

DR. ISAAC STATEMENT REGARDING THE IOWA BOARD OF MEDICINE

I am a board-certified physician specializing in Rheumatology. I graduated from medical school more than three decades ago. I have seen over 20,000 patients and have saved many lives and helped many patients. I have been licensed to practice Medicine in the state of Iowa, without restrictions since 1997. My practice is highly regarded by my colleagues and patients in the state of Iowa and neighboring states.

I did not realize until recently how frustrating and unfair it is to deal with the Iowa Board of Medicine.

My experience began with a complaint of not refilling a prescription in August of 2015. As a result of the complaint, I fully cooperated and provided records to the Board of Medicine, as requested.

A few months later, an investigator for the Board made an unannounced visit to my office and told me that there were no issues with my practice; remarkably, the next step in dealing with the Board was, however, when I received a subpoena requesting 20 records, chosen from the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), for five years from 2010 to 2015.

I provided the records. Almost a year went by with no action by the Board until I received a statement of the review and a demand of my explanation within two weeks.

Again, I fully complied and provided a narrative and explanation of my treatment of the patients, only to receive a list of purported allegations and a proposed settlement regarding these allegations less than one week later. Any reasonable person would conclude that the Board did not carefully consider my explanation or narrative, given the time frame of the allegations and proposed settlement.

Because the Board allegations were unfounded and the proposed settlement was unreasonable, I declined to agree and requested a direct meeting with the Board. I was granted 15 minutes to speak to the Board in September of 2017. I made a presentation to the Board regarding the doctoring of my patients and answered all questions that the Board members had.

As a consequence of my presentation to the Board, there were additional discussions which led to lesser and lesser "charges" and a proposed "settlement." Among the phrases used in the proposed "settlement" were, however, "improper chronic pain management" and "professional incompetency."

The phrases were offensive to me and completely unfounded. I requested the Board remove these phrases. The Board declined and instead published their allegations on their website.

Thereafter, my attorney requested the Board file in preparation for a future hearing on the allegations. Amazingly, a review of the Board file demonstrated the reviewers engaged by the Board appeared to be told by the Board what conclusions to reach. Indeed, the letter to the Board reviewers was a duplicate of the Statement of Charges.

While there has been significant delay in bringing this matter to a hearing, it has not been on my behalf. Rather, the delay has only been to accommodate my counsel and attempt to reach resolution. The consequence of the Board failing to set this matter for hearing has allowed these false allegations to continue to hang over my practice and reputation, causing irreparable harm.

Previously, I was hopeful a fair resolution could be reached when the executive director of the Iowa Board of Medicine was placed on administrative leave and subsequently resigned. The previous legal counsel for the Board was chosen to replace the executive director. Unfortunately, the new executive director made comments to the Telegraph Herald which were false and prejudicial, namely, "While this case is pending, state regulators are keeping an eye on Isaac's practice" and "It is being monitored most definitely and it is my understanding that [Dr. Isaac] is not practicing medicine at this time."

These statements are untrue. How can the executive director be "keeping an eye" on my practice and at the same time saying I am not practicing? Not to mention that the board is supposed to be a reliable source of information to the public!

I am fully engaged in the practice of medicine and providing superior care and treatment for my patients every day.

Indeed, during examination under oath of the Board reviewers, they admitted I was "an excellent rheumatologist;" I "did what any good doctor would do;" I "prescribed narcotics for [my] patients responsibly;" and, I "managed to decrease the dose for a patient who came to [me] on large doses, and monitored narcotic use carefully." The reviewers also said they were stunned when they saw the Board allegations and the proposed settlement which was unreasonable.

Given these admissions by the Board reviewers, my legal counsel proposed a resolution adopting the reviewers' suggestions that I complete some continuing medical education hours and, in return, the Board dismisses the charges. Legal counsel for the Board rejected the proposal and indicated that they were not bound

by the sworn testimony of the reviewers. Thereafter, I received a document showing the reviewers were now changing their opinions or statements made under oath.

Why these reviewers would now change their testimony is troubling. One explanation is the Board or its counsel was frustrated and upset that I have challenged their authority and allegations.

I owe it to myself and my patients to fight for my rights and my ability to practice and to push back on these false allegations. The exercise of my rights should not result in this punitive action from the Board. This is not how reasonable people would expect the Iowa Board of Medicine to conduct itself.

I have heard of good doctors forcibly retiring, resigning, or moving their practice to another state as the consequence of the heavy-handed actions of the Iowa Board of Medicine.

Until now I have kept quiet at the advice of my counsel, but enough is enough. I would kindly appeal to all caring and reasonable people who recognize injustice, unfairness, and hypocrisy to contact the Iowa Board of Medicine and tell them what has happened to me is not right.

Respectfully,

George B Isaac

George B. Isaac, M.D.

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