

IN AND BEFORE THE OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL LICENSURE AND SUPERVISION
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

FILED

FEB 21 2024

OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD OF
MEDICAL LICENSURE & SUPERVISION

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, *ex rel.*)
OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD)
OF MEDICAL LICENSURE)
AND SUPERVISION,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
STEPHEN JAMES RIDDEL, M.D.,)
LICENSE NO. MD 16862,)
)
Defendant.)

Case No. 23-03-6205

ORDER OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT AND INDEFINITE SUSPENSION

This matter comes on for hearing before the Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision ("Board") on January 18, 2024, at the office of the Board, 101 N.E. 51st Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105, pursuant to proper notice and service given as required by law and the rules of the Board.

Alex A. Pedraza, Assistant Attorney General ("AAG Pedraza"), appears for Plaintiff. Defendant Stephen James Riddel, M.D., appears not, nor is he represented by counsel. Defendant was called three times before the Board in session without answer by the Defendant or a representative. The Board voted and declared the Defendant in default. 75 O.S. §309(E) and Okla. Admin. Code §435:3-3-14.

The Board, having considered representations of counsel, the sworn testimony of Board Investigator Melissa Davis and expert witness Dr. Michael Johns, as well as the exhibits admitted into evidence and being fully apprised of the premises therein, finds the following has been established by clear and convincing evidence.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Board originally received a complaint containing allegations that Defendant had been prescribing phentermine to a patient at doses exceeding the medically acceptable standard. After reviewing the complainant subject patient's prescription record, Board staff subpoenaed medical records for this and five (5) additional patients of Defendant, all of which were provided to an expert for review. The expert determined that Defendant's practices relating to the prescription of phentermine were outside the medically accepted standard of care for all six (6) patients, for varying reasons. Specifically, Defendant had prescribed phentermine in excess of recommended doses, for extending periods of time, without consistent clinical monitoring of vitals for these patients. For three of the patients,

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OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD OF
MEDICAL LICENSURE & SUPERVISION

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OR MEDICAL LICENSURE AND SUPERVISION
IN AND BEFORE THE OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL LICENSURE
AND SUPERVISION

Plaintiff

Case No. 23-03-0193

STEPHEN JAMES RIBBEL, M.D.
LICENSE NO. MD 10821

Defendant

ORDER OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT AND FINES/REPEAL OF LICENSE

This matter comes on for hearing before the Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision ("Board") on January 18, 2024, at the office of the Board, 101 N.E. 15th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73102, pursuant to proper notice and service given as required by law and the rules of the Board.

Alex A. Redburn, Assistant Attorney General ("AAG Redburn"), appears for Plaintiff. Defendant Stephen James Ribbel, M.D., appears not, nor is he represented by counsel. Defendant was called three times before the Board to answer without answer by the Defendant or a representative. The Board voted and declared the Defendant in default, 75 O.S. §39-1(B) and Civil Admin. Code §125-3-14.

The Board, having considered representations of counsel, the sworn testimony of Board Investigator Melissa Davis and expert witness Dr. Michael Johns, as well as the exhibits admitted into evidence and being fully apprised of the premises therein, finds that Ribbel has been established by clear and convincing evidence.

KINDNESS OF FACT

The Board originally received a complaint containing allegations that Defendant had been providing pharmaceuticals to a patient in doses exceeding the medical professional standards. After reviewing the complaint, Ribbel's prescription record, Board staff subpoenaed medical records for this and his (2) additional patients. Defendant's records which were provided to an extent to Ribbel. The exact date when Defendant's prescriptions relating to the prescription of pharmaceuticals were outside the medically accepted standard of care for all six (6) patients for varying reasons. Specifically, Defendant had provided pharmaceuticals in excess of recommended doses for extending periods of time, without consistent clinical monitoring of visits for these patients. In the case of the patients

this practice continued despite clinical indications of hypertension when the patients' vitals were in fact observed. Moreover, Defendant prescribed phentermine to one patient when doing so was clearly contraindicated considering the patient's history of cardiovascular disease. Defendant's prescribing practices also continued as described herein despite apparent loss of efficacy or benefit to the patient in several instances. The expert determined that Defendant's prescription of phentermine as described herein demonstrated a pattern of medical practice inconsistent with or in violation of the appropriate and medically accepted standard(s) of care.

