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**BEFORE THE
BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS
STATE OF OREGON**

In the Matter of) STIPULATED FINAL
ORDER

Kimberly Privitera, D.C.,)

Licensee.) Cases # 2013-2014, 2013-2027
and 2014-2001

The Board of Chiropractic Examiners (Board) is the state agency responsible for licensing, regulating and disciplining chiropractic physicians in the State of Oregon. Kimberly Privitera, D.C. (Licensee), is licensed by the Board to practice as a chiropractic physician in the State of Oregon.

1.

The Board received complaints against Licensee and her business partner, Dr. John Platt. The majorities of Licensee's patients are Latino and are receiving treatment due to motor vehicle accidents and using their PIP coverage. The Board investigated and attempted to interview Licensee, but she declined. The Board's investigation included other interviews, gathering of data and evidence and review of 31 patient files. On November 21, 2014 the Board issued a First Amended Notice of Proposed Disciplinary Action against Licensee. Licensee timely requested a hearing. The Board alleged in the Proposed Notice that Licensee's supervision and control of the clinic and treatment practices and policies constituted unprofessional conduct and gross negligence toward the patients. The Board hereby incorporates by reference the First Amended Proposed Notice of Discipline.

2.

Findings of Fact

If this matter were to proceed to hearing, the Board is of the opinion the outcome would confirm evidence of violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A) and (B)(q) and (4); danger to patient, gross negligence; ORS 684.150; OAR 811-035-0005(1) and (2)(a)-(b); welfare of patient is first priority; and OAR 811-035-0015: unprofessional conduct, providing unnecessary care; and OAR 811-015-0010(1) and (2); clinical justification; OAR 811-035-0015 (2): willful disregard or careless disregard for patient safety and charging fees for unnecessary services; OAR 811-030-0030(2)(a): x-ray violations; OAR 811-035-0015 (5), (7), and (12): charging for unnecessary services, billing for services not rendered, threatening/dishonest fee collection, perpetrating fraud on third party payors; OAR 811-035-0005(2)(a)-(b) and (A)-(C): informed consent; and OAR 811-015-0005(1)(a)-(b): records. License denies any wrongdoing and disagrees with the Board's

1 opinion as set forth above, but is nevertheless, willing to enter into the stipulation set forth
2 below.

3 Stipulations

4 7.

5 Therefore, pursuant to ORS 183.415(5) and ORS 684.100(9)(e) the parties agree to the
6 following:

- 7
8 1. The parties have agreed to enter this stipulated final order. Licensee does not
9 agree with the Board's findings of facts, however, agrees to the entering of this
10 final order. Licensee agrees that she is aware of her right to a hearing with her
11 attorney present to contest the charges and hereby waives that right and agrees to
12 entry of this order. The signature of this order also waives any right to appeal.
13 The parties wish to settle and resolve the above matter without further
14 proceedings.
15
- 16 2. Licensee shall be on probation for a two year period. Licensee is required to
17 arrange to have Affiliated Monitors conduct a compliance audit in regards to the
18 issues raised in the First Amended Proposed Notice of Discipline.
19
- 20 3. Licensee shall arrange for an office compliance audit by Affiliated Monitors
21 within 10 days of the order being signed. The compliance auditor designated by
22 Affiliated Monitors shall have demonstrated training and/or experience in
23 determining whether a health care practitioner or facility is in compliance with all
24 applicable state and federal laws and regulations that affect the provider in
25 preparing and implementing compliance plans or programs for such providers.
26
- 27 4. The compliance auditor shall conduct a compliance audit and assessment of
28 Licensee's chiropractic practice in all three clinic locations for the purpose of
29 determining whether Licensee's practice is in satisfactory compliance with all
30 applicable state laws, rules and regulations, including but not limited to the laws,
31 rules and regulations which pertain to the delivery of, documentation of, and/or
32 billing and payment for health care services. The review shall identify any
33 deficiencies in the administrative or clinical practices in the professional judgment
34 of the Compliance Monitor and shall provide a copy of each such report to
35 Licensee. This audit shall focus on the issues raised in the Amended Proposed
36 Order. Licensee has an obligation to keep the Board informed about the audit
37 results and authorizes the Board to receive information directly from the auditors.
38
- 39 5. The compliance auditor shall develop a written Compliance Plan for Licensee,
40 based on the results of the compliance audit and assessment, which identifies the
41 specific preventative and correction action which Licensee has taken or will take
42 in the future to ensure continuing satisfactory compliance with all applicable

1 federal and state laws, rules and regulations. The Compliance Plan shall be
2 released to the Board and Licensee shall execute all necessary releases.
3

4 The Compliance Plan shall address, at a minimum the following:
5

- 6 a. The establishment and implementation of written policies and
7 procedures for all aspects of Licensee's practice, including office
8 operations and administration, patient care, response to patient
9 complaints or concerns, clinical record-keeping, confidentiality of
10 patient records and access to such records, and billing and coding
11 procedures;
- 12 b. The exercise of due diligence with respect to hiring, training,
13 appropriate supervision and retention of present and/or prospective
14 employees, if any, and in the delegation of patient care functions to
15 such personnel if applicable;
- 16 c. The assurance that all present and/or prospective employees properly
17 carry out their responsibilities under the Compliance Program,
18 including the reporting of possible compliance problems to the
19 Compliance Monitor;
- 20 d. The performance of periodic internal reviews as outlined in the
21 above;
- 22 e. The establishment and implementation of adequate procedures for
23 investigating and facilitating appropriate corrective responses to
24 identified compliance problems and patient complaints and concerns.
- 25 f. Licensee agrees to work with the Compliance Monitor to establish a
26 written x-ray protocol for patients to assure that x-rays are within the
27 standard of care. Licensee agrees to follow the recommendations of
28 the Compliance Plan as to appropriateness of x-rays on patients and
29 to work with the peer mentor as to an appropriate x-ray protocol with
30 specific protocol developed for minors.
31
- 32 6. Licensee agrees to have file reviews by the Board for a period of one year with no
33 less than two file pulls per year and no more than four per year from the date of
34 this order, unless Affiliated Monitors deems it is recommended to accomplish the
35 Compliance Plan. Licensee agrees to allow the Board, or their representative to
36 request files from her and to provide those complete files to the Board when
37 requested in a timely manner. The files will be chosen by the Board or their
38 representative and will be reviewed by the Board and Licensee agrees to cooperate
39 in providing files. Failure to cooperate in providing records may be considered
40 cause for further discipline up to and including revocation.
41
- 42 7. In a timely manner, Licensee shall take any and all corrective actions which are
43 reasonably necessary to correct any and all deficiencies identified in any of the

