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STATE BOARD OF MEDICINE TAKES DISCIPLINARY ACTION

BOSTON: At its meeting today, the State Board of Registration in Medicine took disciplinary action against the medical licenses of six physicians: Richard B. Hawkins, M.D., Stephen P. Murphy, M.D., Leslie Cronister, M.D., Alice Francisco, M.D., Michael Ellis, M.D. and Frederic Oder, M.D.

The Board revoked the license of Dr. Richard B. Hawkins, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon. Dr. Hawkins is a 1969 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and has been licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts since 1970. He reported having hospital privileges at Leominster Hospital. The Board found that Dr. Hawkins had committed acts of sexual misconduct with two female patients. In its decision the Board noted that Dr. Hawkins' misconduct was, "a serious departure from good and accepted medical practice and a complete abuse of patient trust." The Board further found that, "this behavior is clearly contrary to the role of a physician and merits revocation," of Dr. Hawkins' license.

In another matter, the Board entered into a consent order with Dr. Stephen Murphy whereby his license to practice medicine is indefinitely suspended. Dr. Murphy is a board-certified internist formerly affiliated with Winchester Hospital which suspended his privileges in January 2004. He is a 1978 graduate of Boston University School of Medicine, and has been licensed to practice in Massachusetts since 1981. In 2001 Dr. Murphy entered into a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the Board whereby he would remain compliant with a chemical dependency monitoring contract. In December 2003 he tested positive for alcohol in a random urine screen. Shortly thereafter he agreed to stop practicing medicine pending review of the matter. Today's action continues a March 2004 suspension after formal findings of fact. Dr. Murphy may petition to stay the suspension upon documentation of one year of continuous sobriety and compliance with a chemical dependency monitoring contract.

The Board also entered into a consent order with Dr. Leslie Cronister, indefinitely suspending her license to practice. Dr. Cronister is a board-certified family practitioner. She graduated from the University of Nevada School of Medical Sciences in 1990, and has been licensed to practice in Massachusetts since 2002. Dr. Cronister was employed by the Lynn Community Health Center until she resigned in July 2003. Her original

license was conditioned on her compliance with a Letter of Agreement with the Board in which she agreed to refrain from the use of all controlled substances unless specifically prescribed by a treating physician. Today the Board found that Dr. Cronister had violated the terms of her LOA with the Board. Dr. Cronister may petition the Board for a stay of the suspension by documenting one year of continuous sobriety and compliance with a monitoring contract.

Dr. Alice Francisco's legal right to renew her license to practice medicine was revoked. Dr. Francisco is a board-certified radiologist. She is a 1961 graduate of the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Medicine and Surgery in Manila, Philippines, and was first licensed to practice in Massachusetts in 1972. Her license lapsed in 2003, and she is not currently practicing medicine. The Board found that Dr. Francisco had been disciplined by the medical board of New York for reasons substantially similar to those found in Massachusetts law, specifically engaging in conduct which has the capacity to deceive or defraud. Dr. Francisco lied on her New York license reinstatement application with respect to her exclusion from the Medicaid program.

In other action the Board reprimanded Dr. Michael Ellis and fined him \$5,000 for failing to disclose a criminal conviction and other criminal charges on his limited license application. Dr. Ellis is a 1999 graduate of Boston University School of Medicine, and is in a hospital residency program. In his initial application for a limited license Dr. Ellis failed to disclose that in 1980 at the age of 17 he had been convicted of armed assault, breaking and entering, knowingly receiving stolen property and larceny of property. He further failed to disclose that he had twice been charged with driving under the influence of alcohol in 1988 and 1991.

The Board also accepted Dr. Frederic Oder's resignation of his license to practice medicine. Such resignations are disciplinary actions and are reported to the national practitioners database. Dr. Oder is a board-certified psychiatrist. He graduated from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry in 1967, and has been licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts since 1968.

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine licenses more than 30,000 physicians, osteopaths and acupuncturists. The Board was created in 1894 to protect the public health and safety by setting standards for the practice of medicine and ensuring that doctors who practice in the Commonwealth are appropriately qualified and competent. The Board investigates complaints, holds hearings and determines sanctions. More information about the Board is available at www.massmedboard.org.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Copies of orders issued by the Board are available by calling the Public Information Coordinator at (617) 654-9831.

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