

BEFORE THE
NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

In re:)
)
Susan Lovejoy Roque, M.D.,) CONSENT ORDER
)
Respondent.)

This matter is before the North Carolina Medical Board ("Board") on information received relating to Susan Lovejoy Roque, M.D. ("Dr. Roque"). Dr. Roque admits and the Board finds and concludes that:

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Board is a body duly organized under the laws of North Carolina and is the proper party to bring this proceeding under the authority granted it in Article 1 of Chapter 90 of the North Carolina General Statutes and the rules and regulations promulgated thereto.

FINDINGS OF FACT

On March 25, 1995, the Board issued a license to Dr. Roque to practice medicine, license number 9500440.

During the times relevant herein, Dr. Roque practiced medicine in Statesville, North Carolina.

On June 6, 2012, Patient A presented to the Lake Norman Regional Medical Center ("LNRMC") emergency department in need

of obstetrical services. Dr. Roque was the obstetrician on-call. A hospital nurse contacted Dr. Roque regarding Patient A.

At the time she was contacted, Dr. Roque was at her son's high school graduation and was farther than a half hour away from the hospital while on-call. LNRMC had to contact another physician, who was not on-call, to attend to Patient A. Dr. Roque violated hospital policy by being farther than a half hour away from the hospital while she was on-call.

Patient B was an unassigned nineteen-year-old first time mother who presented to LNRMC in labor during a time while Dr. Roque was on-call. When Patient B presented to the hospital, Dr. Roque was contacted by a labor and delivery nurse. The first contact was approximately four hours before Patient B gave birth. Dr. Roque decided to manage the initial stages of Patient B's labor by telephone. This management included the ordering of an epidural for Patient B. Dr. Roque asked to be called when the patient was at +2 station. A labor and delivery nurse called Dr. Roque at 0250, when the patient was at +2 station. Dr. Roque was at home, less than half and hour from the hospital, but Patient B delivered her child eleven minutes later without Dr. Roque being present. The birth was uneventful, and Dr. Roque arrived shortly thereafter.

Although it is not uncommon for patients to deliver before obstetricians arrive, it may have been more prudent for Dr. Roque to have come to the hospital earlier than she did.

Patient C presented to the hospital in labor. Patient C's contractions were every two to three minutes. Dr. Roque's nurse midwife ordered, Patient C to be administered misoprostol to augment labor. However, misoprostol is contraindicated if a patient is in active labor. Misoprostol is only indicated for labor induction prior to the ripening of the cervix. If a patient is in active labor with a ripe cervix, as Patient C was, use of misoprostol could cause hyperstimulation of the uterus resulting in uterine rupture. The use of misoprostol under these circumstances unnecessarily increased the risk of birth injury or death. Although Dr. Roque was not involved directly in Patient C's care, she, as the supervising obstetrician, is responsible for the care provided by any nurse midwife under her supervision.

On March 25, 2013, Dr. Roque was issued a citation for marijuana possession by the Statesville Police Department. As a result of this information, Dr. Roque presented to the North Carolina Physicians Health Program ("NCPHP") for an assessment. NCPHP performed a nail test on Dr. Roque to determine whether she had smoked marijuana in the past several months. The

results of that test were positive. Dr. Roque was then referred for a comprehensive drug abuse assessment. Dr. Roque underwent the assessment and was diagnosed with a substance abuse problem and recommended inpatient treatment.

On August 25, 2013, Dr. Roque agreed to not practice medicine until cleared by both the Board and the NCPHP.

Dr. Roque has successfully completed inpatient treatment for her substance abuse issues and the NCPHP advocates for her return to the practice of medicine.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Dr. Roque's conduct with regard to Patients A through C, as described above, constitutes unprofessional conduct within the meaning of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-14(a)(6) which is grounds for the Board to annul, suspend, revoke, condition or limit Dr. Roque's license to practice medicine and surgery or to deny any application she may make in the future.

