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FILED

January 5, 2009

**NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS**

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUSPENSION :
OR REVOCATION OF THE LICENSE OF :
: **Administrative Action**
:
MICHAEL A. SCHMIERER, D.P.M. : **CONSENT ORDER**
License No. 25MD00095200 :
:
TO PRACTICE PODIATRY :
IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY :
:

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") upon notification that on August 7, 2008 in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey, Michael Schmierer, D.P.M. (hereinafter "Respondent" or "Dr. Schmierer") waived prosecution by Indictment and pled guilty to a one count Information charging him with conspiracy to obstruct a federal audit in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1516.

According to the federal Information, Respondent is a principal of Advantage Foot and Ankle Centers, which has centers in Old Bridge, East Brunswick, South Amboy, and Linden, New Jersey.

Both Respondent and Advantage were approved Medicare providers. In late September 2003, the Medicare program requested the medical records of twenty-five Advantage patients as part of a Medicare audit to determine if Advantage was engaging in upcoding in its billing for these patients. As part of the alleged conspiracy to obstruct this audit, on or about September 25, 2003, Respondent, and other as yet unidentified individuals, rewrote patient notes in seven of these twenty-five audited patient files to increase the amount of information about the patients' condition and treatment in an apparent attempt to support Advantage's submitted billing. According to the Information, these seven records were materially altered to justify Advantage's billing where the original medical notes either were insufficient to support a reimbursable Medicare claim or demonstrated that the services actually provided were not reimbursable or were reimbursable at a lower rate than claimed.

Respondent's sentencing currently is scheduled for December 19, 2008, at which time Respondent anticipates that the government will submit a letter to the sentencing judge confirming his cooperation and assistance in the government's investigation and prosecution of this matter.

Respondent, through his Counsel, Lawrence B. Sachs, Esq., acknowledges that his conduct, as set forth in the federal Information, constituted the use or employment of dishonesty, deception, or misrepresentation; professional misconduct; the

commission of a crime involving moral turpitude and relating adversely to the practice of podiatry; and/or a violation of the Board's record keeping regulation, and therefore subjects Dr. Schmierer to discipline by the Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b), (e), (f), and/or (h).

Respondent Dr. Schmierer having agreed and given his voluntary consent to the within Order, the Board finding that the within disposition is adequately protective of the public health, safety and welfare, and other good cause having been shown,

IT IS on this 24th day of DECEMBER, 2008

ORDERED AND AGREED THAT:

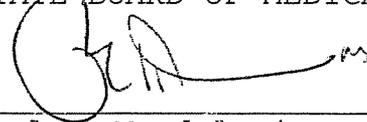
1. Effective February 1, 2009, the license of Michael A. Schmierer, D.P.M. to practice podiatry in this State hereby is suspended for a period of three (3) years. The first six (6) months of said suspension shall be served as an active suspension, with the remaining thirty (30) months stayed and served as a period of probation.
2. At his sole expense, Respondent shall enroll in and demonstrate successful completion of Board-approved courses in (a) ethics and (b) record keeping. Successful completion means that all sessions were attended, all assignments, if any, were properly and appropriately completed, and passing grades, if applicable, were achieved that were unconditional and without reservation.

Respondent shall secure prior written approval from the Board for any course that he may seek to take to satisfy the requirements of this paragraph. Respondent shall submit to the Board written verification of the successful completion of each said course no later than July 31, 2009.

3. Respondent hereby is ordered to pay a civil penalty in the amount of \$5,000.00 and the State's investigative costs in the amount of \$339.55, for a total of \$5,339.55. Said total amount shall be paid within thirty (30) days of the entry of this Order by the Board. Payment shall be made by certified check or money order made payable to the State of New Jersey and shall be sent to the attention of the Executive Director of the State Board of Medical Examiners at P.O. Box 183, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0183. The Board reserves the right to file a certificate of debt for the full amount of the penalty and costs outstanding when the Order is entered by the Board. Any failure of Respondent to make payment under the terms of this Order shall be considered a violation of this Order and shall constitute professional misconduct pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e), thereby subjecting Respondent to any and all remedies available to the Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21 and 22.

