

IN THE MATTER OF

CATHERINE A. WILLIAMSON, P.T.A.

Respondent

License Number: A2988

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*

BEFORE THE

*

MARYLAND BOARD OF

*

PHYSICAL THERAPY

*

EXAMINERS

Case Number: PT-13-03

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CONSENT ORDER

On March 22, 2013, the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (the "Board") charged Catherine A. Williamson, P.T.A. (the "Respondent") (D.O.B. 11/02/1977), License Number A2988 with violations of certain provisions of the Maryland Physical Therapy Act (the "Act"), Md. Health Occupations ("H.O.") Code Ann. §§ 13-101 *et seq.* (2009 & 2012 Supp.).

Specifically, the Board charged the Respondent with violations of the following provisions of H.O. § 13-316:

13-316. Denials, reprimands, probations, suspensions, and revocations – Grounds.

Subject to the hearing provisions of § 13-317 of this subtitle, the Board may deny a license, temporary license, or restricted license to any applicant, reprimand any licensee or holder of a temporary license or restricted license, place any licensee or holder of a temporary license or restricted license on probation, or suspend or revoke a license, temporary license, or restricted license if the applicant, licensee or holder:

...

- (12) Willfully makes or files a false report or record in the practice of physical therapy or limited physical therapy;
- (14) Submits a false statement to collect a fee;
- (15) Violates any provision of this title or rule or regulation adopted by the Board;

(19) Commits an act of unprofessional conduct in the practice of physical therapy or limited physical therapy[.]

On June 18, 2013, a conference with regard to this matter was held before the Board's Case Resolution Conference ("CRC"). As a result of the CRC, the Respondent agreed to enter into this Consent Order, consisting of Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was and is licensed to practice limited physical therapy in the State of Maryland. The Respondent was originally licensed to practice limited physical therapy on December 19, 2005. The Respondent's license is active and will expire on May 31, 2014.
2. On or about July 23, 2021, the Board received a complaint from the director of physical medicine ("Director") at the hospital ("Hospital A") where the Respondent was then employed.
3. The Director alleged that the Respondent had falsified patient documentation and billing records to indicate that on June 26, 2012, she (the Respondent) had provided limited physical therapy services to a hospital patient ("Patient A") when she had not done so.
4. Patient A, then a 72-year-old female, had been admitted to Hospital A on June 22, 2012, with complaints of warmth and swelling of her left calf. Patient A had undergone a total knee replacement earlier that month. Evaluation revealed a deep venous thrombosis in Patient A's lower left extremity and Patient A was admitted to Hospital A for treatment.

5. On June 24, 2012, a physical therapist evaluated Patient A and recommended that Patient A be provided physical therapy services while in the hospital.
6. Physical therapy providers other than the Respondent provided physical therapy to Patient A on June 24 and 25, 2012.
7. On June 27, 2012, Patient A's daughter notified staff of Hospital A that her mother had not received physical therapy on June 26, 2012.
8. Review of Patient A's chart revealed that the Respondent documented that on June 26, 2012, at 14:39 (2:39 p.m.), she had ambulated 350 feet with Patient A, had supervised transfer training and that Patient A had performed 20 repetitions of therapeutic exercise focusing on her left lower extremity.
9. Review of Patient A's records further revealed that the Respondent had billed for one unit of ambulation training and one unit of therapeutic exercises on June 26, 2012.
10. On June 27, 2012, the Respondent's supervisor accompanied the Respondent to Patient A's room. The Respondent asked Patient A if she (Patient A) remembered her. Patient A responded that she had never seen the Respondent before. The Respondent then asked Patient A whether she remembered that the Respondent had walked with her that day and that Patient A had exercised. Patient A responded no and that she would have remembered the exercises because they were painful.
11. Patient A's daughter, who was in Patient A's room at the same time as the Respondent and her supervisor, stated that she had been in Patient A's room the

entire afternoon of June 26 and that the Respondent had not provided any therapy.

12. The Respondent then stated that she may have treated Patient A in the morning.
13. On June 28, 2012, the Director met with the Respondent. The Respondent was adamant that she had treated Patient A on June 26, 2012. When asked which floor nurse the Respondent had spoken to before providing therapy to Patient A, as hospital policy requires, the Respondent initially stated that she had talked to a nursing aide but was unable to recall his name. When the Director stated that they would find the aide to confirm the Respondent's account, the Respondent began to cry. The Respondent stated that she did not want to turn the incident into a "big deal" and since the "customer is always right," asked if she could simply remove her June 26 documentation and charges.
14. When the Director told the Respondent that she needed to know if Patient A had been treated, the Respondent admitted that she had not seen Patient A and apologized for lying.
15. Effective June 29, 2012, the Respondent was terminated from Hospital A for failure to comply with hospital policy; specifically, falsifying a patient's record.¹
16. On June 29, 2012, the Respondent signed a Discharge Statement that contains allegations consistent with ¶13, above. The Respondent indicated on the Discharge Statement that she agreed with the statements contained therein.²

¹ Patient A was not billed for physical therapy services on June 26, 2012.

