

**State of New Hampshire
Board of Medicine
Concord, New Hampshire 03301**

In the Matter of:
Dennis L. Swartout, M.D.
No.: 6038
(Misconduct Allegations)

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

In order to avoid the delay and expense of further proceedings and to promote the best interests of the public and the practice of medicine, the New Hampshire Board of Medicine (“Board”) and Dennis L. Swartout, M.D. (“Respondent”), a physician licensed by the Board, hereby stipulate and agree to resolve certain allegations of professional misconduct pending before the Board according to the following terms and conditions:

1. Pursuant to RSA 329:17, I, 329:18 and 329:18-a, and Medical Administrative Rule (“Med”) 206 and 210, the Board has jurisdiction to investigate and adjudicate allegations of professional misconduct committed by physicians. Pursuant to RSA 329:18-a, III, the Board may, at any time, dispose of such allegations by settlement and without commencing a disciplinary hearing.
2. The Board first granted Respondent a license to practice medicine in the State of New Hampshire on April 12, 1979. Respondent holds license number 6038. Respondent worked as a part-time consulting physician at the Keene State College Health Service.
3. In October of 2004, the Board received a complaint from the mother of one of Respondent’s former patients alleging, *inter alia*, that Respondent had failed to adequately examine the patient and as a result failed to diagnose her condition. In

response to this complaint, the Board conducted an investigation and obtained information from various sources pertaining to Respondent's treatment of the patient.

4. Respondent stipulates that if a disciplinary hearing were to take place, Hearing Counsel would introduce evidence obtained during the Board's investigation alleging that Respondent engaged in professional misconduct, in violation of RSA 329:17, VI (d) (unprofessional conduct) and (k) (failing to maintain adequate medical record documentation), by the following facts:

A. Respondent saw patient, a freshman at Keene State College, on day one in the Keene Health Center, several days after her enrollment. No vital signs were taken. No notes were made of the medications the patient was currently taking. No testing was ordered.

B. On day two, patient returned to see Respondent for a second time. Her symptoms were the same. Again, no vital signs were taken and no testing was done.

C. During the visits, Respondent dictated his notes to a nurse who was present during the patient's examination. The nurse wrote down what Respondent dictated. Respondent signed the nurse's notes as his note. The entire medical record from both visits consists of less than one page.

D. Twelve and a half hours after the visit on day two, the patient was admitted to the hospital febrile and septic.

5. The Board finds that Respondent committed the acts as described above and concludes that, by engaging in such conduct, Respondent violated RSA 329:17, VI

- (d) (unprofessional conduct) and (k) (failing to maintain adequate medical record documentation).
6. Respondent accepts the Board's factual findings and consents to the Board imposing the following discipline against Respondent's license to practice as a physician in the State of New Hampshire, pursuant to RSA 329:17, VII:
- A. Respondent is REPRIMANDED.
 - B. Respondent is required to meaningfully participate in at least 6 hours of continuing medical education concerning medical records and conducting adequate patient history and physical examinations. These hours shall be in addition to the hours required by the Board for renewal of licensure and shall be completed within one (1) year from the effective date of this *Settlement Agreement*. Within fifteen (15) days of completing these hours, Respondent shall notify the Board and provide written proof of completion.
 - C. Respondent is assessed an ADMINISTRATIVE FINE in the amount of \$2,000. Respondent shall pay this fine in full within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this *Settlement Agreement*, as defined further below, by delivering a money order or bank check, made payable to "Treasurer, State of New Hampshire," to the Board's office at 2 Industrial Park Drive, Suite 8, Concord, New Hampshire.
 - D. The Board may consider Respondent's compliance with the terms and conditions herein in any subsequent proceeding before the Board regarding Respondent's license.

- E. Within ten (10) days of the effective date of this agreement, as defined further below, Respondent shall furnish a copy of the *Settlement Agreement* to any current employer for whom Respondent performs services as a physician or work which requires a medical degree and/or medical license or directly or indirectly involves patient care, and to any agency or authority which licenses, certifies or credentials physicians, with which Respondent is presently affiliated.
- F. For a continuing period of one (1) year from the effective date of this agreement, Respondent shall furnish a copy of this *Settlement Agreement* to any employer to which Respondent may apply for work as a physician or for work in any capacity which requires a medical degree and/or medical license or directly or indirectly involves patient care, and to any agency or authority that licenses, certifies or credentials physicians, to which Respondent may apply for any such professional privileges or recognition.
7. Respondent's breach of any terms or conditions of this *Settlement Agreement* shall constitute unprofessional conduct pursuant to RSA 329:17, VI (d), and a separate and sufficient basis for further disciplinary action by the Board.
8. Except as provided herein, this *Settlement Agreement* shall bar the commencement of further disciplinary action by the Board based upon the misconduct described above. However, the Board may consider this misconduct as evidence of a pattern of conduct in the event that similar misconduct is proven against Respondent in the future. Additionally, the Board may consider the fact that discipline was imposed by this

Order as a factor in determining appropriate discipline should any further misconduct be proven against Respondent in the future.

9. This *Settlement Agreement* shall become a permanent part of Respondent's file, which is maintained by the Board as a public document.
10. Respondent voluntarily enters into and signs this *Settlement Agreement* and states that no promises or representations have been made to him other than those terms and conditions expressly stated herein.
11. The Board agrees that in return for Respondent executing this *Settlement Agreement*, the Board will not proceed with the formal adjudicatory process based upon the facts described herein.
12. Respondent understands that his action in entering into this *Settlement Agreement* is a final act and not subject to reconsideration or judicial review or appeal.
13. Respondent has had the opportunity to seek and obtain the advice of an attorney of his choosing in connection with his decision to enter into this agreement.
14. Respondent understands that the Board must review and accept the terms of this *Settlement Agreement*. If the Board rejects any portion, the entire *Settlement Agreement* shall be null and void. Respondent specifically waives any claims that any disclosures made to the Board during its review of this *Settlement Agreement* have prejudiced his right to a fair and impartial hearing in the future if this *Settlement Agreement* is not accepted by the Board.
15. Respondent is not under the influence of any drugs or alcohol at the time he signs this *Settlement Agreement*.

16. Respondent certifies that he has read this document titled *Settlement Agreement*. Respondent understands that he has the right to a formal adjudicatory hearing concerning this matter and that at said hearing he would possess the rights to confront and cross-examine witnesses, to call witnesses, to present evidence, to testify on his own behalf, to contest the allegations, to present oral argument, and to appeal to the courts. Further, Respondent fully understands the nature, qualities and dimensions of these rights. Respondent understands that by signing this *Settlement Agreement*, he waives these rights as they pertain to the misconduct described herein.
17. This *Settlement Agreement* shall take effect as an Order of the Board on the date it is signed by an authorized representative of the Board.

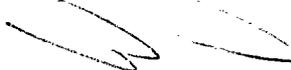
FOR RESPONDENT

Date: 3/10 / 2006



Dennis L. Swartout, M.D.
Respondent

Date: 3/10/06



Robert Stein
Counsel for Respondent

FOR THE BOARD/*

This proceeding is hereby terminated in accordance with the binding terms and conditions set forth above.

Date: April 11, 2006

Penny Taylor
(Signature)

Penny Taylor
(Print or Type Name)
Authorized Representative of the
New Hampshire Board of Medicine

/* James Forbes and Kevin Costin Board members, recused.

James Sise, MD recused
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