

1 BEFORE THE ARIZONA MEDICAL BOARD

2 In the Matter of

3 **RONALD E. PARFITT, M.D.**

4 Holder of License No. 20680
5 For the Practice of Allopathic Medicine
6 In the State of Arizona.

Case No. MD-17-0118A

**ORDER FOR LETTER OF REPRIMAND
AND PROBATION WITH PRACTICE
RESTRICTION; AND CONSENT TO
THE SAME**

7 Ronald E. Parfitt, M.D. ("Respondent") elects to permanently waive any right to a
8 hearing and appeal with respect to this Order for a Letter of Reprimand and Probation with
9 Practice Restriction; admits the jurisdiction of the Arizona Medical Board ("Board"); and
10 consents to the entry of this Order by the Board.

11 **FINDINGS OF FACT**

12 1. The Board is the duly constituted authority for the regulation and control of
13 the practice of allopathic medicine in the State of Arizona.

14 2. Respondent is the holder of license number 20680 for the practice of
15 allopathic medicine in the State of Arizona.

16 3. The Board initiated case number MD-17-0118A after receiving a complaint
17 regarding Respondent's care and treatment of a 50 year-old male patient ("AB") alleging
18 negligent prescribing resulting in patient death.

19 4. AB was an established patient of Respondent for treatment of issues
20 including chronic post-surgical abdominal pain ("CPSP"), insomnia, obesity, ADHD,
21 anxiety and stress with medications including opiates, benzodiazepines, Ambien and
22 amphetamines.

23 5. On August 6, 2012, Respondent noted that AB needed a refill of his Xanax
24 and morphine sulfate, both prescribed for anxiety, due to ongoing legal issues.

25

1 6. AB had a second abdominal surgery in May of 2012. Respondent's physical
2 examination notes for visits dated August 16, 2012, November 30, 2012 and March 4,
3 2013 stated that, "[T]he abdomen is soft and nontender; there is no guarding or rigidity.
4 Bowel sounds are normal. There are no palpable masses. There is no
5 hepatosplenomegaly. There is no costovertebral angle (CVA) tenderness."

6 7. AB saw a gastrointestinal specialist on April 22, 2013, who noted that AB
7 "does have intermittent mild abdominal pain which is likely due to adhesions." The
8 specialist further noted that he discussed symptoms to watch for that would require further
9 evaluation.

10 8. In August, September, and December of 2013, as well as February and
11 March of 2014, AB obtained double prescriptions of Xanax by filling Respondent's
12 prescriptions at two different pharmacies.

13 9. On December 6, 2013, Respondent noted that AB might have been self-
14 medicating with alcohol over the previous year, but that AB was no longer drinking. AB
15 reported increased abdominal pain. Respondent changed AB to oxycodone without
16 Tylenol. Respondent further documented that AB had been "persistent" in requests to
17 increase his oxycodone to 30 mg, four times a day and his alprazolam to twice a day.
18 Respondent noted that he increased AB's oxycodone prescription to 15 mg, twice a day.
19 Respondent noted that a prescription review for AB was normal and continued previously
20 prescribed Xanax.

21 10. At a February, 2014 visit, Respondent increased AB's dose of oxycodone to
22 30 mg, twice a day and increased the frequency to four times a day in June, 2014.

23 11. On April 14, 2014, Respondent noted that AB was receiving double
24 prescriptions of Xanax.

25

1 12. Between May and September of 2014, AB received prescriptions of
2 oxycodone from another provider due to a work related injury. Respondent continued to
3 prescribe oxycodone 30 mg, four times a day during this time period.

4 13. On June 6, 2014, February 23, 2015 and March 10, 2016, AB's urine drug
5 screens were negative for the Xanax prescribed by Respondent.

6 14. Between 2013 and 2016, there were multiple references in the chart that AB
7 was under stress and anxiety. AB declined a psychiatric consultation on multiple
8 occasions.

9 15. AB was last seen by Respondent on September 2, 2016. At the time of his
10 last treatment, Respondent was prescribing AB methamphetamine 5 mg, three times a day
11 for weight loss; alprazolam 0.5 mg, twice a day as needed for anxiety; oxycodone 30 mg,
12 four times a day; Zolpidem, 1.5 10 mg tablets by mouth at bedtime as needed for
13 insomnia; and, dextroamp-amphetamine 20 mg twice a day for ADHD.

