State disciplines health care providers

OLYMPIA -- The Washington State Department of Health has taken disciplinary actions or withdrawn charges against health care providers in our state.

The department’s Health Systems Quality Assurance Division works with boards, commissions, and advisory committees to set licensing standards for more than 80 health care professions (e.g., medical doctors, nurses, counselors).

Information about health care providers is on the agency website. Click on “Look up a health care provider license” in the “How Do I?” section of the Department of Health website (doh.wa.gov). The site includes information about a health care provider’s license status, the expiration and renewal date of their credential, disciplinary actions and copies of legal documents issued after July 1998. This information is also available by calling 360-236-4700. Consumers who think a health care provider acted unprofessionally are encouraged to call and report their complaint.

Clallam County

In May 2019 the Chemical Dependency Professional Program charged chemical dependency professional trainee Summer B. Leith (CO60811627) with unprofessional conduct. Leith allegedly reported relapsing on alcohol, using heroin, and having a sexual relationship with a client.

Clark County

In May 2019 the Medical Commission ended an agreement that placed conditions on physician Eric A. Doerfler (MD00029233).

In May 2019 the Chiropractic Commission ended conditions on the chiropractor credential of John Anthony Lewis (CH00002998).

In May 2019 the Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist Program charged cardiovascular invasive specialist Kirt Hughes (IS60691181) with unprofessional conduct. Hughes allegedly diverted a syringe of fentanyl meant for a patient and substituted another syringe that didn’t contain fentanyl. Hughes allegedly admitted having a substance abuse or use disorder.
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King County

In May 2019 the Naturopathy Board ended conditions on the naturopathic physician credential of Elissa J. Mullen (NT00001570).

In May 2019 the secretary of health conditionally granted a registered nursing assistant credential to Rachelle Rose Smith (NA60938557) and placed her on probation for at least two years. Smith must abide by requirements of a 2019 continuance she received on a fourth-degree assault charge.

In May 2019 the Nursing Commission placed licensed practical nurse Ayele D. Indiyelalu (LP00053242) on probation for at least two years. Indiyelalu must complete continuing education in patient assessment, law and ethics, and critical thinking. Indiyelalu notified a physician by fax instead of by telephone about an 86-year-old patient’s right-side weakness, thus delaying for several hours the patient’s transfer from a nursing and rehabilitation center to an emergency department.

Kitsap County

In May 2019 the secretary of health ended probation for certified nursing assistant Kathy Lynn Null (NC10089837).

Mason County

In May 2019 the Pharmacy Commission ended conditions on the pharmacy technician credential of Lillian Hernandez Bernal (VA00067708).

Skagit County

In May 2019 the Medical Commission ended a reinstatement order that placed restrictions on the physician credential of Scott F. Mennella (MD00022793).

Snohomish County

In May 2019 the Nursing Commission ended conditions on the licensed practical nurse credential of Marie-Josee Harimenshi (LP60108692).

Spokane County

In May 2019 the Massage Therapy Program charged massage therapist Marcia K. Kampster (MA00009117) with unprofessional conduct. Kampster allegedly didn’t complete required continuing education.

In May 2019 the Medical Commission modified an agreement with physician Edwin D. Robins (MD00035964) to amend practice review requirements.

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In May 2019 the Agency-Affiliated Counselor Program charged agency-affiliated counselor Emily Grace Estrada (CG60607550) with unprofessional conduct. Estrada allegedly submitted a fraudulent activity log, falsified client progress notes, and signed progress notes as a social worker despite not being licensed in that profession in Washington.

In May 2019 the secretary of health ended probation for chemical dependency professional trainee and chemical dependency professional Terren Rex Beeman (CO60721626, CP60894281).

Thurston County

In May 2019 the secretary of health ordered Paula Berlund to cease and desist from practicing as a medical assistant without a license, and to pay a $1,000 fine. Berlund, who has no medical assistant license, performed duties of a medical assistant.

Whatcom County

In May 2019 the Medical Commission filed an amended statement of charges against physician David E. Baker (MD00025510) to add allegations involving his treatment of a patient.

Yakima County

In May 2019 the Nursing Commission charged registered nurse Joy Kaylene Gaddis (RN00132531) with unprofessional conduct. Charges say Gaddis arrived late for her night shift at a hospital. She allegedly acted distracted, unfocused, and fidgety, and didn’t record information into four of her assigned patients’ medical records. After being found sleeping in the hospital’s break room, according to charges, Gaddis was awakened, started walking, lost consciousness, fell, hit her head on the floor, and was transferred to the hospital’s emergency department. Gaddis allegedly admitted having consumed alcohol that day.

Out of State

California: In May 2019 the Medical Commission charged physician Robert A. Yoho (MD00038131) with unprofessional conduct. In 2017, according to charges, Yoho’s California physician license was placed on probation for five years in connection with repeated negligence, inadequate record-keeping, and displayed incompetence in patient treatment.

Idaho: In May 2019 the Nursing Commission charged licensed practical nurse Aaron Michael Kuchinski (LP60479367) with unprofessional conduct. While working at a skilled nursing facility, Kuchinski allegedly didn’t assess an 86-year-old patient who had chronic constructive pulmonary disease, didn’t document that he observed the patient becoming confused and experiencing shortness of breath, and didn’t contact the patient’s primary care provider (despite being asked to do so by two nursing assistants) or family. The patient died later that day, charges say.
Nebraska: In May 2019 the Nursing Commission charged licensed practical nurse Tracy R. Perkins (LP00047810) with unprofessional conduct. Perkins allegedly didn’t complete a required refresher course.

New Mexico: In May 2019 the Physical Therapy Board charged physical therapist Jerry Barry Watson (PT00005634) with unprofessional conduct. In 2019, charges say, Watson applied to activate his license, which expired in 1996. Watson’s Oregon and California physical therapist credentials were subject to discipline in 2013.

Note to Editors: Health care providers charged with unprofessional conduct have 20 days to respond to the Department of Health in writing. The case then enters the settlement process. If no disciplinary agreement can be reached, the case will go to a hearing.

The DOH website is your source for a healthy dose of information. Find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. Sign up for the DOH blog, Public Health Connection.

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