dilated, and her husband informed the nurse that the electronic monitor was not picking up the Fetal Heart Tones. Nursing personnel attempted to find the Fetal Heart Tones with an ultrasound and a Doppler. A nurse reported a fetal kick on two occasions, and Patient C.D. indicated she felt kicking as well.
- d. At or around 4:00 p.m., upon arriving to Patient C.D.'s bedside from the adjoining clinic, Respondent discovered severe variable and late decelerations on the fetal monitor strip. Patient C.D. was fully dilated. Pitocin was stopped and oxygen was started at that time.
- e. At or around 4:15 p.m., Respondent ordered an emergency Cesarean section, because of the severe decelerations that she believed to be consistent with cord compromise.
- f. At 4:28 p.m., Patient C.D. was moved to the operating room. At that time, Respondent assessed the fetal monitor strip and believed it showed improvement. As a result of the perceived improvement, Respondent requested administration of spinal anesthesia, rather than general anesthesia. Three attempts were made before the spinal anesthetic needle was successfully placed.

- g. At 4:57 p.m., the incision for the C-section was made. At 5:01 p.m., Patient C.D.'s baby was delivered unresponsive and resuscitation efforts were unsuccessful.

6. Due to the thin and unhealthy condition of the umbilical cord, it is believed that the baby was deceased at the time of delivery. While she was born with a nuchal cord, the cause for fetal distress cannot be determined with certainty.

7. Respondent is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine and is currently working at Memorial Health Center Rib Lake Clinic in Rib Lake, Wisconsin. She is no longer performing obstetrical deliveries or providing prenatal care, and does not intend to resume the practice of obstetrics at anytime in the future.

8. Respondent's conduct fell below the minimum standards of competency for the medical profession by failing to recognize a medical emergency and by misreading the fetal monitoring strip while in the operating room, which lead to her decision not to order an emergency C-section under general anesthesia.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Wisconsin Medical Examining Board has jurisdiction to act in this matter, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 448.02(3), and is authorized to enter into the attached Stipulation and Order, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(5).

2. Respondent, engaging in practice that tends to constitute a danger to the health, welfare, or safety of patient or public, has committed unprofessional conduct as defined by Wis. Admin. Code § Med 10.02(2)(h) and is subject to discipline pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 448.02(3).

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. The attached Stipulation of the parties is accepted.
2. Susan J. Frazier, M.D., is REPRIMANDED for the above conduct.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that:

3. Respondent shall, within 90 days of this Order, pay costs of this proceeding in the amount of TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY FIVE (\$275.00) dollars. Payment shall be made to the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services, and mailed to:

Department Monitor
Department of Safety and Professional Services
Division of Enforcement
1400 East Washington Ave.

P.O. Box 8935
Madison, WI 53708-8935
Telephone: (608) 267-3817
Fax: (608) 266-2264

4. Violation of any terms of this Order may be construed as conduct imperiling public health, safety and welfare and may result in a summary suspension of Respondent's license. The Board in its discretion may in the alternative impose additional conditions and limitations or other additional discipline for a violation of any of the terms of this Order. In the event Respondent fails to timely submit payment of the costs as ordered, the Respondent's license (No. 34972-20) may, in the discretion of the board or its designee, be SUSPENDED, without further notice or hearing, until Respondent has complied with payment of the costs.

5. This Order is effective on the date of its signing.

MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

By

A Member of the Board

Date

2/15/12

11MED249/Frazier/Kluck/AH/12-5-11