14 16. The standard of care prohibited Respondent from initiating and continuing
15 treatment with long term opioids in a complex patient with multiple psycho-social
16 comorbidities. Respondent deviated from the standard of care in that the indication for
17 long term opioids continuation is not appropriate for this complex patient with multiple
18 psycho-social comorbidities.

19 17. The standard of care requires documentation to support the initiation and
20 continuation of long term opiate therapy. Respondent deviated from the standard of care
21 in that there is not enough documentation in the chart to support the initiation and
22 continuation of long term opiate therapy.

23 18. The standard of care requires Respondent to use caution when opioids are
24 used with another sedative/hypnotic as combined use of benzodiazepines with opioids
25 increases the risk of respiratory depression and death from overdose. Respondent

1 deviated from the standard of care by continuing high dose opiates with benzodiazepines
2 and benzodiazepine-like substances without sufficient caution.

3 19. Actual harm was identified in that the patient developed narcotics
4 dependence and narcotics addiction. The patient was at risk of potential harm including
5 narcotics overdose, respiratory depression, low sexual drive, testicular hypofunction,
6 restlessness, and insomnia.

7 20. On November 13, 2017, Respondent entered into an Interim Consent
8 Agreement for Practice Restriction prohibiting him from prescribing controlled substances
9 pending the outcome of a Formal Hearing or Formal Interview in this matter.

10 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

11 a. The Board possesses jurisdiction over the subject matter hereof and over
12 Respondent.

13 b. The conduct and circumstances described above constitute unprofessional
14 conduct pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-1401(27)(e) ("Failing or refusing to maintain adequate
15 records on a patient.").

16 c. The conduct and circumstances described above constitute unprofessional
17 conduct pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-1401(27)(q) ("Any conduct or practice that is or might be
18 harmful or dangerous to the health of the patient or the public.").

19 ORDER

20 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

21 1. Respondent is issued a Letter of Reprimand.

22 2. Respondent is placed on Probation for a period of 2 years with the following
23 terms and conditions:

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a. Practice Restriction

Respondent's practice is restricted in that he is prohibited from prescribing controlled substances until he has completed the Continuing Medical Education ("CME") as stated in paragraph 2(b) of this Order, enters into an agreement with a Board-approved monitor to conduct chart reviews as stated in paragraph 2(c) of this Order, and provides Board staff satisfactory proof of compliance with these requirements.

b. Continuing Medical Education

Respondent shall within 6 months of the effective date of this Order obtain no less than 15 hours of Board staff pre-approved Category I CME in an intensive, in-person course regarding medical recordkeeping; and, no less than 15 hours of Board staff pre-approved Category I CME in an intensive, in-person course regarding controlled substances prescribing. Respondent shall within thirty days of the effective date of this Order submit his request for CME to the Board for pre-approval. Upon completion of the CME, Respondent shall provide Board staff with satisfactory proof of attendance. The CME hours shall be in addition to the hours required for the biennial renewal of medical licensure.

c. Chart Reviews

Within 30 days of completion of the CME, Respondent shall enter into a contract with a Board-approved monitoring company to perform periodic chart reviews at Respondent's expense. The chart reviews shall involve current patients' charts for care rendered after the date Respondent returned to practice as stated herein. Based upon the chart review, the Board retains jurisdiction to take additional disciplinary or remedial action.

1 **d. Obey All Laws**

2 Respondent shall obey all state, federal and local laws, all rules governing the
3 practice of medicine in Arizona, and remain in full compliance with any court ordered
4 criminal probation, payments and other orders.

5 **e. Tolling**

6 In the event Respondent should leave Arizona to reside or practice outside the
7 State or for any reason should Respondent stop practicing medicine in Arizona,
8 Respondent shall notify the Executive Director in writing within ten days of departure and
9 return or the dates of non-practice within Arizona. Non-practice is defined as any period of
10 time exceeding thirty days during which Respondent is not engaging in the practice of
11 medicine. Periods of temporary or permanent residence or practice outside Arizona or of
12 non-practice within Arizona, will not apply to the reduction of the probationary period.

