

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



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STATE OF WISCONSIN
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF :
 :
 :
 : FINAL DECISION AND ORDER
 : FOR REMEDIAL EDUCATION
 SUSAN M. PIECHOWSKI, R.N., A.P.N.P., :
 LICENSEE. : **ORDER 0008399**

Division of Legal Services and Compliance Case No. 21 NUR 386

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

Susan M. Piechowski, R.N., A.P.N.P.
Wautoma, WI 54982

Wisconsin Board of Nursing
P.O. Box 8366
Madison, WI 53708-8366

Division of Legal Services and Compliance
Department of Safety and Professional Services
P.O. Box 7190
Madison, WI 53707-7190

The parties in this matter agree to the terms and conditions of the attached Stipulation as the final disposition of this matter, subject to the approval of the Board of Nursing (Board). The Board has reviewed this Stipulation and considers it acceptable.

Accordingly, the Board in this matter adopts the attached Stipulation and makes the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Susan M. Piechowski, R.N., A.P.N.P (Licensee), (Year of Birth 1977) is licensed in the state of Wisconsin as a registered nurse, with multistate privileges pursuant to the Nurse Licensure Compact (Compact), having license number 135240-30, first issued on June 27, 2000, and current through February 29, 2024. Licensee is also certified as an advanced practice nurse prescriber, having certificate number 5514-33, first issued on September 25, 2013, and current through September 30, 2024. Licensee's most recent address on file with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (Department) is in Wautoma, Wisconsin 54982.

2. At all times relevant to this proceeding, Licensee worked as a family practice registered nurse and advanced practice nurse prescriber for a clinic located in Wautoma, Wisconsin (Clinic).

3. Beginning in late 2017 and/or early 2018, the Clinic Licensee worked for underwent a change in ownership which led to five doctors transferring out of the Clinic and/or moving to a different area of practice. As such, in addition to her regular workload, Licensee inherited approximately 80 additional patients who formerly belonged to these doctors. These patients were being treated for among other reasons, pain management, and were actively receiving opioid prescriptions for pain management from the former providers.

4. When Licensee assumed care for the additional patients who were being treated for pain management, she understood that she should explore weaning the patients from opioids and referring the patients to providers and therapies that were alternatives to opioids. However, due to the COVID pandemic, hostilities in the workplace, and pain management clinic delays, Licensee did not timely address weaning some of the patients from opioids and/or referring the patients to providers and therapies that were alternatives to opioids.

5. While Licensee was able to get most of the newly assigned patients weened down from opioids or referred to alternative therapies, several patients and their records reflected the following:

- a. Patient records indicate that urine drug screens were conducted but the patient records did not contain any urine drug screen results. Licensee advised that such records existed in the labs folder but were not always filed correctly in the patient records.
- b. Patient records did not contain documentation of the risk/benefits of opioids, risk/benefits of prescribing opioids concurrently with benzodiazepines, available alternative therapies, referral to pain management, and/or weaning of opioids.
- c. For one patient, Licensee continued the amount of opioids prescribed by the former prescriber which amounted to approximately 495 morphine milligram equivalents per month.

6. In resolution of this matter, Licensee consents to the entry of the following Conclusions of Law and Order.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction to act in this matter pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 441.07 and is authorized to enter into the attached Stipulation pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 227.44(5).

ORDER

1. The attached Stipulation is accepted.
2. Within six (6) months of the date of this Order, Licensee shall at her own expense take and successfully complete 16 hours of education on the topic of prescribing opioids and benzodiazepines as follows:

a. Each course attended in satisfaction of this Order must be pre-approved by the Board or its designee. Licensee shall be responsible for locating course(s) satisfactory to the Board and for obtaining the required approval of the course(s) from the Board or its designee. Licensee must take and pass any exam offered for the course(s).

b. Licensee shall submit proof of successful completion of the education in the form of verification from the institution providing the education to the Department Monitor at the address stated below. None of the education completed pursuant to this requirement may be used to satisfy any continuing education requirements that have been or may be instituted by the Board and may not be used in any future attempt to upgrade a credential.

c. The Board's monitoring liaison may change the number of credit hours and/or education topics in response to a request from Licensee. The monitoring liaison may consider the topic availability and/or hours of education when determining if a change to the ordered education should occur.

