

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of	§	AGREED ORDER
Registered Nurse License Number 745965	§	
issued to SHARON CARLENE EPPERSON	§	
	§	

On this day the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, considered the matter of SHARON CARLENE EPPERSON, Registered Nurse License Number 745965, hereinafter referred to as Respondent.

Information received by the Board produced evidence that Respondent may be subject to discipline pursuant to Section 301.452(b)(10)&(13), Texas Occupations Code.

Respondent waived notice and hearing and agreed to the entry of this Agreed Order approved by Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN, Executive Director, on July 22, 2020.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Prior to the institution of Agency proceedings, notice of the matters specified below in these Findings of Fact was served on Respondent and Respondent was given an opportunity to show compliance with all requirements of the law for retention of the license(s).
2. Respondent waived notice and hearing, and agreed to the entry of this Agreed Order.
3. Respondent's license to practice as a professional nurse in the State of Texas is in current status.
4. Respondent received an Associate Degree in Nursing from Victoria College, Victoria, Texas, on May 11, 2007. Respondent was licensed to practice professional nursing in the State of Texas on August 14, 2007.
5. Respondent's nursing employment history includes:

8/2007 – 8/2012	Unknown	
9/2012 – 7/2013	Corrections Nurse	Corizon-Lane Co. Jail Eugene, Oregon

Respondent's nursing employment history continued:

7/2013 – 9/2016	RN Case Manger	State Supported Living Center Carlsbad, Texas
9/2016 – Unknown	Clinical Nurse Liaison	Superior Health Plan El Paso, Texas
2/2017 – 11/2019	Registered Nurse	Shannon Clinic at Tom Green County Jail San Angelo, Texas
12/2019 – Present	Unknown	

6. At the time of the initial incident, Respondent was employed as a Registered Nurse with Shannon Clinic at Tom Green County Jail, San Angelo, Texas, and had been in that position for two (2) years and eight (8) months.
7. On or about October 8, 2019, while employed as a Registered Nurse by Shannon Clinic, San Angelo, Texas, at Tom Green County Jail, Respondent added Celexa to the medication list of Patient JRM without a valid physician's order. Instead, Respondent inaccurately documented the patient had a current order from Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) for Celexa. The TDCJ prescription had not been filled in the previous three (3) months, therefore, the criteria for Standing Order for Medication Continuity was not met. Respondent's conduct was likely to injure the patient from adverse effects of Celexa administered without supervision of a physician.
8. On or about October 28, 2019, while employed as a Registered Nurse by Shannon Clinic, San Angelo, Texas, at Tom Green County Jail, Respondent failed to obtain proof of a valid, current insulin prescription for Patient NCK prior to requesting a provider's order to continue the medication. Instead Respondent based the prescription information on a verbal report from the patient. Respondent's conduct was likely to injure the patient from clinical decisions based on unverified prescription history.
9. On or about November 2, 2019, while employed as a Registered Nurse by Shannon Clinic, San Angelo, Texas, at Tom Green County Jail, Respondent falsely documented that Patient VL had taken Lithium two (2) weeks prior to her arrival to the facility. In addition, Respondent added Lithium to patient's medication list under the auspices of the Standing Order Medication Continuity protocol without verification of current active prescription and without a provider's order. Patient VL had not filled her prescription for Lithium in the previous three (3) months, therefore, the criteria for Standing Order Medication Continuity was not met. Respondent's conduct was likely to injure the patient from adverse effects of Lithium administered without supervision of a physician.

10. In response to the incident in Finding of Fact Number Seven (7), Respondent states that she did not inaccurately document the patient's prescription. In response to the incident in Finding of Fact Number Eight (8), Respondent states that she appropriately contacted and provided the Nurse Practitioner with the patient's sliding scale. Further, patient was provided the sliding scale as written by the Nurse Practitioner. Patient was provided the appropriate and necessary medication. In response to Finding of Fact Number Nine (9), Respondent denies this allegation. Respondent states that the newly filled prescription bottle was a current order.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Pursuant to Texas Occupations Code, Sections 301.451-301.555, the Board has jurisdiction over this matter.
2. Notice was served in accordance with law.
3. The evidence received is sufficient to prove violation(s) of 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §217.11(1)(A),(1)(B),(1)(D),(1)(M)&(1)(P) and 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §217.12(1)(A),(1)(B),(1)(C)&(4).
4. The evidence received is sufficient cause pursuant to Section 301.452(b)(10)&(13), Texas Occupations Code, to take disciplinary action against Registered Nurse License Number 745965, heretofore issued to SHARON CARLENE EPPERSON.
5. Pursuant to Section 301.463(d), Texas Occupations Code, this Agreed Order is a settlement agreement under Rule 408, Texas Rules of Evidence, in civil or criminal litigation.