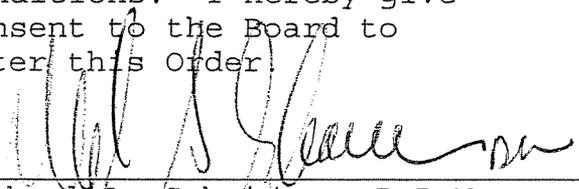
4. On February 1, 2009, Respondent shall return his original New Jersey podiatry license, any biennial registration cards in his possession, and his original State CDS registration to the New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners, Post Office Box 183, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0183.
5. On February 1, 2009, Respondent shall notify the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") of the entry of the within Order and provide proof of such notification to the Board.
6. Respondent shall comply with the attached "Directives Applicable to Any Medical Board Licensee Who Is Disciplined or Whose Surrender of Licensure Has Been Accepted," which Directives are incorporated herein by reference.

STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS



Paul C. Mendelowitz, M.D., President

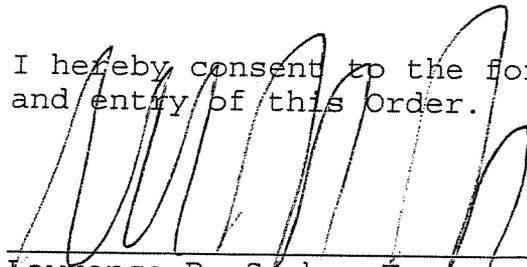
I have read and understood the foregoing Order and agree to be bound by its terms and conditions. I hereby give consent to the Board to enter this Order.



Michael A. Schmierer, D.P.M.

12/17/08
Date

I hereby consent to the form
and entry of this Order.



Lawrence B. Sachs, Esq.
Attorney for Michael A.
Schmierer, D.P.M.

12/17/09

Date

**DIRECTIVES APPLICABLE TO ANY MEDICAL BOARD LICENSEE
WHO IS DISCIPLINED OR WHOSE SURRENDER OF LICENSURE
HAS BEEN ACCEPTED**

APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON MAY 10, 2000

All licensees who are the subject of a disciplinary order of the Board are required to provide the information required on the addendum to these directives. The information provided will be maintained separately and will not be part of the public document filed with the Board. Failure to provide the information required may result in further disciplinary action for failing to cooperate with the Board, as required by N.J.A.C. 13:45C-1 et seq: Paragraphs 1 through 4 below shall apply when a license is suspended or revoked or permanently surrendered, with or without prejudice. Paragraph 5 applies to licensees who are the subject of an order which, while permitting continued practice, contains a probation or monitoring requirement.

1. Document Return and Agency Notification

The licensee shall promptly forward to the Board office at Post Office Box 183, 140 East Front Street, 2nd floor, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0183, the original license, current biennial registration and, if applicable, the original CDS registration. In addition, if the licensee holds a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) registration, he or she shall promptly advise the DEA of the licensure action. (With respect to suspensions of a finite term, at the conclusion of the term, the licensee may contact the Board office for the return of the documents previously surrendered to the Board. In addition, at the conclusion of the term, the licensee should contact the DEA to advise of the resumption of practice and to ascertain the impact of that change upon his/her DEA registration.)

