



LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

630 Camp Street, New Orleans, LA 70130
Phone: (504) 568-6820; Fax: (504) 324-0994
Web site: <http://www.lsbme.la.gov>

BEFORE THE LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

No. 2021-I-1293

IN THE MATTER OF:

MEREDITH SHEAD GREMBOWICZ, M.D.

*(Credential No. MD.023669),
Respondent*

CONSENT ORDER FOR REPRIMAND

The above-entitled proceeding was docketed for investigation by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") following receipt of information relating to Meredith Shead Grembowicz, M.D. ("Dr. Grembowicz"), a physician holding an unrestricted license to practice medicine in the State of Louisiana as evidenced by Credential No. MD.023669. At all times material to the facts and matters alleged herein, Dr. Grembowicz was engaged in the practice of pediatrics in and around St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana.

The Board initiated the present review upon the receipt of apparently reliable information in the form of filings from a lawsuit in the 22nd Judicial District Court for the Parish of St. Tammany, State of Louisiana, captioned *Ratley v. St. Tammany Parish Hospital*, No. 2021-13731. The suit involved a petition for an *ex parte* order to administer Ivermectin to Charlotte D. Ratley ("Ms. Ratley"), a 64-year-old COVID-19 patient, filed by Ms. Ratley, her daughter, and husband. The Court granted the petition and issued an order on August 20, 2021. Ms. Ratley passed away the next day, before being given any medication pursuant to the order. The "Answer to the Petition and Reconventional Demand" filed by the defendant hospital and dated September 29, 2021, identified Dr. Grembowicz, a pediatrician, as the physician who had previously written Ms. Ratley the prescription at issue. Dr. Grembowicz was not involved as a party to this lawsuit in any way.

Investigation of the captioned matter was assigned to Lawrence H. Cresswell, III, D.O., J.D., Director of Investigations for the Board (the "DOI" or "Investigating Officer"). The investigation revealed that Dr. Grembowicz's practice specialty is pediatrics, and that she prescribed medication to the 64-year-old Ms. Ratley in August 2021. Further investigation revealed that Dr. Grembowicz had not personally evaluated the patient prior to issuing any prescription, but relied on information received from a relative by telephone regarding the patient's condition and did not include documentation adequate to support a prescription for an off-label use. Dr. Grembowicz stated that at the time the Ratley family requested the prescription, Ms. Ratley was in a car being transported to a drug store, was suffering acute respiratory distress, and was undergoing Nebulizer treatment at the time. Dr. Grembowicz stated that, under these extenuating emergency circumstances, she elected to obtain information from the patient's legal representative and family member by telephone. Dr. Grembowicz acknowledges that she did not

speak directly with the patient while in the car and directed them to the emergency room to obtain monoclonal antibodies.

Dr. Grembowicz and her counsel appeared for a meeting with the DOI at the Board's offices in June 2022. At the meeting, Dr. Grembowicz confirmed that she practiced primarily in pediatrics and explained that she was a friend of Ms. Ratley's family and obtained the patient's history, symptoms, and COVID-19 status from the patient's family member by telephone. Dr. Grembowicz acknowledged that she did not interact directly with the adult patient before issuing the prescription. Dr. Grembowicz also was counseled that the patient's treatment record did not reflect or document the risks or benefits of the off-label use of medication, and that appropriate consent for the off-label use of medication was not reflected in the patient's medical record, as required by the Board's rules. Dr. Grembowicz and the DOI discussed that the issuance of this prescription without conducting an examination of the patient fell outside the standard of care and was outside the scope of her training as a pediatrician.

As evidenced by her subscription hereto, Dr. Grembowicz acknowledges the substantial accuracy of the foregoing information and that proof of such information upon administrative evidentiary hearing would establish sufficient cause to take action with respect to her license pursuant to the Louisiana Medical Practice Act, La. R.S. 37:1285(A)(13)¹ and (30).²

Recognizing her right to notice and administrative adjudication of any charges that may be asserted against her in these proceedings, at which time Dr. Grembowicz would be entitled to be represented by legal counsel, to call witnesses and to present evidence on her own behalf in defense or in mitigation of the charges made and to a decision thereon by the Board based upon written findings of fact and conclusions of law pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955–65, Dr. Grembowicz, nonetheless, hereby waives her right to notice and formal adjudication and pursuant to La. R.S. 49:955(D) consents to entry of the Order set forth hereinafter. Dr. Grembowicz acknowledges that she hereby waives any right to which she may be entitled pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, La. R.S. 49:951 *et seq.*, or which may be afforded to her by any other law to contest or appeal her agreement to or the force and effect of the Board's investigation or this Order in any court or other forum. By her subscription hereto, Dr. Grembowicz also hereby authorizes the Investigating Officer designated by the Board with respect hereto to present this Order to the Board for its consideration and to fully disclose to and discuss with the Board the nature and results of the investigation and she waives any objection to such disclosures under La. R.S. 49:960. Dr. Grembowicz expressly acknowledges that the disclosure of such information to the Board by the Investigating Officer shall be without prejudice to the Investigating Officer's authority to proceed