Dr. Roque admits that when abusing substances she is unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of excessive use of drugs within the meaning of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-14(a)(5), and grounds exist under that section of the North Carolina General Statutes for the Board to annul, suspend, revoke or limit her license or to deny any

application she might make in the future or have pending for a license.

PROCEDURAL STIPULATIONS

Dr. Roque acknowledges and agrees that the Board has jurisdiction over her and over the subject matter of this case.

Dr. Roque knowingly waives her right to any hearing and to any judicial review or appeal in this case.

Dr. Roque acknowledges that she has read and understands this Consent Order and enters into it voluntarily.

The Board has determined it to be in the public interest to resolve this matter as set forth below.

Dr. Roque would like to resolve this matter without the need for more formal proceedings.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, with Dr. Roque's consent, it is ORDERED that:

1. Dr. Roque is hereby SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY. This suspension, however, is hereby IMMEDIATELY STAYED upon the following terms and conditions.

2. Dr. Roque shall maintain her current contract with NCPHP and abide by its terms, including the timely payment of any fees required by NCPHP.

3. Unless lawfully prescribed for her by someone other than herself, Dr. Roque shall refrain from the use or possession of alcohol and all other mind- or mood-altering substances and all controlled substances including but not limited to, sedatives, stimulants, and pain medication.

4. Dr. Roque shall notify the Board in writing within ten (10) days of her use of such medication or alcohol. This notice shall include, but shall not be limited to, identification of the prescribing physician and of the pharmacy filling the prescription.

5. Upon request by the Board, Dr. Roque shall supply urine, blood, hair, or any other bodily fluid or tissue sample the Board might reasonably require for the purposes of analysis to determine if she has consumed any of the substances mentioned above.

6. Dr. Roque's August 25, 2013 non-practice agreement is hereby immediately DISSOLVED.

7. Dr. Roque shall obey all laws. Likewise, Dr. Roque shall obey all rules and regulations involving the practice of medicine.

8. Dr. Roque shall notify the Board in writing of any change in her residence and practice addresses within ten (10) days of the change.

9. Dr. Roque shall meet with the Board or members of the Board for an investigative interview at such times as requested by the Board.

10. If Dr. Roque fails to comply with any of the terms of this Consent Order, that failure shall constitute unprofessional conduct within the meaning of N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-14(a)(6) and shall be grounds, after any required notice and hearing, for the Board to annul, revoke, suspend or limit his license or to deny any application she might then have pending or might make in the future for a license.

11. This Consent Order shall take effect immediately upon its execution by both Dr. Roque and the Board and it shall continue in effect until specifically ordered otherwise by the Board.

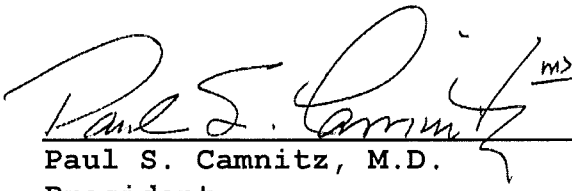
12. Dr. Roque hereby waives any requirement under any law or rule that this Consent Order be served on her.

13. Upon execution by Dr. Roque and the Board, this Consent Order shall become a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Statutes and shall be subject to public inspection and dissemination pursuant to the

provisions thereof. Additionally, it will be reported to persons, entities, agencies and clearinghouses as required and permitted by law.

By Order of the North Carolina Medical Board this the 12th day of December, 2013.

NORTH CAROLINA MEDICAL BOARD

By: 
Paul S. Camnitz, M.D.
President

Consented to this the 12th day of December, 2013.

Susan Lovejoy Roque M.D.
Susan Lovejoy Roque, M.D.

State of NORTH CAROLINA

County of WAKE

I, WANDA A. LONG, a Notary Public for the above named County and State, do hereby certify that Susan Lovejoy Roque, M.D. personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument.

Witness my hand and official seal

this the 12th day of DECEMBER, 2013.

Wanda A. Long
Notary Public

(SEAL)

My Commission Expires: 4-18-2015