

## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



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STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

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IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF :  
 :  
 : FINAL DECISION AND ORDER  
 : FOR REMEDIAL EDUCATION  
 RICHELLE A. CHRISTIANSON, R.N., :  
 LICENSEE. :  
 : **ORDER 0008644**

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Division of Legal Services and Compliance Case No. 22 NUR 372

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

Richelle A. Christianson, R.N.  
Grantsburg, WI 54840

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 Wisconsin 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. Richelle A. Christianson, R.N. (Licensee), (Year of Birth 1962) is licensed in the state of Wisconsin as a registered nurse, with multi-state practice privileges pursuant to the Nurse Licensure Compact (Compact), having license number 114655-30, first issued on September 29, 1993, and current through February 29, 2024. Licensee's most recent address on file with the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (Department) is in Grantsburg, Wisconsin 54840.

2. At all times relevant to this proceeding, Licensee worked as a registered nurse at a community based residential facility located in Centuria, Wisconsin (Facility).

3. On August 5, 2021, Patient A (male born in 1954), was admitted to the Facility. There was no nurse on duty. The Facility Administrator assessed Patient A as having weakness, dementia, Parkinson's Disease, and recently exhibiting an increase in behavioral issues and refusal to take medication. It was also noted at this time that Patient A had a rash in his groin area and was prescribed a topical anti-fungal powder. Patient A was previously cared for at a skilled nursing facility and Patient A's family expressed concerns whether the Facility was an appropriate setting for Patient A.

4. From August 5 through August 12, 2021, Facility staff noted that Patient A consistently refused to take his medication, and/or was physically unable to take his medication. They noted that Patient A was verbally aggressive. They also noted that Patient A's groin area was "very yeasty and red" and "raw and painful." During this time, Patient A also experienced two fall episodes.

5. On August 12, 2021, the Administrator communicated with Patient A's nurse practitioner and advised that Patient A was refusing to take his medication and that he was aggressive with staff. The nurse practitioner advised that she would come to the Facility the next day. Following this communication, a staff member from the Facility tested positive for COVID-19 and visitors to the Facility were restricted. As such, the nurse practitioner did not come to the Facility on August 13, 2021.

6. On August 13, 2021, the Administrator emailed a referral form to the nurse practitioner asking if there was a cream for Patient A's groin area.

7. Licensee did not work any shifts at the Facility from August 4 through August 12, 2021. She was unaware of Patient A or his condition prior to returning to work on August 13, 2021. When she returned to work on August 13, 2021, she assessed Patient A around 8 p.m. Licensee charted the following:

- a. Patient A has severe redness/excoriation noted in the groin area.
- b. Staff reported Patient A was refusing care and required three caregivers.
- c. Licensee discussed Patient A's condition with the Administrator and that Patient A is inappropriate for the Facility due to major behavioral issues.
- d. Patient A came to this Facility with severe skin breakdown with no treatment ordered.
- e. Will look to transfer Patient A on Monday to a skilled nursing facility or mental health unit.

8. During Licensee's discussion with the Administrator on August 13, 2021, they discussed sending Patient A for evaluation and it was Licensee's understanding that Patient A would be sent for evaluation the next day. Licensee did not notify Patient A's nurse practitioner or primary care physician of his condition.

9. Licensee did not work the next two days. Patient A was not sent for evaluation the next day.

10. On August 15, 2021, Patient A was sent to the emergency department after he was found unresponsive. He tested positive for COVID-19. He expired August 23, 2021. Patient A's death certificate stated the cause of death as "Multisystem Organ Failure, Failure to Thrive, and Dementia Related to Advanced Parkinson's Disease."

11. During the first quarter of 2022, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services completed a licensing survey and complaint investigation of the Facility. Following the survey and investigation, the Facility was cited for various deficiencies, was assessed a forfeiture, and was ordered to comply with various directives.

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

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board 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 six (6) hours of education on the topic of identifying, documenting, and responding to a change in condition 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.

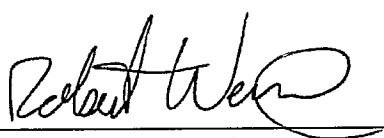
3. Requests for course approval and proof of successful course completion shall be sent by Licensee to the Department Monitor at the address below:

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  
DSPSMonitoring@wisconsin.gov

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

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

WISCONSIN BOARD OF NURSING

By:   
A Member of the Board

7/13/2023  
Date

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

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IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF :  
 :  
RICHELLE A. CHRISTIANSON, R.N., : STIPULATION  
LICENSEE. :  
 : **ORDER 0008644**

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Division of Legal Services and Compliance Case No. 22 NUR 372

Richelle A. Christianson, R.N. (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 for Remedial Education by the Wisconsin Board of Nursing (Board). The parties to the Stipulation consent to the entry of the attached Final Decision and Order for Remedial Education 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 for Remedial Education.

7. Licensee is informed that should the Board adopt this Stipulation, the Board's Final Decision and Order for Remedial Education 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 for Remedial Education 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 for Remedial Education.

Richelle A. Christianson  
Richelle A. Christianson, R.N., Licensee  
Grantsburg, WI 54840  
License No. 114655-30

6-10-23  
Date

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

June 13, 2023  
Date

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