1 administrative and clinical reviews conducted by the Compliance Monitor as
2 identified by the OBCE. Failure of Licensee to take corrective action requested by
3 the auditor, which may result in a failure to follow this order, may result in
4 discipline, up to and including revocation.
5

6 8. Licensee expressly agrees that she shall be responsible for all costs and expenses
7 associated with the Compliance Audit and Plan by Affiliated Monitors, and that
8 the Board shall bear no responsibility or liability for the costs of those services.
9 Failure to pay Affiliated Monitors may cause cessation of the plan and will result
10 in immediate license suspension until corrected. The first such Compliance
11 Report shall be due one hundred twenty days after the Compliance Plan is
12 developed by Affiliated Monitors. Licensee also will agree to allow the Board or
13 their representative to pull files from the clinic for the period of probation and
14 Licensee will cooperate in allowing the Board, or their representative to obtain
15 those files.
16

17 9. If Licensee has an issue with the standard of care that the monitor is expecting of
18 her in review of the cases, Licensee can address those issues directly to the Board
19 for review. However, if the Board feels that Licensee is unreasonably challenging
20 the monitors expectations and directions, the Board may review that as a failure to
21 follow the Stipulated Order.
22

23 10. Licensee agrees to take and pass the NBCE ethics examination within 120 days
24 this order becomes final. Licensee agrees to provide that passage information to
25 the Board.
26

27 11. Licensee agrees to provide the clinic forms and intake, including informed
28 consent, in the Spanish language.
29

30 12. Licensee agrees to complete 4 hours of continuing education on documentation
31 and patient chart taking and 8 hours of continuing education on clinical
32 justification. These hours are in addition to the amount required for licensure.
33

34 13. Licensee agrees to file a dismissal of Multnomah County Circuit Court Case
35 number 1401-00824 with prejudice, including a waiver for any costs or fees
36 awarded to either party.
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38 14. Failure to complete this final stipulated order with the terms so stated, may result
39 in further discipline, up to and including, revocation.
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7 **IT IS SO STIPULATED AND AGREED TO:**

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9 DATED this 5th day of May, 2015.
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Original signatures are on file in the
OBCE administrative office
By: Kimberly Privitera, DC

DATED this 6th day of May, 2015.

BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS
State of Oregon

Original signatures are on file in the OBCE
administrative office
By: Cassandra C. Skinner, J.D.
Executive Director

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**BEFORE THE
BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS
STATE OF OREGON**

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In the Matter of)	FIRST AMENDED
)	NOTICE OF PROPOSED
Kimberly Privitera, D.C.,)	DISCIPLINARY ACTION
)	(REVOCATION)
)	
Licensee.)	Cases # 2013-2014, 2013-2027
)	and 2014-2001

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The Board of Chiropractic Examiners (Board) is the state agency responsible for licensing, regulating and disciplining chiropractic physicians in the State of Oregon. Kimberly Privitera, D.C. (Licensee), is licensed by the Board to practice as a chiropractic physician in the State of Oregon. The Board proposes to discipline Licensee for the following reasons.

1.

The Board received complaints against Licensee and her business partner, Dr. John Platt. The majority of Licensee's patients are Latino and are receiving treatment due to motor vehicle accidents and using their PIP coverage. The Board investigated and attempted to interview Licensee, but she declined. The Board's investigation included other interviews, gathering of data and evidence and review of 31 patient files. The Board found the following:

2.

Introduction

Licensee worked with Dr. Platt in specifically dictating and directing clinic protocols and all aspects of patient medical management, billing, and the hiring, firing, and training of all associate doctors, staff, and personnel. These associate doctors were employees who would defer to Licensee even if something unprofessional was being requested for fear of losing their jobs. Licensee acted as the managing doctor in at least one of the clinics.

Licensee's supervision and control of the clinic and treatment practices and policies, in tandem with Dr. Platt, resulted in her putting revenue ahead of patient safety and welfare, constituting unprofessional conduct and gross negligence towards her patients.

The practices and protocols instituted and controlled by Licensee created an environment of negligence that compromised patient safety and wellbeing by providing medically unnecessary and unwarranted treatment. This included taking of unnecessary X-rays and failing to refer patients for a second opinion or for ancillary care. Licensee often failed to provide the patients with sufficient information for them to make informed consent following the PARQ format.

1
2 Patient files show evidence of overbilling, billing for services not rendered, lack of
3 clinical justification for the treatment provided, and/or gross negligence that put patients at risk
4 of harm, and a failure of Licensee to meet minimal competency standards of care for an Oregon
5 chiropractor. Licensee and Dr. Platt controlled treatment in a way that did not provide clinical
6 rationale for the level of care provided or the number of modalities/visits used with patients, and
7 promoted a pattern of overtreatment.

8
9 Patient X-ray data and patient files provided evidence of over-utilization and billing for
10 services not provided over a period of several years. Specifically, this involved billing for X-rays
11 that were never taken of specific patients.