2. Practice Cessation

The licensee shall cease and desist from engaging in the practice of medicine in this State. This prohibition not only bars a licensee from rendering professional services, but also from providing an opinion as to professional practice or its application, or representing him/herself as being eligible to practice. (Although the licensee need not affirmatively advise patients or others of the revocation, suspension or surrender, the licensee must truthfully disclose his/her licensure status in response to inquiry.) The disciplined licensee is also prohibited from occupying, sharing or using office space in which another licensee provides health care services. The disciplined licensee may contract for, accept payment from another licensee for or rent at fair market value office premises and/or equipment. In no case may the disciplined licensee authorize, allow or condone the use of his/her provider number by any health care practice or any other licensee or health care provider. (In situations where the licensee has been suspended for less than one year, the licensee may accept payment from another professional who is using his/her office during the period that the licensee is suspended, for the payment of salaries for office staff employed at the time of the Board action.)

A licensee whose license has been revoked, suspended for one (1) year or more or permanently surrendered must remove signs and take affirmative action to stop advertisements by which his/her eligibility to practice is represented. The licensee must also take steps to remove his/her name from professional listings, telephone directories, professional stationery, or billings. If the licensee's name is utilized in a group practice title, it shall be deleted. Prescription pads bearing the licensee's name shall be destroyed. A destruction report form obtained from the Office of Drug Control (973-504-6558) must be filed. If no other licensee is providing services at the location, all medications must be removed and returned to the manufacturer, if possible, destroyed or safeguarded. (In situations where a license has been suspended for less than one year, prescription pads and medications need not be destroyed but must be secured in a locked place for safekeeping.)

3. Practice Income Prohibitions/Divestiture of Equity Interest in Professional Service Corporations and Limited Liability Companies

A licensee shall not charge, receive or share in any fee for professional services rendered by him/herself or others while barred from engaging in the professional practice. The licensee may be compensated for the reasonable value of services lawfully rendered and disbursements incurred on a patient's behalf prior to the effective date of the Board action.

A licensee who is a shareholder in a professional service corporation organized to engage in the professional practice, whose license is revoked, surrendered or suspended for a term of one (1) year or more shall be deemed to be disqualified from the practice within the meaning of the Professional Service Corporation Act. (N.J.S.A. 14A:17-11). A disqualified licensee shall divest him/herself of all financial interest in the professional service corporation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 14A:17-13(c). A licensee who is a member of a limited liability company organized pursuant to N.J.S.A. 42:1-44, shall divest him/herself of all financial interest. Such divestiture shall occur within 90 days following the the entry of the Order rendering the licensee disqualified to participate in the applicable form of ownership. Upon divestiture, a licensee shall forward to the Board a copy of documentation forwarded to the Secretary of State, Commercial Reporting Division, demonstrating that the interest has been terminated. If the licensee is the sole shareholder in a professional service corporation, the corporation must be dissolved within 90 days of the licensee's disqualification.

4. Medical Records

If, as a result of the Board's action, a practice is closed or transferred to another location, the licensee shall ensure that during the three (3) month period following the effective date of the disciplinary order, a message will be delivered to patients calling the former office premises, advising where records may be obtained. The message should inform patients of the names and telephone numbers of the licensee (or his/her attorney) assuming custody of the records. The same information shall also be disseminated by means of a notice to be published at least once per month for three (3) months in a newspaper of general circulation in the geographic vicinity in which the practice was conducted. At the end of the three month period, the licensee shall file with the Board the name and telephone number of the contact person who will have access to medical records of former patients. Any change in that individual or his/her telephone number shall be promptly reported to the Board. When a patient or his/her representative requests a copy of his/her medical record or asks that record be forwarded to another health care provider, the

licensee shall promptly provide the record without charge to the patient.

5. Probation/Monitoring Conditions

With respect to any licensee who is the subject of any Order imposing a probation or monitoring requirement or a stay of an active suspension, in whole or in part, which is conditioned upon compliance with a probation or monitoring requirement, the licensee shall fully cooperate with the Board and its designated representatives, including the Enforcement Bureau of the Division of Consumer Affairs, in ongoing monitoring of the licensee's status and practice. Such monitoring shall be at the expense of the disciplined practitioner.