² The Discharge Statement provides the employee with the option of disagreeing with the Statement and providing an alternate statement.

17. On November 27, 2012, Board investigatory staff interviewed the Respondent. During the interview, the Respondent claimed that on June 26, 2012, she had treated a patient whom she had mistakenly thought was Patient A.
18. During the interview the Respondent acknowledged that she did not verify the patient's identification bracelet before providing therapy.
19. The Respondent acknowledged that the Discharge Statement she had signed did not include her claim that she provided therapy to the wrong patient. The Respondent stated, "[h]onestly, I was such a wreck...I just signed it. I didn't know what to do."
20. On November 28, 2012, Board staff contacted the Director regarding the Respondent's statement that she had provided therapy to the wrong patient. The Director stated that the Respondent had never made that claim and had she done so, the Director would have followed up and found the patient.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Respondent's conduct constitutes, in whole or in part, violations of the following provisions of the Physical Therapy Act: willfully making or filing a false report or record in the practice of limited physical therapy, in violation of H.O. § 13-316(12); submitting a false statement to collect a fee, in violation of H.O. §13-316(14); violating any provision of this title, in violation of H.O. § 13-316(15) and committing an act of unprofessional conduct in the practice of limited physical therapy, in violation of H.O. § 13-316(19).

ORDER

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 29th day of July, 2013, by a majority of the quorum of the Board:

ORDERED that the Respondent is reprimanded; and it is further

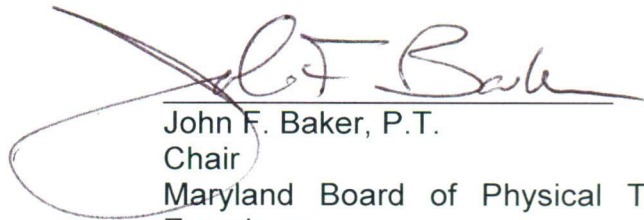
ORDERED that the Respondent shall be placed on probation for a minimum of two years and until the Respondent complies fully with the following terms and conditions:

- a. The Respondent will meet on a quarterly basis with her clinical supervisor at each practice site for the purpose of reviewing her work performance. The Respondent shall provide the supervisor with a copy of the Consent Order;
- b. The Respondent shall ensure that the clinical supervisor(s) submits to the Board reports on a form provided by the Board on a quarterly basis;
- c. Within the six months of probation, the Respondent shall successfully pass the Board's closed-book law examination with a passing score of 90 percent;
- d. After a minimum of two years, the Respondent may petition to the Board to terminate her probation after demonstrating that she has complied with all of the terms and conditions of the Consent Order;
- e. The Respondent is responsible for all costs associated with the Consent Order;
- f. The Respondent shall practice in accordance with the laws and regulations governing physical therapy; and it is further

ORDERED that for purposes of public disclosure, as permitted by Md. State Gov't Code Ann. §10-617(h)(2009 Rep. Vol., 2011 Supp.), this document consists of the contents of the foregoing Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order and that the

Board may also disclose same to any national reporting data bank to which it is mandated to report.

07/29/13
Date


John F. Baker, P.T.
Chair
Maryland Board of Physical Therapy
Examiners

CONSENT

I, Catherine A. Williamson, P.T.A, acknowledge that I am represented by counsel and have consulted with counsel before entering this Consent Order. By this Consent and for the purpose of resolving the issues raised by the Board, I agree and accept to be bound by the foregoing Consent Order and its conditions.

I acknowledge the validity of this Consent Order as if entered into after the conclusion of a formal evidentiary hearing in which I would have had the right to counsel, to confront witnesses, to give testimony, to call witnesses on my own behalf, and to all other substantive and procedural protections provided by the law. I agree to forego my opportunity to challenge these allegations. I acknowledge the legal authority and jurisdiction of the Board to initiate these proceedings and to issue and enforce this Consent Order. I affirm that I am waiving my right to appeal any adverse ruling of the Board that I might have filed after any such hearing.

I sign this Consent Order after having an opportunity to consult with counsel, voluntarily and without reservation, and I fully understand and comprehend the language, meaning and terms of the Consent Order.

7/16/13
Date

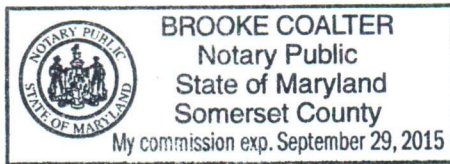
Catherine A. Williamson P.T.A.
Catherine A. Williamson, P.T.A. A2988
Respondent

STATE OF MARYLAND
CITY/COUNTY OF SOMERSET

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 16th day of July 2013, before me, a Notary Public of the foregoing State and City/County personally appeared Catherine

A. Williamson, P.T.A and made oath in due form of law that signing the foregoing Consent Order was her voluntary act and deed.

AS WITNESSETH my hand and notarial seal.



Brooke Coalter
Notary Public