12
13 Licensee served the Latino community and put generating revenue ahead of patient safety
14 and welfare, at the expense of her patients and the PIP system, constituting unprofessional
15 conduct and gross negligence. Some Latino patients would continue to come to the clinic for as
16 long as they were asked to, and according to associates, they were the patients who saw the most
17 visits.

18
19 The Board reviewed the files of two undercover patients, Patients 8 and 9, who presented
20 at the clinic for treatment for fictitious motor vehicle accidents. Each healthy undercover patient
21 went through at least two months of care without proper documentation of pain, proper
22 diagnosis, credible findings, or rationale for the frequency or duration of treatment or the
23 modalities administered. Exam findings, patient subjective complaints, and pain levels were
24 exaggerated or fabricated. These patients were repeatedly prompted and coerced to provide a
25 pain level, which, when not provided, was fabricated. Neither undercover patient had subjective
26 or objective findings from Licensee to justify their care.

27
28 Licensee's associate doctors failed to properly inform patients to obtain appropriate
29 informed consent for the treatment they received. In most cases, the patient merely signed a form
30 attesting that they had been properly informed without any input from the treating doctor as
31 required, and, in most cases, did not understand what they were signing. Parents were not
32 informed of potential negative consequences for treatment and submitting to X-rays for their
33 children. Licensee would override associates' attempts to delay an X-ray for a minor when the
34 parents were not available. Associates who spent extra time explaining proper contraindications
35 and report of findings were told by managing doctor Platt "don't waste time telling them about
36 anything but the loss of lordosis, the loss of curvature of the spine. They won't understand
37 anything you told them anyway."

38
39 Licensee failed to cooperate with the Board by refusing to appear for a Board interview.
40 Licensee further failed to cooperate by providing either a partial response, or no response at all,
41 to complaint notices and Board requests for information, and by generally and repeatedly
42 challenging the Board's authority to conduct investigations and provide oversight to the
43 profession.

3.
Findings of Fact

The Board found violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A) and (B)(q): danger to patient, gross negligence; OAR 811-035-0015(7): engaging in misleading fee collection; OAR 811-035-0005(1): welfare of patient is first priority; and OAR 811-035-0015: unprofessional conduct, as follows: As evidenced by the chart notes, prior interviews, and data collected, Dr. Platt and Licensee were listed as the attending physicians for nearly all patients reviewed, and one of their NPI's was used for billing, all checks from insurance were paid to one of them; usually Dr. Platt, and the care provided was implicitly or explicitly directed by both of them. Licensee, as managing doctor assisted with, and was directly responsible for how the clinic was operated, how patients were treated, how services were billed, and the actions of the associates under Licensee's direction.

Associate doctors were required to provide daily updates to Licensee and Dr. Platt, usually via internal (Woodstock) email accounts, providing a list of patients seen, and some general findings about the patients. Usually associates provided a percentage of improvement overall or specific regions, which, for example, a 90% rating would be 10% short of full recovery.

4.
The Board found violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A) and (B): unprofessional conduct, providing unnecessary care; and OAR 811-015-0010(1) and (2): clinical justification, as follows: The Board's review of patient records and interviews of two undercover patients indicated unnecessary treatment was provided to healthy individuals. This unnecessary treatment constituted incompetence and negligence as well as exposing the patients to unnecessary risk. The undercover patients were not provided wellness or maintenance treatment but were provided acute injury care for injuries that did not exist. Neither undercover patient presented with subjective findings, or had objective findings that were valid, reasonable, or worthy of medical treatment.

Overall, there seems to be little or no alteration of treatment plans (between patients, and in patient's individual plan) despite changes in patient subjective complaints (better or worse). Plans follow a standard 5 times in week one, followed by 4-6 weeks of care at 3-times/week, followed by 4-6 weeks of care at 2-times/week.

Licensee did not provide clinical rationale for the level of care provided or the number of modalities used with patients. Several of these patients were children whose files were reviewed. For example, Patient 1, a 3.5 year old, was treated 29 times in 11 weeks. Patient 2, a 2 week old infant, was treated 22 times over 10 weeks, and Patient 3, a 6 year old, received 36 visits over 16 weeks. All three children received manipulation and 1 unit of massage each visit. Patient 1's treatment plan called for care at a frequency of 2-3 times per week for 2-3 weeks, yet her chart notes indicate she was treated 29 times with manipulation and massage over 11 weeks. The chart

1 notes do not provide any reason for additional care. This child received two levels of spinal
2 manipulation and one unit of massage at each of the 29 visits. The Board found this level of
3 treatment excessive given the children's ages and the documented findings. There was
4 insufficient clinical justification for the amount of massage prescribed to these children in the
5 charts.

6
7 Another example of a minor patient whose treatments lacked justification is Patient 4, a 4
8 month old, who was treated 11 times in 6 weeks. Spinal palpation indicated subluxation levels
9 but the patient was pain free. Despite this finding, she was prescribed treatment 2-3 times per
10 week for 2-3 weeks followed by treatment 1-2 times per week for 1-2 weeks. Chart notes
11 document she received soft tissue massage. Based on chart notes and the patient's age, the Board
12 found this was excessive massage and adjustment frequency without documented need.

13
14 Patient 5, a 7 year old, was in a minor rear end collision and was treated 24 times over the
15 course of 17 weeks, despite the fact that by appointment on July 15, 2013, she reported no pain
16 and ranges of motion were normal, yet treatment continued for eight additional visits, each visit
17 including soft tissue massage and manipulation.

18
19 Other adult patients were also treated excessively. Specifically, as evidenced by the
20 following:

21
22 Patient 6 received extremity manipulation to his knees 21 times over the course of six
23 weeks for mild soft tissue strain and subluxation, without evidence of a basic knee regional
24 examination to rule in or out competing diagnosis. This constitutes excessive treatment without
25 sufficient clinical justification to warrant the amount and duration of treatment.

