

BEFORE THE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS  
OF THE STATE OF NEVADA


\* \* \* \* \*

In The Matter of Charges and )  
Complaint Against )  
JENNIFER SAHM, M.D. )  
Respondent. )

Case No. 10-18975-1

FILED

JUL 26 2010

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF  
MEDICAL EXAMINERS  
By: 

COMPLAINT

The Investigative Committee of the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners, composed at the time filing of Benjamin Rodriguez, M.D., Chairman, Beverly A. Neyland, M.D., Member, and Van V. Heffner, Member, having a reasonable basis to believe that Jennifer Sahn, M.D., hereinafter referred to as Respondent, has violated the provisions of NRS Chapter 630, hereby issues its formal Complaint, stating the Investigative Committee's charges and allegations, as follows:

1. Respondent is currently licensed in active status (License No. 9500), and has been so licensed since July 14, 2000 by the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 630 of the Nevada Revised Statutes.

2. Patient A was a fifty-seven year old (57) male at the time of the incidents in question. His true identity is not disclosed to protect his privacy, but his identity is disclosed in the Patient Designation served on Respondent along with a copy of this Complaint.

3. Patient A presented to Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center Emergency Room (the "ER") on December 25, 2004 at 11:22 a.m. He complained of shortness of breath and sternal chest pain. He described the chest pain as stabbing, dull. His physical assessment was described as diaphoretic, cool and pale. Patient A's vital signs were normal except for an elevated blood pressure.

1           4.       The onset of the chest pain was identified by Patient A as that morning about 10:00  
2 a.m., little more than one (1) hour before his presentation to the ER.

3           5.       Patient A was treated with aspirin, oxygen, morphine, nitroglycerin, an anti-emetic  
4 and anti-inflammatory medication. Diagnostic testing included a chest x-ray, CT scan of the chest,  
5 an EKG and laboratory tests. The laboratory tests were taken from Patient A at 12:23 p.m. All  
6 tests were either normal or non-diagnostic.

7           6.       The differential diagnosis made by Respondent was cardiac v. pulmonary disease.  
8 However, the majority of potentially dangerous lung pathologies were eliminated by the CT scan  
9 of Patient A's chest. Thus, the identified cardiac pathology was likely. Patient A's shortness of  
10 breath in the absence of pulmonary pathology from the CT scan, metabolic derangement or anemia  
11 indicated that cardiac pathology was the likely cause of his dyspnea. Additionally, the "stuttering"  
12 (intermittent) chest pain pointed to cardiac pathology as well.

13           7.       Unfortunately, only one EKG was administered on Patient A. The EKG results, not  
14 surprisingly, were non-diagnostic showing slight abnormalities only. In a case like this, a single  
15 EKG is not sufficient. It cannot be used to rule in or rule out unstable angina or acute myocardial  
16 infarction, so it is not helpful as a diagnostic tool by itself. It only gives a snapshot of the heart at  
17 a particular moment and further EKG testing of Patient A was required. Another EKG would  
18 have been helpful in reaching the correct diagnosis. Unfortunately, no repeat EKG was ever  
19 performed.

20           8.       The laboratory tests for cardiac enzymes were similarly deficient. The test samples  
21 were collected at 12:23 p.m. just a short time after Patient A presented to the ER. Since the onset  
22 of the chest pain was at 10:00 a.m., this was only about two and one half (2 1/2) hours after the  
23 onset of chest pain. This was not enough time to adequately identify the leakage of cardiac  
24 enzymes into the bloodstream.

25           9.       Cardiac enzymes, significantly, are not immediately elevated from Acute  
26 Myocardial Infarction. Elevation of the cardiac enzymes can be delayed for up to eight (8) to  
27 twelve (12) hours after the onset of symptoms. Thus, the single set of cardiac enzymes tested for  
28 in this matter was not enough to exclude any cardiac pathology where such a short time elapsed

1 between the onset of chest pain and the cardiac enzymes' test. The cardiac enzymes' test should  
2 have been repeated at least once, if not several, times to be certain that there was no sign of cardiac  
3 necrosis. As a result, Patient A's condition warranted admission to the hospital specifically for this  
4 purpose. Patient A required at least another five (5) hours in the hospital in order to allow for a  
5 correct diagnosis.

6 10. Patient A appeared to improve, however, and was discharged at 4:45 p.m. No  
7 further laboratory tests were performed prior to his discharge from the ER.

8 **Count I**

9 11. All of the allegations contained in the above paragraphs are hereby incorporated by  
10 reference as though fully set forth herein.

11 12. Nevada Administrative Code Section 630.040 defines malpractice as the failure of  
12 a physician, in treating a patient, to use the reasonable care, skill, or knowledge ordinarily used  
13 under similar circumstances.

14 13. Nevada Revised Statute Section 630.301(4) provides that malpractice is grounds  
15 for initiating disciplinary action against a licensee.

16 14. Respondent failed to use the reasonable care, skill, or knowledge ordinarily used  
17 under the same or similar circumstances when she failed to order a repeat EKG in the face of  
18 stuttering chest pain and/or failed to admit Patient A to the hospital for the required time frame in  
19 order to run a second set of cardiac enzymes tests.

20 15. By reason of the foregoing, Respondent is subject to discipline by the Nevada State  
21 Board of Medical Examiners as provided in Section 630.352 of the Nevada Revised Statutes.

22 **WHEREFORE**, the Investigative Committee prays:

23 1. That the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners give Respondent notice of the  
24 charges herein against her and give her notice that she may file an answer to the Complaint herein  
25 as set forth in Section 630.339 of the Nevada Revised Statutes within twenty (20) days of service  
26 of the Complaint.

27 2. That the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners set a time and place for a  
28 formal hearing after holding an Early Case Conference pursuant to NRS §630.339(3);

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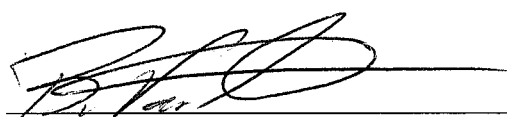
3. That the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners determine what sanctions it determines to impose if it determines there has been a violation or violations of the Medical Practice Act (Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 630) committed by Respondent; and

4. That the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners make, issue and serve on Respondent its findings of facts, conclusions of law and order, in writing, that includes the sanctions imposed; and

5. That the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners take such other and further action as may be just and proper in these premises.

DATED this 20<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2010.

THE NEVADA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By:   
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Bradley O. Van Ry, Esq.  
Deputy General Counsel and Attorney for the Investigative Committee

VERIFICATION

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STATE OF NEVADA            )  
  : ss.  
COUNTY OF CLARK         )

Benjamin Rodriguez, M.D., hereby deposes and states under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Nevada that he is the Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners that authorized the foregoing Complaint against the Respondent herein; that he has read the foregoing Complaint; and that based upon information discovered during the course of the investigation into a complaint against Respondent, that he believes the allegations and charges in the foregoing Complaint against Respondent are true, accurate, and correct.

Dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2010.

  
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BENJAMIN RODRIGUEZ, M.D.

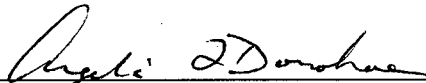
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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that I am employed by Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners and that on 26<sup>th</sup> day of July 2010; I served a file copy of the Complaint, Patient Designation, Original Settlement, Waiver and Consent Agreement along with the Fingerprint Information by mailing via USPS certified return receipt mail to the following:

Jennifer Sahm, M.D.  
P.O. Box 21418  
Reno, NV 89515-1418

Dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day of July 2010.

  
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Angelia L. Donohoe  
Legal Assistant