13 **f. Probation Termination**

14 After two consecutive favorable chart reviews, Respondent may petition the Board
15 to terminate the Probation. Respondent may not request early termination without
16 satisfaction of the chart review requirements as stated in this Order.
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18 Prior to any Board consideration for termination of Probation, Respondent must
19 submit a written request to the Board for release from the terms of this Order.
20 Respondent's request for release will be placed on the next pending Board agenda,
21 provided a complete submission is received by Board staff no less than 30 days prior to
22 the Board meeting. Respondent's request for release must provide the Board with
23 evidence establishing that he has successfully satisfied all of the terms and conditions of
24 this Order.

1 The Probation shall not terminate except upon affirmative request of Respondent
2 and approval by the Board. In the event that Respondent requests Probation termination
3 and the Practice Restriction is in effect at the time of the request, the Board may require
4 any combination of examinations and/or evaluations in order to determine whether or not
5 Respondent is safe to prescribe controlled substances and the Board may continue the
6 Practice Restriction or take any other action consistent with its authority.

7 The Board has the sole discretion to determine whether all of the terms and
8 conditions of this Order have been met or whether to take any other action that is
9 consistent with its statutory and regulatory authority.

10 3. The Board retains jurisdiction and may initiate new action against
11 Respondent based upon any violation of this Order. A.R.S. § 32-1401(27)(r).

12 DATED AND EFFECTIVE this 1st day of February, 2018.

13 ARIZONA MEDICAL BOARD

14
15 By Patricia E. McSorley
16 Patricia E. McSorley
17 Executive Director

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19 **CONSENT TO ENTRY OF ORDER**

20 1. Respondent has read and understands this Consent Agreement and the
21 stipulated Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order ("Order"). Respondent
22 acknowledges he has the right to consult with legal counsel regarding this matter.

23 2. Respondent acknowledges and agrees that this Order is entered into freely
24 and voluntarily and that no promise was made or coercion used to induce such entry.

25 3. By consenting to this Order, Respondent voluntarily relinquishes any rights to
a hearing or judicial review in state or federal court on the matters alleged, or to challenge

1 this Order in its entirety as issued by the Board, and waives any other cause of action
2 related thereto or arising from said Order.

3 4. The Order is not effective until approved by the Board and signed by its
4 Executive Director.

5 5. All admissions made by Respondent are solely for final disposition of this
6 matter and any subsequent related administrative proceedings or civil litigation involving
7 the Board and Respondent. Therefore, said admissions by Respondent are not intended
8 or made for any other use, such as in the context of another state or federal government
9 regulatory agency proceeding, civil or criminal court proceeding, in the State of Arizona or
10 any other state or federal court.

11 6. Upon signing this agreement, and returning this document (or a copy thereof)
12 to the Board's Executive Director, Respondent may not revoke the consent to the entry of
13 the Order. Respondent may not make any modifications to the document. Any
14 modifications to this original document are ineffective and void unless mutually approved
15 by the parties.

16 7. This Order is a public record that will be publicly disseminated as a formal
17 disciplinary action of the Board and will be reported to the National Practitioner's Data
18 Bank and on the Board's web site as a disciplinary action.

19 8. If any part of the Order is later declared void or otherwise unenforceable, the
20 remainder of the Order in its entirety shall remain in force and effect.

21 9. If the Board does not adopt this Order, Respondent will not assert as a
22 defense that the Board's consideration of the Order constitutes bias, prejudice,
23 prejudgment or other similar defense.

24 10. Any violation of this Order constitutes unprofessional conduct and may result
25 in disciplinary action. A.R.S. § § 32-1401(27)(r) ("[v]iolating a formal order, probation,

1 consent agreement or stipulation issued or entered into by the board or its executive
2 director under this chapter.”) and 32-1451.

3 11. Respondent acknowledges that, pursuant to A.R.S. § 32-2501(16), he
4 cannot act as a supervising physician for a physician assistant while his license is on
5 probation.

6 12. ***Respondent has read and understands the conditions of probation.***

8 Ronald E. Parfitt
9 RONALD E. PARFITT, M.D.

DATED: 12/29/17

11 EXECUTED COPY of the foregoing mailed
12 this 1st day of February, 2018 to:

13 Ronald E. Parfitt, M.D.
14 Address of Record

15 ORIGINAL of the foregoing filed
this 1st day of February, 2018 with:

16 Arizona Medical Board
17 ~~9545 E. Doubletree Ranch Road~~ 1740 W. Adams St Ste 4000
~~Scottsdale, AZ 85258~~ Phoenix, AZ 85007

19 Mary Bobey
20 Board staff