26
27 Patient 7 was treated 39 times in 13 weeks at which time the insurer ordered an
28 independent medical examination (IME). The IME doctor stated that care should have concluded
29 after four weeks. Patient 7 received protracted, high density treatment with poorly documented
30 clinical outcomes. There were no circumstances documented for his slow recovery as should
31 have been done, nor any referral for a second opinion noted in the file.

32
33 Doctors of Chiropractic who worked for Licensee indicated that treatment schedules were
34 based on Croft Guidelines and severity grades. However, the records provided no rationale for
35 treatment frequency such as complicating factors, prior injuries, advanced age, prior surgery, or
36 degenerative disc disease as recommended by Dr. Croft. There was no indication of what
37 regions, left versus right side, time spent, or other information about the modalities given. In
38 fact, while massage and electrical stimulation were used with almost every patient, there was no
39 indication within the notes of the duration or number of units provided or who provided the
40 therapy. Licensee inflated treatment frequency by considering most of the MVA patients to be
41 severely injured, even though patient records were more indicative of injuries that were mild to
42 moderate. According to Dr. Croft's severity grades for whiplash injuries, patient records indicate
43 that most patients were less severely injured than their diagnoses and treatment plans indicated.

1 Of the 31 files reviewed only four had diagnoses of moderate/severe or severe, three as moderate,
2 and 24 or 77% as mild/moderate strains/sprains. There were no diagnoses indicating
3 neurological involvement or neuropathy, which are the criteria for Grade III. The injury severity
4 recorded in patient files more closely corresponded with Dr. Croft's Grade I or Grade II. A
5 comparison of treatment recommendations with actual number of treatments recorded
6 demonstrates a high frequency of treatment provided by Licensee's clinic.
7

8 5.

9 The Board found violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A),(B) and (q): unprofessional
10 conduct, providing unnecessary care); OAR 811-035-0015 (2): willful disregard or careless
11 disregard for patient safety and charging fees for unnecessary services; and OAR 811-035-
12 0005(1): the health and welfare of the patient shall be the first priority, as follows: Under the
13 direct supervision of Licensee, clinicians compromised the health and welfare of patients by
14 providing unnecessary and unreasonable medical treatment. Treating doctors who work or who
15 worked for Licensee stated they did not always have access to the most recent chart notes. It was
16 common practice that the most recent treatment notes might not be available for the treating
17 doctor, including the most recent examination, until after the patient visit. These doctors
18 indicated that this practice compromised patient safety because they didn't know full patient
19 histories, contraindications or current concerns regarding patients when they provided treatment,
20 nor did they know what was being billed for their treatments, and typically were not consulted
21 about their chart notes or any confusion about treatment. The doctors stated that at times they did
22 not have enough information on a patient to treat the patients appropriately or safely and further
23 stated that they were typically "going in blind." One doctor noted it would be very difficult to
24 take up care of a patient without prior knowledge based on just the chart notes.
25

26 The associate doctors also noted that when the volume dropped in the clinics, treatment
27 for some patients jumped from two treatments per week to three, without an increase in pain or
28 symptoms. Licensee monitored staff through cameras mounted in the clinic with internet access.
29

30 The doctors also stated that there was a lack of continuity of care for the patients.
31 Doctors were not given their own assigned patients; patients would see a different doctor on
32 different dates. The doctors would often not know which of the three clinics they would be going
33 to that day until they got a text message that morning from Dr. Platt. This prevented them from
34 monitoring or fulfilling the patient's course of medical treatment, providing consistent care,
35 establishing a doctor-patient relationship, determining their recommendations for ending care,
36 referring to a specialist, reducing care, or providing specialized treatment. The doctors agreed
37 that the continuity and efficacy of care was directly compromised and that this negatively
38 affected the patient's well-being and faith in the care being provided. The doctors stated that
39 there was no formal method for passing information between doctors regarding patient issues and
40 concerns. Important changes in patient status, recommended tests, regional examinations and re-
41 examinations, and referrals were either missed or not communicated, to the detriment of patient
42 care and safety.
43

1 Associate doctors providing medical treatment attempting to decrease or recommending a
2 decrease in care or patient visits only found that more visits had been added to the schedule on
3 the computer, resulting in patients receiving additional and unnecessary care. The associate
4 doctors understood that they had no control over the treatment plans of the patient(s) they were
5 treating, to the point where they could not tell the patient when their next appointment was when
6 they asked, referring that patient to the front desk. This control over the associate doctors'
7 treatment of patients led to unnecessary and unreasonable medical care based on inaccurate
8 objective and subjective findings, and subjected the patients to unnecessary risk of injury, used
9 up limited PIP benefits that could have been used for legitimately beneficial treatment, violated
10 the patient's trust to act in a legal and ethical manner, and failed to effectively treat legitimate
11 injuries. The Board found this was negligence and below the standard of care for an Oregon
12 chiropractor.

13
14 One of the doctors who worked for Licensee said that doctors had "discretion but didn't
15 have authority" over patients' medical care. Licensee did not explain her clinical decision-
16 making to the associate doctors. They were told the clinic belonged to the Licensee and Dr. Platt,
17 and the doctors were the employee physicians. There was no latitude for differing opinions
18 regarding injury severity and treatment. Licensee would typically control the final approval to
19 end care. Releasing a patient was difficult for an associate doctor to do. Doctors stated that their
20 decision to end care was over ridden by Licensee on numerous occasions. When the associate
21 doctors would ask for Licensee to assist with ending their care, Licensee would not respond for
22 up to two weeks or more.