TERMS OF ORDER

I. SANCTION AND APPLICABILITY

IT IS THEREFORE AGREED and ORDERED that RESPONDENT SHALL receive the sanction of **REPRIMAND WITH STIPULATIONS** in accordance with the terms of this Order.

- A. This Order SHALL apply to any and all future licenses issued to RESPONDENT to practice nursing in the State of Texas.
- B. This Order SHALL be applicable to RESPONDENT'S nurse licensure compact privileges, if any, to practice nursing in the State of Texas.

- C. As a result of this Order, RESPONDENT'S license(s) will be designated "single state" as applicable and RESPONDENT may not work outside the State of Texas in another nurse licensure compact party state using a Texas compact license.

II. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

While under the terms of this Order, RESPONDENT agrees to comply in all respects with the Nursing Practice Act, Texas Occupations Code, §§301.001 *et seq.*, the Rules and Regulations Relating to Nursing Education, Licensure and Practice, 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §§211.1 *et seq.*, and this Agreed Order.

III. UNDERSTANDING BOARD ORDERS

Within thirty (30) days of entry of this Order, RESPONDENT must successfully complete the Board's online course, "Understanding Board Orders", which can be accessed on the Board's website from the "Discipline & Complaints" drop-down menu or directly at: <http://www.bon.texas.gov/UnderstandingBoardOrders/index.asp>. Upon successful completion, RESPONDENT must submit the course verification at the conclusion of the course, which automatically transmits the verification to the Board.

IV. REMEDIAL EDUCATION COURSE(S)

In addition to any continuing education requirements the Board may require for licensure renewal, RESPONDENT SHALL successfully complete the following remedial education course(s) **within one (1) year of the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise specifically indicated:**

- A. **A Board-approved course in Texas nursing jurisprudence and ethics** that shall be a minimum of six (6) hours in length. The course's content shall include the Nursing Practice Act, standards of practice, documentation of care, principles of nursing ethics, confidentiality, professional boundaries, and the Board's Disciplinary Sanction Policies regarding: Sexual Misconduct; Fraud, Theft, and Deception; Nurses with Substance Abuse, Misuse, Substance Dependency, or

other Substance Use Disorder; and Lying and Falsification. Courses focusing on malpractice issues will not be accepted. Home study and video programs will not be approved.

- B. **A Board-approved course in medication administration** with a didactic portion of not less than six (6) hours and a clinical component of not less than twenty-four (24) hours. Both the didactic and clinical components must be provided by the same Registered Nurse. The course's content shall include: a review of proper administration procedures for all standard routes; computation of drug dosages; the six (6) rights of medication administration; factors influencing the choice of route; and possible adverse effects resulting from improper administration. The clinical component SHALL focus on tasks of medication administration only. The course description shall indicate goals and objectives for the course, resources to be utilized, and the methods to be used to determine successful completion of the course. Successful completion of this course requires RESPONDENT to successfully complete both the didactic and clinical portions of the course.
- C. **The course "Sharpening Critical Thinking Skills,"** a 3.6 contact hour online program provided by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Learning Extension.

In order to receive credit for completion of this/these course(s), RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE the instructor to submit a Verification of Course Completion form or SHALL submit the continuing education certificate, as applicable, to the attention of Monitoring at the Board's office. RESPONDENT SHALL first obtain Board approval of any course prior to enrollment if the course is not being offered by a pre-approved provider. *Information about Board-approved courses and Verification of Course Completion forms are available from the Board at www.bon.texas.gov/compliance.*

V. **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

In order to complete the terms of this Order, RESPONDENT must work as a nurse in the State of Texas, providing direct patient care in a clinical healthcare setting, for a minimum of sixty-four (64) hours per month for eight (8) quarterly periods [two (2) years] of employment. This requirement will not be satisfied until eight (8) quarterly periods of employment as a nurse have elapsed. Periods of unemployment or of employment that do not require the use of a registered nurse (RN) or a vocational nurse (LVN) license, as

appropriate, will not apply to this period and will not count towards completion of this requirement.