2. Any conclusion of law below which is more properly characterized as a finding of fact is hereby incorporated as a finding of fact.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over the subject matter and is a duly authorized agency of the State of Oklahoma empowered to license and oversee the activities of physicians and surgeons in the State of Oklahoma. 59 O.S. § 480, *et seq.* and Okla. Admin. Code 435:5-1-1, *et seq.*
2. Defendant holds medical license No. 16862, issued 06/12/1989 by the Oklahoma Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision. The acts and/or omissions complained of herein were made while Defendant was licensed to practice medicine by the State of Oklahoma.
3. Based on the foregoing, Defendant is guilty of unprofessional conduct as follows:
 - a. Prescribing, dispensing or administering of controlled substances or narcotic drugs in excess of the amount considered good medical practice, in violation of 59 O.S. 509(16)(a) and Okla. Admin. Code § 435:10-7-4(2).
 - b. Indiscriminate or excessive prescribing, dispensing or administering of controlled or narcotic drugs, in violation of Okla. Admin. Code § 435:10-7-4(1).
 - c. Prescribing or administering a drug or treatment without sufficient examination and the establishment of a valid physician-patient relationship and not prescribing in a safe, medically accepted manner, in violation of 59 O.S. 509(12).
 - d. Failure to maintain an office record for each patient which accurately reflects the evaluation, treatment, and medical necessity of treatment of the patient, in violation of 59 O.S. § 509(18).
 - e. Failure to maintain adequate medical records to support diagnosis, procedure, treatment or prescribed medications, in violation of 59 O.S. § 509(21) and Okla. Admin. Code § 435:10-7-4(41).
4. Any finding of fact above which is more properly characterized as a conclusion of law is hereby incorporated as a conclusion of law.


ORDERS:

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision that **STEPHEN JAMES RIDDEL, M.D.**, is found guilty of unprofessional conduct as described herein by default.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED by the Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision that **STEPHEN JAMES RIDDEL, M.D.**, Oklahoma medical license no. 16862 is indefinitely suspended pending Defendant's submission to a clinical skills assessment program preapproved by Board staff, and that Defendant appear before the Board and show proof of compliance with any conditions and/or limitations resulting therefrom.

This Order is subject to review and approval by the Oklahoma Attorney General, and this Order shall become final upon completion of the review by the Oklahoma Attorney General unless disapproved, in which case this Order shall be null and void.

Dated this 21st day of February, 2024.

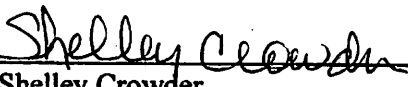


Steven B. Katsis, MD (Feb 20, 2024 16:05 CST)
Steven Katsis, M.D., Vice-President
OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL
LICENSURE AND SUPERVISION

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that on the 21st day of ^{February}~~January~~, 2024, a true and correct copy of this Order was transmitted as indicated, postage prepaid, the following:

U.S. Certified Mail
Mr. Stephen James Riddel
1547 S. Newport Ave
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74120
Defendant



Shelley Crowder



FILED

FEB 20 2024

OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD OF
MEDICAL LICENSURE & SUPERVISION

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION
2024-12A

Billy H. Stout, M.D., Board Secretary
State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision
101 N.E. 51st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-1821

February 20, 2023

Re: Riddel ("Defendant"); Case No. 23-03-6205

Dear Dr. Stout:

This office has received your request for a written Attorney General Opinion regarding action that the State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision intends to take in case 23-03-6205.

The Oklahoma Allopathic Medical and Surgical Licensure and Supervision Act ("Act") authorizes the Board to revoke or order other appropriate sanctions against the license of a physician for unprofessional conduct.¹ 59 O.S.2021, § 503.

According to a Board complaint, Defendant prescribed Phentermine to multiple patients in excess of recommended doses and outside the medically accepted standard of care. Defendant also failed to consistently monitor his patients. Further, Defendant failed to appear at the Board hearing on the complaint and is in default. Finding clear and convincing evidence, the Board proposes to indefinitely suspend Defendant's license pending Defendant's completion of a pre-approved clinical skills assessment program and appearance before the Board demonstrating compliance with any conditions or limits resulting from the program. The Board may reasonably believe that the proposed action is necessary to deter future violations and to protect the public.

It is, therefore, the official opinion of the Attorney General that the State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision has adequate support for the conclusion that this board action advances the State's policy of protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the citizens of Oklahoma.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Johnson".

ROB JOHNSON
General Counsel

¹Oklahoma statutes and the Board rules define "unprofessional conduct" to include: (1) failure to prescribe a drug in a "safe, medically accepted manner;" (2) "[p]rescribing . . . controlled substances or narcotic drugs in excess of the amount considered good medical practice" or "without medical need in accordance with published standard[s];" (4) failure to maintain records which "accurately reflect[] the evaluation, treatment, and medical necessity of treatment" or "to support . . . [the] prescribed medications." 59 O.S.2021, § 509(12), (16)(a), (18), (21); OAC 435:10-7-4(1-2), (41).