23
24 Patients 8 and 9, the two undercover patients, experienced substandard and grossly
25 negligent care in the two clinics they were treated in. They were under the care of 10 different
26 chiropractors receiving 22 and 21 treatments, respectively. These patients represented the typical
27 blue-collar Latino patients seen at Licensee's clinic. For Patients 8 and 9, the Board found that
28 Patient 9 was billed seven times for services not rendered. This patient reported not being
29 adjusted on several occasions, only being provided massage/soft tissue work, yet according to the
30 chart and billing, he was adjusted and billed for the adjustments. Dates of service ranged from
31 August 25, 2011, to October 17, 2011. The undercover patients stated that there were deficient,
32 errant, or a lack of communications with them in the clinic, by treating chiropractors,
33 Chiropractic Assistants, and other staff, putting them at potential risk for injury and not properly
34 informed about their care. For example, there were instances of failure to accommodate the
35 patient's language ability in the informed consent portion of treatment. There were instances of
36 CA staff who administered e-stimulation modality treatments without any substantive
37 communication with the patient. Both Patient 8 and 9 indicated that the placement of the pads
38 seemed to be random to them, changing position at times on visits for no apparent reason. There
39 was also a lack of supervision of the CA staff. On several visits with Patients 8 and 9, the CA
40 did not return to check on the patient until the time bell rang 10 minutes later during
41 e-stimulation sessions.

1 Patient 10 presented with several constitutional symptoms which were suggestive of a
2 concussion or trauma to the brain or brain stem. This patient's file lacked documentation of any
3 examination to address these symptoms, any reference to concern about the symptoms, or referral
4 for additional oversight.

5
6 Billing records for Patient 11 demonstrate use of 5 region manipulation (CPT code
7 98942), plus electrical stimulation (97014) and massage therapy (97124) on every one of this
8 patient's visits. The pain diagram, from the intake denotes only a lower lumbar region of chief
9 complaint. The Board felt that this treatment and billing for treatment was excessive and
10 unnecessary. Based on the lack of physical examination findings, there does not appear to be
11 sufficient justification to warrant 5 regions of manipulation, massage therapy and electrical
12 stimulus.

13
14 For Patient 7, one treatment was billed as CPT code 98942 for 4 regions. In this case,
15 the thoracic, lumbar, lumbosacral and SI joints are considered separate regions. This is
16 inappropriate as the 2013 Chiro Code Desk Book spinal regions are cervical, thoracic, lumbar,
17 sacral and SI joint. The lumbosacral joint is part of the lumbar spine and is not considered a
18 separate joint. This charting error was repeated on several other patients.

19
20 With Patient 8, when he received treatment and provided responses in Spanish,
21 information was incorrectly interpreted to the doctor that he had low back pain when he said he
22 had none. On two occasions in September 2011, Patient 8 told the doctors that he felt 95-100%
23 recovered, however this statement was not charted in the notes and did not make it into any
24 charts until a later date. Even with a report of that recovery, Patient 8 was treated for several
25 additional visits. Patient 9 was put at risk by clinicians and staff who treated him without seeing
26 any of his records. On one occasion, on 8/23/11, he was treated in the Hillsboro clinic when his
27 records had not been received. He was asked to give some information about his accident and
28 someone interpreted for him. Without asking where his pain was, staff put four electrical patches
29 on his back region. Since there were no records, the staff had no information about the
30 appropriate region for treatment and subjected this patient to risk of injury. Patient 9 received
31 care on 10/17/11 and came limping into the office stating that he had had another accident. He
32 was told by all staff that he would not be able to be treated for that unless he opened up another
33 claim. His low back was not examined and he was only treated for his neck. He was not offered
34 any other options for the low back pain. The chart notes for this date of service did not mention
35 any new accident or new pain. This patient should have been examined and assessed prior to
36 receiving care. To treat this patient knowing another injury occurred is grossly negligent and
37 outside of the standard of care of an Oregon chiropractor.

38
39 Patients 8 and 9 experienced treatment with non-Spanish speaking doctors without an
40 interpreter in the room on multiple occasions. The doctor conversed in English as if the patient
41 understood when these patients clearly presented that they did not understand English. On some
42 occasions when the doctor asked questions and did not get an answer, they called out for a CA
43 interpreter to come in. This happened with several doctors.

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3 Patient 13 was treated by Licensee on March 4, 2013. At that time she complained since
4 accident of bleeding and having abdominal pain, although she had just finished her menstrual
5 cycle. On the next visit, there is no evaluation or note about abdominal pain or bleeding. The
6 initial exam notes that issue, but it is dropped off the continued chart notes and remains the same
7 from exam to re-exam. This patient reported vaginal bleeding, abdominal pain and right
8 shoulder pain that were never addressed by Licensee. These issues were not properly addressed,
9 recorded or communicated or treated as this patient was passed from one clinician to another.

10
11 The minors referred to in paragraph 4 were treated on several occasions that were not
12 medically necessary and lacked clinical justification in the chart notes. Associate doctors
13 acknowledged to the Board that treatment for these children was more than it should have been.

14
15 These are examples of how Licensee and Dr. Platt place their revenue generating business
16 model ahead of the welfare and safety of their patients, constituting unprofessional conduct.
17 Licensee discouraged individualized treatment by her clinicians. The above conduct places
18 patients at risk in that they are getting care that is medically unnecessary and unreasonable and
19 being subjected to care that can cause further risk of serious injury, in violation of ORS
20 684.100(1)(f)(A) and (B), OAR 811-035-0015, and OAR 811-035-0005(1).

21
22 6.

23 The Board finds violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A) and (B): unprofessional conduct,
24 providing unnecessary treatment; OAR 811-030-0030(2)(a): x-ray; and OAR 811-035-0015(2):
25 charging fees for unnecessary services, where Licensee acted in an unprofessional manner, as
26 follows:

27
28 Licensee and Dr. Platt compromised patient safety by their policies and practices that
29 were to take a full spine X-ray series on all new patients who had been in a motor vehicle
30 accident. Licensee condoned the office policy to "light them up" referring to patients being X-
31 rayed. The Board finds that this constitutes over-exposure of patients to harmful X-rays. The
32 Board relies on the University of Western States Diagnostic Imaging Guidelines for
33 Musculoskeletal Complaints which found that absent pain, normal range of motion and absent of
34 neurological deficits, physical examination is reliable in this region (i.e. no need for X-rays).
35 When the patient is alert and asymptomatic, injury risk is low and radiographs provide no clinical
36 utility. This clinic policy to "light up" the patients is inappropriate and exposes patients
37 unnecessarily to radiation. Research indicates that even low doses of radiation can be harmful
38 and increase the risk of cancer.