3. Requests for course approval and proof of successful course completion shall be sent by Licensee to the Department Monitor at the address below:

Department Monitor
Division of Legal Services and Compliance
Department of Safety and Professional Services
P.O. Box 7190, Madison, WI 53707-7190
Telephone (608) 266-2112; Fax (608) 266-2264
DPSMonitoring@wisconsin.gov

Licensee may also submit this information online at: <https://dpsmonitoring.wi.gov>.

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

WISCONSIN BOARD OF NURSING

By: Robert Weirman TW-LCHP
A Member of the Board

2/9/2023
Date

STATE OF WISCONSIN
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF

SUSAN M. PIECHOWSKI, R.N., A.P.N.P.,
LICENSEE.

STIPULATION

ORDER 0008399

Division of Legal Services and Compliance Case No. 21 NUR 386

Susan M. Piechowski, R.N., A.P.N.P. (Licensee) and the Division of Legal Services and Compliance, Department of Safety and Professional Services stipulate as follows:

1. This Stipulation is entered into as a result of a pending investigation by the Division of Legal Services and Compliance. Licensee consents to the resolution of this investigation by Stipulation.
2. Licensee understands that by signing this Stipulation, Licensee voluntarily and knowingly waives the following rights:
 - the right to a hearing on the allegations against Licensee, at which time the State has the burden of proving those allegations by a preponderance of the evidence;
 - the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against Licensee;
 - the right to call witnesses on Licensee's behalf and to compel their attendance by subpoena;
 - the right to testify on Licensee's own behalf;
 - the right to file objections to any proposed decision and to present briefs or oral arguments to the officials who are to render the final decision;
 - the right to petition for rehearing; and
 - all other applicable rights afforded to Licensee under the United States Constitution, the Wisconsin Constitution, the Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Administrative Code, and other provisions of state or federal law.
3. Licensee is aware of Licensee's right to seek legal representation and has been provided an opportunity to obtain legal counsel before signing this Stipulation.
4. Licensee agrees to the adoption of the attached Final Decision and Order by the Wisconsin Board of Nursing (Board). The parties to the Stipulation consent to the entry of the attached Final Decision and Order without further notice, pleading, appearance or consent of the parties. Licensee waives all rights to any appeal of the Board's order, if adopted in the form as attached.
5. If the terms of this Stipulation are not acceptable to the Board, the parties shall not be bound by the contents of this Stipulation, and the matter shall then be returned to the Division of Legal Services and Compliance for further proceedings. In the event that the Stipulation is not


accepted by the Board, the parties agree not to contend that the Board has been prejudiced or biased in any manner by the consideration of this attempted resolution.

6. The parties to this Stipulation agree that the attorney or other agent for the Division of Legal Services and Compliance and any member of the Board ever assigned as an advisor in this investigation may appear before the Board in open or closed session, without the presence of Licensee, for purposes of speaking in support of this agreement and answering questions that any member of the Board may have in connection with deliberations on the Stipulation. Additionally, any such advisor may vote on whether the Board should accept this Stipulation and issue the attached Final Decision and Order.

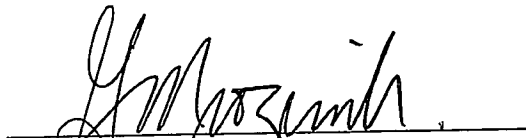
7. Licensee is informed that should the Board adopt this Stipulation, the Board's Final Decision and Order is a public record and will be published in accordance with standard Department procedure.

8. Licensee is further informed that should the Board adopt this Stipulation, the Board's Final Decision and Order will be reported as required by the National Practitioner Databank (NPDB) Guidebook and as otherwise required by any licensure compact or any other state or federal law.

9. The Division of Legal Services and Compliance joins Licensee in recommending the Board adopt this Stipulation and issue the attached Final Decision and Order.


Susan M. Piechowski, R.N., A.P.N.P., Licensee
Wautoma, WI 54982
License No. 135240-30 & 5514-33

1/20/2023
Date


Gretchen Mrozinski, Prosecuting Attorney
Department of Safety and Professional Services
Division of Legal Services and Compliance
P.O. Box 7190
Madison, WI 53707-7190

1-23-2023
Date