

1 **BEFORE THE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS**
2 **OF THE STATE OF NEVADA**

3 * * * * *

4
5 **In the Matter of Charges and Complaint**

Case No. 24-28048-1

6 **Against:**

FILED

7 **ZIAD AHMED SAWI, M.D.,**

JUL 11 2024

8 **Respondent.**

**NEVADA STATE BOARD OF
MEDICAL EXAMINERS**
By: 

9
10 **COMPLAINT**

11 The Investigative Committee¹ (IC) of the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners
12 (Board), by and through Alexander J. Hinman, Deputy General Counsel and attorney for the IC,
13 having a reasonable basis to believe that Ziad Ahmed Sawi, M.D. (Respondent) violated the
14 provisions of Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Chapter 630 and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC)
15 Chapter 630 (collectively, the Medical Practice Act), hereby issues its Complaint, stating the IC's
16 charges and allegations as follows:

17 1. Respondent was at all times relative to this Complaint a physician holding an active
18 license to practice medicine in the State of Nevada (License No. 10533). Respondent was originally
19 licensed by the Board on July 1, 2003, and has a specialty in anesthesiology.

20 2. Patient A² was a sixty-two (62) year-old female at the time of the events at issue.

21 3. On August 28, 2019, Patient A presented to Respondent with a chief complaint of
22 "shoulder pain." Respondent's evaluation noted thoracic pain of the T4-5 region of the spine.
23 Also, during this visit, Respondent reviewed an MRI of Patient A's thoracic spine, noting that it
24 showed, "disc pathology at the T6-7 and T7-8 levels, consistent with [Patient A's] physical
25 symptomatology."
26

27 ¹ The Investigative Committee of the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners, at the time this formal
Complaint was authorized for filing, was composed of Board members Chowdhury H. Ahsan, M.D., Ph.D., FACC,
28 Ms. Pamela J. Beal, Irwin B. Simon M.D., FACS.

² Patient A's true identity is not disclosed herein to protect her privacy, but is disclosed in the Patient
Designation served upon Respondent along with a copy of this Complaint.

1 4. In the medical notes, Respondent stated that he planned to proceed with a “right-
2 sided T6-7, T7-8 TESI” (transforaminal epidural steroid injection), a procedure that does not cure
3 the condition, but can provide pain relief to the patient, and that Patient A “will receive an IV
4 push,” meaning, Patient A would be put under anesthesia for the TESI’s.

5 5. The American Society of Anesthesiology (ASA) has published a position statement
6 on “Anesthetic Care During Interventional Pain Procedures for Adults”³ which provides that deep
7 sedation is not necessary with TESI procedures.

8 6. On August 30, 2019, at 11:16 a.m., Patient A was taken to the operating room and
9 anesthesia was administered by another anesthesiologist pursuant to Respondent’s directive, and
10 Patient A received three (3) successive doses of IV Propofol (100mg each), while Respondent
11 performed the TESI’s on Patient A’s right T6-7 and T7-8 vertebrae.

12 7. The procedure finished at 11:31 a.m. According to the procedure note, the
13 injectate used was “Solu-Medrol in 1% preservative-free Xylocaine...”.

14 8. Respondent knew, or should have known, that the blood supply to the thoracic
15 spinal cord is predominantly from the anterior spinal artery, and if that blood supply is
16 compromised, it will result in permanent neurologic impairment, especially flaccid paralysis or
17 severe weakness and there was a risk of occlusion (blockage or closing of a blood vessel) of the
18 anterior spinal artery that is associated with a thoracic TESI procedure.

19 9. Further, Respondent knew, or should have known, that the risk of impaired blood
20 supply to the spinal cord was accentuated by the use of a particulate steroid, as was used in this
21 procedure. “Solo-Medrol” as referenced in the procedure note, is the brand name for
22 methylprednisolone, and it is the steroid with the largest particles.