39
40 Patients were referred for X-rays at the clinic when there were very limited or no
41 objective findings to support the need. Patient 5, a juvenile, was sent for further X-rays on
42 6/21/13 without clear explanation of need, and despite recently having had X-rays done at the ER
43 for the same incident. Patient 9's cervical region was X-rayed even though he only complained

1 of a mild headache which had resolved by the time he presented for care. Moreover, he did not
2 report neck pain so cervical X-rays were not indicated. Patient 13 reported no cervical pain in his
3 pain drawings at the initial intake. In fact, his treatment plan specifically indicated that no
4 cervical manipulation should be performed on this patient due to a recent prior cervical surgery.
5 However, an associate and Licensee still ordered and performed three cervical views on this
6 patient without indication of pain and knowing that this region would not be addressed in
7 treatment. Furthermore, the radiography order calls for "AP, Lateral, PA spot—lumbar spine."
8 The films show there was no collimation to visualize only the lumbar spine and no gonadal
9 shielding was provided for the patient.

10
11 Evidence was accumulated from over 200 claims from patients treated in Licensee's
12 clinic which showed that billing patterns involved performing the same set of X-ray studies using
13 the CPT billing codes of 72050, 72070 and 72110 on most patients who had received treatment.
14 In terms of X-rays, each patient was charged for 4 views with codes 72050 and 72110. The
15 X-rays were reviewed by a DACBR reviewer and his reports showed that he reviewed only 2-3
16 views not 4, which reveals that the correct codes should have been 72040 and 72100,
17 respectively. In information provided by Licensee and Dr. Platt, an admission of errors in X-ray
18 billing was provided, but they stated that to identify those specific patients and amounts in issue
19 would be too costly and he was owed money for other unpaid claims. The Board's review of
20 billing for X-rays showed a pattern of billing for services not rendered over a seven year period,
21 amounting to many hundreds of claims. An identical pattern of billing for services not rendered
22 was found in 332 claims paid from another source. The clinic was billing for 4 views (code
23 72050) and charging \$75 while the reviewer was interpreting 2-3 views (code 72040) and
24 charging \$35.

25
26 7.

27 The Board finds violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A): unprofessional conduct/danger to
28 patient and OAR 811-035-0015(2), (5), (7), and (12): charging for unnecessary services, billing
29 for services not rendered, threatening/dishonest fee collection, perpetrating fraud on third party
30 payors, as follows:

31
32 At the direction of Licensee, associate doctors were directed to treat patients
33 unnecessarily and take unnecessary X-rays. (Paragraph 6). When associate doctors would
34 attempt to decrease the care to a level they felt more appropriate, they would find more visits
35 added to the schedule.

36
37 Two undercover patients, Patients 8 and 9, were treated in excess of 20 times before they
38 were released from care. These patients had no true injury or pain and were healthy prior to
39 presenting at the clinic. Patient 9 stated that he was not adjusted on 8/25/2011, 8/30/2011,
40 9/7/2011, 9/9/2011, 10/10/2011, 10/12/201, and 10/17/2011, but records show billing for
41 adjustments on those dates. In addition, in relation to Patient 8 the notes are contradictory. In one
42 note by Licensee on 10/19/10 there are no notes of thoracic issues but a thoracic diagnosis was
43 added. Associate doctors stated that Licensee would "find" new issues, circling thoracic spine

1 subluxations and tonicity in mid T spine. However, with this patient, the diagnosis never made it
2 into the billing forms. It was only noted in the SOAP notes.

3
4 For DOS 12/14/11, records for Patient 8 included a no-show bill for \$450 for a
5 consultation with Dr. Tim Borman DO, orthopedic surgeon. The chart notes do not mention this
6 referral, nor was the patient informed of this appointment. There is no clinical justification for
7 this referral.

8
9 Both undercover patients noted that the soft tissue therapy provided by the chiropractors
10 and billed as 97124 in most cases fell short of the required time component of at least eight
11 minutes, in most cases being closer to five minutes, which does not meet required billing
12 standards for timed modality codes (see ChiroCode Deskbook 2011 for details).

13
14 8.

15 The Board finds violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A): danger to patient, and OAR 811-
16 035-0005(2)(a)-(b) and (A)-(C): informed consent. Licensee failed to get appropriate informed
17 consent from the patients for the treatment they received.

18
19 Licensee was not provided adequate consent to further treat Patients 8 and 9, the
20 undercover patients. The patients acted as if they only spoke Spanish and asked for assistance on
21 many intake forms that they filled out. While bilingual staff attempted to explain the forms, the
22 patients indicated that staff rushed through the forms and did not adequately explain them to
23 them. The associates did not explain about the treatment or contraindications. Had these
24 patients been solely Spanish speaking, they would not have been provided adequate information
25 to be able to provide consent for treatment. The patient files of patients 8 and 9 did not have any
26 informed consent to treat forms in the files, and files submitted for patients 10 and 6, both
27 minors, did not include the informed consent forms. Associates indicated that Licensee had
28 instructed staff to X-ray all children, asserting that X-rays were a part of a routine exam and can
29 be done without consent.

30
31 9.

32 The Board finds violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A): danger to patients, and OAR 811-
33 015-0005(1)(a)-(b): records. Records did not meet minimal standards in the 31 charts reviewed.