- A. **Notifying Present and Future Employers:** RESPONDENT SHALL notify each present employer in nursing and present each with a complete copy of this Order, including all attachments, if any, within five (5) days of receipt of this Order. While under the terms of this Order, RESPONDENT SHALL notify all future employers in nursing and present each with a complete copy of this Order, including all attachments, if any, prior to accepting an offer of employment.
- B. **Notification of Employment Forms:** RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each present employer in nursing to submit the Board's "Notification of Employment" form to the Board's office within ten (10) days of receipt of this Order. RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each future employer to submit the Board's "Notification of Employment form" to the Board's office within five (5) days of employment as a nurse.
- C. **Direct Supervision:** For the first year [four (4) quarters] of employment as a Nurse under this order, RESPONDENT SHALL be directly supervised by a Registered Nurse, if licensed as a Registered Nurse, or by a Licensed Vocational Nurse or a Registered Nurse, if licensed as a Licensed Vocational Nurse. Direct supervision requires another nurse, as applicable, to be working on the same unit as RESPONDENT and immediately available to provide assistance and intervention. RESPONDENT SHALL work only on regularly assigned, identified and predetermined unit(s). RESPONDENT SHALL NOT be employed by a nurse registry, temporary nurse employment agency, hospice, or home health agency. RESPONDENT SHALL NOT be self-employed or contract for services. Multiple employers are prohibited.
- D. **Indirect Supervision:** For the remainder of the stipulation/probation period, RESPONDENT SHALL be supervised by a Registered Nurse, if licensed as a Registered Nurse, or by a Licensed Vocational Nurse or a Registered Nurse, if licensed as a Licensed Vocational Nurse, who is on the premises. The supervising nurse is not required to be on the same unit or ward as RESPONDENT, but should be on the facility grounds and readily available to provide assistance and intervention if necessary. The supervising nurse shall have a minimum of two (2) years of experience in the same or similar practice setting to which the RESPONDENT is currently working. RESPONDENT SHALL work only regularly assigned, identified and predetermined unit(s). RESPONDENT SHALL NOT be employed by a nurse registry, temporary nurse employment agency, hospice, or home health agency. RESPONDENT SHALL NOT be self-employed or contract for services. Multiple employers are prohibited.

- E. **Nursing Performance Evaluations:** RESPONDENT SHALL CAUSE each employer to submit, on forms provided to the RESPONDENT by the Board, periodic reports as to RESPONDENT'S capability to practice nursing. These reports shall be completed by the individual who supervises the RESPONDENT and these reports shall be submitted by the supervising individual to the office of the Board at the end of each three (3) month quarterly period for eight (8) quarters [two (2) years] of employment as a nurse.

VI. RESTORATION OF UNENCUMBERED LICENSE(S)

Upon full compliance with the terms of this Agreed Order, all encumbrances will be removed from RESPONDENT'S license(s) and/or privilege(s) to practice nursing in the State of Texas and, subject to meeting all existing eligibility requirements in Texas Occupations Code Chapter 304, Article III, RESPONDENT may be eligible for nurse licensure compact privileges, if any.

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RESPONDENT'S CERTIFICATION

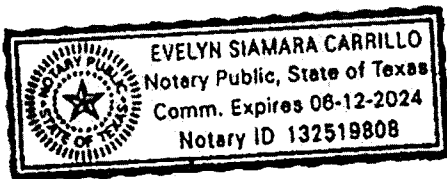
I understand that I have the right to legal counsel prior to signing this Order. I have reviewed this Order. I neither admit nor deny the violation(s) alleged herein. By my signature on this Order, I agree to the entry of this Order, and any conditions of said Order, to avoid further disciplinary action in this matter. I waive judicial review of this Order. I understand that this Order is subject to ratification by the Texas Board of Nursing and a copy of this Order will be mailed to me once the Order becomes effective. I understand that if I fail to comply with all terms and conditions of this Order, I will be subject to investigation and disciplinary sanction, including possible revocation of my license(s) and/or privileges to practice nursing in the State of Texas, as a consequence of my noncompliance.

Signed this 24th day of March, 2021.

Sharon Carlene Epperson
SHARON CARLENE EPPERSON, RESPONDENT

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 24 day of March, 2021.

SEAL



Evelyn Carrillo

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

Approved as to form and substance.

Leanna Marchand
Leanna Marchand, Attorney for Respondent

Signed this 31st day of April, 2021.

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, the Texas Board of Nursing does hereby ratify and adopt the Agreed Order that was signed on the 24th day of March, 2021, by SHARON CARLENE EPPERSON, Registered Nurse License Number 745965, and said Agreed Order is final.

Effective this 11th day of May, 2021.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Katherine A. Thomas".

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director on behalf
of said Board