23 10. The medical record indicates that shortly after Patient A awoke from her thoracic
24 injections, she complained of pain, numbness, and tingling. Respondent then brought Patient A
25 back to the OR for a left SI joint injection. The rationale for proceeding with the left SI joint
26 injection on an urgent basis is unclear and is not documented. Further, a medical indication for

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28 ³ “Anesthetic Care During Interventional Pain Procedures for Adults.” states, “[e]xamples of procedures that typically do not require sedation but are not limited to epidural steroid injections, epidural blood patch, trigger point injections, injections into the shoulder, hip, knee, facet, and sacroiliac joints, and occipital nerve blocks.” (Emphasis added.)

1 performing such a procedure is based upon a presumed SI joint pathology or inflammation and is
2 not indicated in instances of acute numbness/tingling in the legs and low back pain.

3 11. Respondent knew or should have known, that the acute onset of bilateral lower
4 extremity numbness and tingling should not be treated with a left SI joint injection. Further,
5 Respondent also again sedated Patient A by administering midazolam (2mg) while performing the
6 left SI joint injection, which is again, not medically necessary for thoracic epidural injections.

7 12. After the final injection, an MRI was performed, and after reviewing the results,
8 Patient A was transferred to Southern Hills Hospital via ambulance.

9 13. Respondent's Operative Report notes state, "[u]pon completion of the procedure,
10 there were no problems encountered," and that "[t]he patient tolerated the procedure well. He
11 goes on to say, "[a]fter a period of observation in the recovery, the patient was discharged into the
12 hands of the 'driver," meaning the ambulance driver.

13 14. Patient A was then hospitalized for seven (7) days immediately following
14 Respondent's procedure and was not discharged from Southern Hills Hospital until
15 September 5, 2019. From there she was transported to a rehabilitation hospital.

16 15. On January 20, 2020, Patient A was seen at the Cleveland Clinic and was
17 diagnosed with iatrogenic cervicothoracic syrinx formation caused by Respondent's injection.
18 Providers at the Cleavland Clinic diagnosed Patient A with Central Pain Syndrome that included
19 leg and arm weakness and difficulty walking.

20 COUNT I

21 **NRS 630.301(4) - Malpractice**

22 16. All of the allegations contained in the above paragraphs are hereby incorporated by
23 reference as though fully set forth herein.

24 17. NRS 630.301(4) provides that malpractice of a physician is grounds for initiating
25 disciplinary action against a licensee.

26 18. NAC 630.040 defines malpractice as "the failure of a physician, in treating a
27 patient, to use the reasonable care, skill, or knowledge ordinarily used under similar
28 circumstances."

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL
Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners
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VERIFICATION

STATE OF NEVADA)
 : ss.
COUNTY OF CLARK)

Chowdhury H. Ahsan, M.D., Ph.D., FACC, having been duly sworn, hereby deposes and states under penalty of perjury that he is the Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners that authorized the Complaint against the Respondent herein; that he has read the foregoing Complaint; and that based upon information discovered in the course of the investigation into a complaint against Respondent, he believes that the allegations and charges in the foregoing Complaint against Respondent are true, accurate and correct.

DATED this 11th day of July, 2024.

INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
NEVADA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By: 

CHOWDURY H. AHSAN, M.D., PH.D., FACC
Chairman of the Investigative Committee

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I am employed by the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners and that on the 15th day of July, 2024, I served a file-stamped copy of the foregoing **COMPLAINT** and a true and correct copy of the **PATIENT DESIGNATION**, via USPS Certified Mail, postage pre-paid, to the following parties:

ZIAD AHMED SAWI, M.D.
2104 Bachelor Ct.
Las Vegas, NV 89128
Respondent

Tracking No.: 9171 9690 0935 0254 6113 56

With courtesy copy by email to:

Ziad Ahmed Sawi, M.D., at zdoc501@yahoo.com
Respondent

DATED this 15th day of July, 2024.



MERCEDES FUENTES
Legal Assistant
Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners

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MERCEDES FUENTES
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