34
35 The new patient exam form left inadequate space to record patient specific information.
36 There is inadequate space for the patient range of motion in degrees, or important information as
37 to where the pain is located or the quality of the pain. This minimal charting supports the
38 statements of associates that the volume of the clinic and the direction of Licensee drove the
39 doctors to emphasize speed over any other concern or motivation. For example, on the ROM
40 section there is space for the patient's ROM in degrees and then the clinician can circle a number
41 0 to 3, to indicate whether there is pain, and a 'C/T/L' which indicates the region where the pain
42 is felt (cervical, thoracic, lumbar region). Again, there is no space for important information
43 such as *pain in the right lower cervical with left lateral flexion* or the quality of the pain

1 provoked by ROM. There simply is nowhere for the clinician to note any of this type of
2 information—only the most basic findings can be noted. The Assessment section is also lacking.
3 There are abbreviations referring to body regions which can be circled and categorized as mild,
4 moderate, marked, improved, flare-up. If the clinician has any impressions whatsoever about the
5 patient's condition, progress, or lack thereof, there is no place to record them.

6
7 The areas where the clinician can inscribe circles regarding tests performed and clinical
8 findings was very difficult to read as it was illegible when a clinician did write. This is important
9 as different doctors saw the patient day-to-day and week-to-week, so legibility and clarity was
10 important for continuity of and efficacious care. In some parts of the form, there were small
11 areas where the clinician could accompany the circle with commentary, but this was done rarely;
12 when it was done it was nearly always illegible.

13
14 The subjective portion of the chart notes rarely records the patient's own words. They
15 consist only of circles around abbreviations referring to body region. Patients 8 and 9 confirm
16 that they did not fill out this form, or they were instructed what to circle. The subjective sections
17 of daily notes (i.e. the "Daily Soap Note") consist only of circles around abbreviations referring
18 to a body region, or around "All Sx," to indicate either "Same, Mildly improved, Improved,
19 Much improved, or Flare-up." This conveys no subtlety and, in cases where many areas are
20 injured—as is the case in most auto crashes—there is no way for the reader to really know
21 specifics for any one area. There is evidence that the CAs or staff fill out and embellish pain
22 complaints, leading patients to admit to areas or levels of pain they do not have, or intentionally
23 misinterpreting what a patient says in Spanish to the clinician.

24
25 File reviews indicated two separate chart notes for Patient 9, dated 10/25/11, with
26 different doctors treating, with billing for one treatment on 10/25/11. This also occurred for
27 another patient reviewed on 03/05/13 where two associates both appear to have treated the
28 patient. This is either an example of very poor record keeping or poor continuity of care, if the
29 patient is inadvertently seen twice in one day.

30
31 Subjective records for Patient 10 were largely insufficient or deficient in describing the
32 patient's status, or in following key symptoms (enuresis, concentration pain level etc.),
33 particularly those not included on the clinic forms for "circling."

34
35 Recorded neurological symptoms are devoid of any real information pertinent to or
36 revealing of the patient's true medical condition. The chart only notes if the patient has
37 numbness tingling or weakness, and there is no room for recording precise locations and nature
38 of the pain, therefore, no basis for a differential diagnosis.

39
40 The objective portion of the chart contains only spinal levels that are circled and does not
41 include a space for the clinician to comment on radiological findings.

1 The assessment section is lacking in that there are abbreviations referring to the body
2 regions, but if the clinician has any impressions about the condition, there is no room to write
3 those.

4
5 The Plan portion or treatment rendered notation areas that are circled but do not leave the
6 clinician free to write any distinctive plan attributes for care.

7
8 Most notes that have a Home Exercise Program (HEP) circled but there are no notes as to
9 what exercises or home instruction was given. Evidence obtained by Patients 8 and 9 indicate
10 that patients are just given a document describing exercises, usually in English, without
11 explanation or doctor input. The patients were also not properly monitored for safe or effective
12 application or progress obtained through the home exercise program.

13
14 There is little alteration of each patient's treatment plans despite changes in patient
15 subjective complaints. Plans follow a standard 5 week program, followed by many weeks of care
16 3 times a week with many unspecified modalities. This looks like a "one size fits all" approach
17 which does not adequately consider the needs, health and well-being of the patients.

18
19 The signatures of the treating doctor are circled and not signed, so it is not clear who
20 made the circles or if the chart was modified in some way.

21
22 Accuracy of records is at least questionable given admissions by several clinicians that
23 they typically saw 35 or more patients a day, and that it was so busy they had to complete the
24 chart notes at the end of the day. One associate stated that in "no way" could he ethically or
25 accurately do 35 chart notes at the end of the day.

26
27 The daily SOAP notes do not provide another clinician with any sense of the patient's
28 condition, limitations, or progress. The nature of the examination and treatment forms, with
29 circles and pre-written statements, do not create a credible record. Since there is very little
30 handwriting, mostly circled items, or illegible writing, it is impossible to tell if another party
31 added findings, subjective symptoms or treatment information after the fact. Treatment plans do
32 not provide sufficient detail for another clinician to take over care of the patients.

33
34 Follow up exams are devoid of any treatment plan detail beyond treatment frequency and
35 duration of care until the follow up exam. For example, Patient 12 diagnosed with acute severe
36 strains to cervical, thoracic, lumbar, and sacrum and left shoulder received a treatment plan for
37 daily care for the first week, 3 times per week for the next 4-6 weeks with care expected to last
38 14-20 weeks. There is no indication of what areas received what treatment modalities, nor are
39 there any treatment goals for the various injuries. Licensee notes on 10/13/10 the patient is
40 "about the same and not much improvement with addition of light therapy" yet this patient
41 receives light treatment in the thoracic spine and his treatment plan is the same.