(a) Monitoring of practice conditions may include, but is not limited to, inspection of the professional premises and equipment, and inspection and copying of patient records (confidentiality of patient identity shall be protected by the Board) to verify compliance with the Board Order and accepted standards of practice.

(b) Monitoring of status conditions for an impaired practitioner may include, but is not limited to, practitioner cooperation in providing releases permitting unrestricted access to records and other information to the extent permitted by law from any treatment facility, other treating practitioner, support group or other individual/facility involved in the education, treatment, monitoring or oversight of the practitioner, or maintained by a rehabilitation program for impaired practitioners. If bodily substance monitoring has been ordered, the practitioner shall fully cooperate by responding to a demand for breath, blood, urine or other sample in a timely manner and providing the designated sample.

ADDENDUM TO THE DIRECTIVES

Any licensee who is the subject of an order of the Board suspending, revoking or otherwise conditioning the license, shall provide the following information at the time that the order is signed, if it is entered by consent, or immediately after service of a fully executed order entered after a hearing. The information required here is necessary for the Board to fulfill its reporting obligations:

Social Security Number¹: _____

List the name and address of any and all Health Care Facilities with which you are affiliated:

List the names and addresses of any and all Health Maintenance Organizations with which you are affiliated:

Provide the names and addresses of every person with whom you are associated in your professional practice: (You may attach a blank sheet of stationery bearing this information).

¹ Pursuant to 45 CFR Subtitle A Section 61.7 and 45 CFR Subtitle A Section 60.8, the Board is required to obtain your Social Security Number and/or federal taxpayer identification number in order to discharge its responsibility to report adverse actions to the National Practitioner Data Bank and the HIP Data Bank.

**NOTICE OF REPORTING PRACTICES OF BOARD
REGARDING DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:14B-3(3), all orders of the New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners are available for public inspection. Should any inquiry be made concerning the status of a licensee, the inquirer will be informed of the existence of the order and a copy will be provided if requested. All evidentiary hearings, proceedings on motions or other applications which are conducted as public hearings and the record, including the transcript and documents marked in evidence, are available for public inspection, upon request.

Pursuant to 45 CFR Subtitle A 60.8, the Board is obligated to report to the National Practitioners Data Bank any action relating to a physician which is based on reasons relating to professional competence or professional conduct:

- (1) Which revokes or suspends (or otherwise restricts) a license,
- (2) Which censures, reprimands or places on probation,
- (3) Under which a license is surrendered.

Pursuant to 45 CFR Section 61.7, the Board is obligated to report to the Healthcare Integrity and Protection (HIP) Data Bank, any formal or official actions, such as revocation or suspension of a license (and the length of any such suspension), reprimand, censure or probation or any other loss of license or the right to apply for, or renew, a license of the provider, supplier, or practitioner, whether by operation of law, voluntary surrender, non-renewability, or otherwise, or any other negative action or finding by such Federal or State agency that is publicly available information.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:9-19.13, if the Board refuses to issue, suspends, revokes or otherwise places conditions on a license or permit, it is obligated to notify each licensed health care facility and health maintenance organization with which a licensee is affiliated and every other board licensee in this state with whom he or she is directly associated in private medical practice.

In accordance with an agreement with the Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, a list of all disciplinary orders are provided to that organization on a monthly basis.

Within the month following entry of an order, a summary of the order will appear on the public agenda for the next monthly Board meeting and is forwarded to those members of the public requesting a copy. In addition, the same summary will appear in the minutes of that Board meeting, which are also made available to those requesting a copy.

Within the month following entry of an order, a summary of the order will appear in a Monthly Disciplinary Action Listing which is made available to those members of the public requesting a copy.

On a periodic basis the Board disseminates to its licensees a newsletter which includes a brief description of all of the orders entered by the Board.

From time to time, the Press Office of the Division of Consumer Affairs may issue releases including the summaries of the content of public orders.

Nothing herein is intended in any way to limit the Board, the Division or the Attorney General from disclosing any public document.