February 27, 2024

Via Attorney of Record

Rano Thomas Mathew, M.D.
Carolina Dunes Hospital
2050 Mercantile Drive NE
Leland, NC 28451

Dear Dr. Mathew:

The North Carolina Medical Board ("Board") has concluded its investigation related to concerns of substandard care and inappropriate supervision of an advanced practice provider. It is the Board's decision not to commence formal proceedings against your license at this time. However, the Board voted to issue you this public letter of concern. The Board does not consider a public letter of concern to be a disciplinary action or a limitation or restriction on your license.

In August 2022, the Board received a complaint regarding concerns related to the administration of testosterone to patients at a practice owned and operated by you. Testosterone is a Schedule III/IIIN controlled substance as defined by N.C. Gen Stat. § 90-91 and 21 C.F.R. § 1308.13. During the Board's investigation into these concerns, it was discovered, and you admitted, that you had received bioidentical hormone replacement therapy through testosterone pellet insertion performed by a physician assistant ("Provider A") in your practice whom you supervised. This prescribing of a Schedule III/IIIN controlled substance by Provider A violated 21 NCAC 32S .0212, which in relevant part states: "A physician assistant shall not prescribe controlled substances, as defined by the State and federal controlled substances acts, for: (b) the use of the physician assistant's supervising physician." Further, this was in derogation of the Board's Position Statement entitled "9.1.1: Physician Supervision of Other Licensed Health Care Professionals." The Board recognizes that you addressed this issue when it was brought to your attention.

During the Board's investigation, the Board also had the care of Patient A and Patient B reviewed by an independent medical expert. Based on this expert review, the Board has concerns about the care provided to Patient A and about the medical records of Patient B. While the care of Patient A and Patient B was predominately performed by Provider A, you were the supervising physician for this advanced practice provider and have a responsibility to supervise Provider A and other healthcare professionals you supervise to assure their care is appropriate.

In regard to Patient A, the reviewing expert expressed concern that the dosage of testosterone provided to Patient A exceeded recommended dosing, and thus, in the expert's opinion failed to conform to the standards of acceptable and prevailing medical practice in North Carolina. The Board recognizes that there can be a difference of opinion among healthcare providers concerning the calculation of testosterone dosage as part of hormone replacement therapy. However, the reviewing expert expressed concern that Provider A relied upon dosing

calculations that were more aggressive than the typical dosing recommendations for testosterone replacement therapy in North Carolina.

The electronic medical records for Patient B appear to have the history, physical exam, diagnoses, and treatment plan duplicated from note to note with addenda added to address clinically significant changes. This approach can make the records difficult to follow and may increase the likelihood of inaccuracies. The Board's expert reviewer concluded that in the field of Integrative Medicine, for a patient like Patient B, the standards of acceptable and prevailing medical practice requires an accurate and current list of complaints, assessments, and treatment plans. The Board directs your attention to its Position Statement entitled "3.2.1: Medical Records - Documentation, Electronic Health Records, Access, and Retention," which details the Board's position about the use of templates in electronic medical records.

You have agreed that within six (6) months from the date of this letter, you will complete eight (8) hours of a Category I continuing medical education ("CME") concerning the subject of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) approved in advance by the Board's Office of the Medical Director.

This letter is not a disciplinary action and does not constitute a limitation or restriction on your license or on your ability to supervise advanced practice providers. However, the Board urges you to take steps to ensure the conduct giving rise to the concerns does not happen again. Otherwise, the Board may take additional action against your license to practice medicine. If that happens, this letter may be reviewed in determining the appropriate action.

This letter is a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Statutes and is subject to public inspection and dissemination as required by that law. It will be reported to the Federation of State Medical Boards.

Sincerely,

Christine Khandelwal, DO

Christine M. Khandelwal, D.O., MHPE
President

CMK/GAM/adw

Consent and Waiver

I, Rano Thomas Mathew, M.D., would like to resolve this matter without the need for more formal proceedings and consent to the Board's issuance of this public letter of concern in resolution of the above matter. I hereby waive any requirement under any law or rule that this public letter of concern be served on me.

I agree that within six (6) months from the date of this letter, I shall complete eight (8) hours of a Category I continuing medical education ("CME") concerning the subject of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). I will ensure that this CME is approved in advance by the Board's Office of the Medical Director by contacting the Board's Monitoring Coordinator at boardmonitoring@ncmedboard.org to facilitate course approval. I further agree to submit evidence of completion of the above required CME to the Board's Monitoring Coordinator within five (5) days of completing the course.

If I fail to complete the above requirement, I understand that the Board may take disciplinary or other action against my North Carolina license.

Consented to this the 23rd day of February, 2024.

Rano Thomas Mathew, M.D.

Rano Thomas Mathew, M.D.

State of North Carolina

County of New Hanover

I, Tiffany N Norman, do hereby certify that Rano Thomas Mathew, 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 23 day of February, 2024

Tiffany N Norman

Notary Public

TIFFANY N NORMAN
Notary Public
Hanover Co., North Carolina
My Commission Expires Feb.. 5, 2027

(Official Seal)

My Commission Expires: 2-5-2027