¹ The Board may take action against a medical license for (“[u]nprofessional conduct, including but not limited to, conduct manifested as . . . failing to practice within the scope of education, training, and experience, . . . failing to create or maintain medical records.” La. R.S. 37:1285(A)(13); *see also* La. Admin. Code tit. 46, pt. XLV, § 7603(A)(10) (“*Failing to Create or Maintain Medical Records*—a physician shall create and maintain adequate and legible patient records.”)).

² The Board may take action against a medical license for “(30) Violation of any rules and regulations of the board, or any provisions of this Part.” La. R.S. 37:1285(A)(30). The Board's rules provide specific requirements for the use of diagnostic methods or therapies that are additive or alternative to conventional medicine methods or therapies, including, *e.g.*, performance and documentation of: an evaluation prior to any such treatment; physical and other examinations and diagnostic evaluations and consultations; treatment plans and objectives; and informed consents. *See* La. Admin. Code tit. 46, pt. XLV, §§ 7101–09.

with the adjudication of an administrative complaint against her or to the Board's capacity to adjudicate such complaint should the Board decline to approve this Order.

Based upon the information provided, and upon the recommendation of the Investigating Officer, the Board hereby concludes that, consistent with its mandate under La. R.S. 37:1261, the interests of public health, safety, and welfare will be effectively served by entry of the Order set forth hereinafter by consent. Accordingly, in consideration of the foregoing and pursuant to the authority vested in the Board by La. R.S. 37:1285 and La. R.S. 49:955(D);

IT IS ORDERED that the license of Meredith Shead Grembowicz, M.D., as evidenced by Credential No. MD.023669, is hereby **OFFICIALLY REPRIMANDED** for the conduct described above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Dr. Grembowicz shall, within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the date of this Order, pay to the Board a fine in the amount of One Thousand and no/100 Dollars (\$1,000.00).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Dr. Grembowicz shall, within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the effective date of this Order, provide confirmation that she has registered for, attended, and successfully completed a continuing medical education course on medical record keeping that is acceptable to and has been approved by the Board or its designee in writing prior to registering for and completing such course. Failure by Dr. Grembowicz to provide confirmation of successful completion of the continuing medical education course described above within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the date of this Order shall, without further notice, and without any further administrative proceedings, be deemed adequate and sufficient cause for the Board to take action against Dr. Grembowicz's license to practice medicine in the State of Louisiana, as it may find appropriate in its sole discretion at that time, including imposition of additional fines, probation, and/or summary suspension.


IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any violation of or failure to strictly or timely comply with any of the terms set forth by this Order by Dr. Grembowicz shall be deemed adequate and sufficient cause, upon proof of such violation or failure, for such action as the Board may deem appropriate, as if such violations were enumerated among the causes provided in La. R.S. 37:1285.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Consent Order shall be, and shall be deemed to be, a public record.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 23RD day of JANUARY, 2023.

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD
OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By:



LESTER W. JOHNSON, M.D.
President

Acknowledgement and Consent Follows on Next Page

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT
AND CONSENT**

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF St. Tammany

I, MEREDITH SHEAD GREMBOWICZ, M.D., hereby acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to seek the advice and guidance of legal counsel with respect to this Consent Order and that all of its terms and conditions have been fully explained to me and/or that I fully understand them. I further acknowledge that I approve, accept and consent to entry of the above and foregoing Order without duress and of my own free will and accord, this 16th day of November, 2022.


MEREDITH SHEAD GREMBOWICZ, M.D.

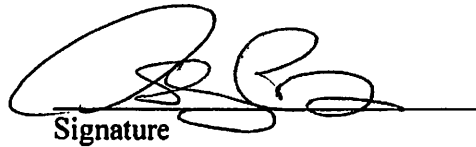
WITNESSES:

Melissa Lacoste
Signature

Melissa Lacoste
Typed Name

222 N. Vermont St
Street Address

Covington, LA 70433
City/State/Zip Code

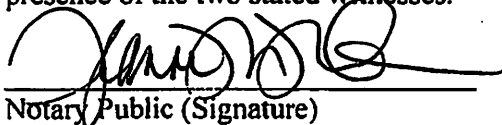

Signature

Ashley Pinzo
Typed Name

222 N. Vermont St.
Street Address

Covington, LA 70433
City/State/Zip Code

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 16th day of November, 2022 in the presence of the two stated witnesses.


Notary Public (Signature)

Name: Jeanne M. Mauldin
Notary/Bar No.: LA 28923
Commission expires: at death