1 The Board finds violations of OAR 811-035-0015 (19), OAR 811-035-0015 (20): failure
2 to cooperate, ORS 684.150: power of board, ORS 684.100 (4): refusing an interview, and OAR
3 811-015-0006(3)(a) and (b): disclosure of records, as follows. On November 18, 2013, a letter
4 was sent to Licensee and Dr. Platt, requesting their appearance for an interview with the Board
5 on January 9, 2014, in relation to these complaints and open cases. The Board voted to issue a
6 Notice of Proposed Disciplinary Action and issued it on February 27, 2014. The Board hereby
7 incorporates by reference that Proposed Notice of Discipline issued on that date and attached
8 herein to this notice. Over a period of over 22 months starting in March 2012, Licensee also
9 failed to cooperate by failing to respond to complaint letters, failing to respond to requests for
10 information, partially responding to complaints, repeatedly challenging the grounds for
11 investigation and complaint, failing to provide certification of patient records, and repeatedly
12 missing deadlines for production of responses and documents.

13
14 11.

15 Conclusions of Law

16 The Board finds violations of ORS 684.100(1)(f)(A) and (B),(q), ORS 684.150, ORS
17 684.100 (4), OAR 811-010-0095, 811-015-0010(1) and (2), 811-015-0005(1)(a)-(b), OAR 811-
18 015-0006(3)(a) and (b), 811-015-0010(1) and (2), 811-035-0005(2)(a)-(b) and (A)-(C), and OAR
19 811-035-0015 (2). (5), (7), (12), (19), (20) as follows:

20
21 For the above reasons as stated in paragraphs 1-10, the Board finds that Licensee has
22 operated below the standard of care of an Oregon chiropractor in that she has put her
23 maximizing-revenue-generation business model ahead of her patients' safety and well-being.
24 She has directed a clinic enterprise that provided care to patients without clinical justification,
25 she has been unprofessional and grossly negligent in care of the patients as noted in the
26 allegations, has subjected patients to unnecessary risk, both overall and in over-exposure to X-ray
27 radiation without clinical justification, has billed for X-rays not taken of patients, has billed for
28 services not rendered, has failed to provide patients a continuity of care as required, has
29 inadequate records for the patients she has overseen treatment of, and has failed to cooperate
30 during the investigation of these matters.

31
32 12.

33 The Board determined that the egregiousness of unprofessional conduct and gross
34 negligence, as noted above, and the significant risk to patients, as depicted within paragraphs 1-
35 11 above, warrants the sanction of Revocation. The allegations as noted above are serious issues
36 and have represented conduct over the span of years, and as evidenced in the 31 files reviewed by
37 the Board and the statements of associates. The care is below the standard of care in Oregon of a
38 chiropractic physician. Licensee, as the managing physician on all the patients' files, and as
39 supervisor of the clinic, is responsible to deliver ethical and appropriate care to these patients and
40 has not done so.

41
42 13.

1 Licensee shall pay costs of this disciplinary proceeding, including investigative costs and
2 attorney fees pursuant to ORS 684.100(9)(g). Pursuant to ORS 293.241 the Board will refer
3 amounts owed to collection if it has received no payment on the account for more than 90 days.
4 Thereafter, the Board will consider assignment to the Oregon Department of Revenue or a
5 private collection agency for collection. Final fees may include additional percentages for any
6 increase in the amount you owe due to the accrual of interest on the unpaid principal amount.

7
8 14.

9 Licensee has the right, if Licensee requests, to have a formal contested case hearing
10 before the OBCE or the Administrative Law Judge to contest the matter set out above. At the
11 hearing, Licensee may be represented by an attorney and subpoena and cross examine witnesses.
12 That request for hearing must be made in writing to the OBCE, must be received by the OBCE
13 within 30 days from the mailing of this notice (or if not mailed, the date of personal service), and
14 must be accompanied by a written answer to the charges contained in this notice.

15
16 15.

17 If Licensee requests a hearing, before commencement of that hearing, Licensee will be
18 given information on the procedures, rights of representation and other rights of the parties
19 relating to the conduct of the hearing as required under ORS 183.413-415.

20
21 16.

22 If Licensee fails to request a hearing within 30 days, or fails to appear as scheduled at the
23 hearing, the OBCE may issue a final order by default and impose the above sanctions against
24 Licensee. Upon default order of the Board or failure to appear, the contents of the Board's file
25 regarding the subject of this automatically become part of the evidentiary record of this
26 disciplinary action upon default for the purpose of proving a prima facie case.


27
28 17.

29 **NOTICE TO ACTIVE DUTY SERVICEMEMBERS:**

30 Active duty service members have a right to stay these proceedings under the federal
31 Service members Civil Relief Act. For more information contact the Oregon State Bar at 800-
32 452-8260, the Oregon Military Department at 800-452-7500 or the nearest United States Armed
33 Forces Legal Assistance Office through <http://legalassistance.law.af.mil>.

34
35 DATED this 21st day of November, 2014.

36
37 BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS
38 State of Oregon

39
40
41 By: 
42 Cassandra C. Skinner, J.D.
43 Executive Director

Patient Confidential Key

Not a Public Document

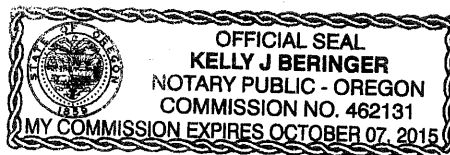
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3 County of Marion) Case # 2013-2014, 2013-2027, 2014-2001

4)
5 I, Cassandra C. Skinner, being first duly sworn, state that I am the
6 Executive Director of the Board of Chiropractic Examiners of the State of
7 Oregon, and as such, am authorized to verify pleadings in this case: and that
8 the foregoing Notice is true to the best of my knowledge as I verily believe.
9
10

11 Cassandra C. Skinner, J.D.
12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
13 OREGON BOARD OF CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS
14
15
16
17

18 SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me
19 this 21st day of November, 2014.
20

21
22 NOTARY PUBLIC FOR OREGON
23 My Commission Expires: 10/7/2015
24
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Page 17 - Notice of Proposed Disciplinary Action (Kimberly Privitera, D.C.)