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8 **BEFORE THE**
9 **MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**
10 **DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**
11 **STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

11 In the Matter of the Petition to Revoke
12 Probation Against,
13 **SACHA COMDEN, M.D.**
2708 Wilshire Blvd., #397
14 Santa Monica, CA 90403
Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No.
15 A112824,

Case No. 800-2016-021196
OAH No. 2016110924
**DEFAULT DECISION
AND ORDER**
[Gov. Code, §11520]

16 Respondent.

17
18 **FINDINGS OF FACT**

19 1. On or about July 18, 2016, Complainant Kimberly Kirchmeyer, in her official
20 capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer
21 Affairs, filed Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2016-021196 against SACHA COMDEN,
22 M.D. (Respondent) before the Medical Board of California.

23 2. On or about June 16, 2010, the Medical Board of California (Board) issued a
24 probationary Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate, No. A112824, to Respondent. On or about
25 November 25, 2015, Respondent was continued on probation for a period of six years.
26 Respondent's Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate expired on February 29, 2016, and has not
27 been renewed. A true and correct copy of a Certificate of Licensure for Respondent is attached
28 hereto as Exhibit "A."

1 3. On or about July 18, 2016, Michelle Solario, an employee of the Complainant
2 Agency, served by Certified Mail (Tracking Number 7012346000023860202), a copy of the
3 Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2016-021196, Statement to Respondent, Notice of Defense,
4 Request for Discovery, and Government Code sections 11507.5, 11507.6, and 11507.7 to
5 Respondent's address of record with the Board, which was and is 2708 Wilshire Blvd., #397,
6 Santa Monica, CA 90403. A copy of the Petition to Revoke Probation, the related documents,
7 and Declaration of Service are attached as Exhibit "B," and are incorporated herein by reference.
8 The aforementioned documents were delivered at Respondent's address of record on July 21,
9 2016. A copy of the certified mail card and tracking information from the United States Postal
10 Service is attached as Exhibit "C," and is incorporated herein by reference.

11 4. Service of the Petition to Revoke Probation was effective as a matter of law under the
12 provisions of Government Code section 11505, subdivision (c).

13 5. On or about October 28, 2016, Respondent signed and returned a Notice of Defense,
14 requesting a hearing in this matter. A copy of Respondent's Notice of Defense is attached hereto
15 as Exhibit "D," and is incorporated herein by reference.

16 6. A Notice of Hearing was served by mail at Respondent's address of record, which
17 was and is 2708 Wilshire Blvd., #397, Santa Monica, CA 90403. The Notice of Hearing
18 informed Respondent that an administrative hearing in this matter was scheduled for April 19,
19 2017. Respondent failed to appear at that hearing. A copy of the Notice of Hearing and
20 Declaration of Service are attached hereto as Exhibit "E," and are incorporated herein by
21 reference.

22 7. At the April 19, 2017 hearing, Administrative Law Judge Carla L. Garrett drafted and
23 issued a Findings and Declaration of Default; Order of Remand. A copy of the Findings and
24 Declaration of Default; Order of Remand is attached hereto as Exhibit "F," and is incorporated
25 herein by reference. Judge Garrett specifically found that Respondent was provided proper notice
26 of the date, time, and location of the hearing, and that Respondent failed to appear at the hearing.

27 8. The Declaration of Brian D. Bill attesting to the foregoing facts is attached hereto as
28 Exhibit "G."

1 9. The facts that caused Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2016-021196 to be filed
2 are as follows:

3 10. On or about February 5, 2016, California Medical Board Probation Inspector Regina
4 Armstrong conducted an intake interview with Respondent and discussed the terms and
5 conditions of Respondent's probation. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation
6 Inspector, Exhibit "H.") Probation Inspector Armstrong drafted a Probation Intake Report that
7 details her discussion with Respondent.

8 11. Respondent indicated that she understood each term and condition of probation and
9 executed an "Acknowledgment of Decision," which confirmed her understanding regarding her
10 obligations as a probationer. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit
11 "H.")

12 12. On or about February 9, 2016, Respondent informed Probation Inspector Armstrong
13 that she scheduled an appointment for a Medical Evaluation with Dr. Katz for February 18, 2016,
14 at 8:00 a.m., as required per the terms and conditions of her probation. (See Declaration of
15 Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

16 13. On or about February 10, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong mailed to Respondent
17 a letter confirming their conversation of February 5, 2016. (See Declaration of Regina
18 Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

19 14. On or about February 12, 2016, Dr. Zemansky of the Pacific Assistance Group (PAG)
20 informed Probation Inspector Armstrong that respondent failed to appear for a meeting, as
21 required per the terms and conditions of Respondent's probation. (See Declaration of Regina
22 Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H" and Notice of Intent to Introduce Declaration,
23 Declaration of Dr. Tracy Zemansky, and Attachment, Exhibit "I.")

24 15. On or about February 17, 2016, Dr. Zemansky informed Probation Inspector
25 Armstrong that respondent failed to appear for a meeting, as required per the terms and conditions
26 of Respondent's probation. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit
27 "H" and Declaration of Dr. Tracy Zemansky, and Attachment, Exhibit "I.")

28 16. On or about February 22, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong received a letter from

1 Dr. Zemansky indicating that Respondent was terminated from PAG due to non-compliance, in
2 violation of the terms and conditions of Respondent's probation. (See Declaration of Regina
3 Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H" and Notice of Intent to Introduce Declaration,
4 Declaration of Dr. Tracy Zemansky, and Attachment, Exhibit "I.")

5 17. On or about February 23, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong received an email
6 from Virginia Gerard, the biological fluid testing coordinator for the Board, which indicated that
7 Respondent failed to make daily contact with her on February 22, 2016; missed a hair test that
8 was scheduled for February 23, 2016, and failed to provide a response; and was suspended for
9 non-payment, in violation of the terms and conditions of Respondent's probation. (See
10 Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

11 18. On or about February 24, 2016, Dr. Katz informed Probation Inspector Armstrong
12 that Respondent failed to appear for her required medical evaluation that was scheduled for
13 February 18, 2016, and she failed to cancel or reschedule the appointment, in violation of the
14 terms and conditions of her probation. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation
15 Inspector, Exhibit "H," and Declaration of Dr. Bernard Katz, and Attachment, Exhibit "J.") On
16 or about March 2, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong received a letter from Dr. Katz that
17 confirmed the February 24, 2016 conversation. (*Ibid.*)

18 19. On or about February 29, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong mailed to respondent
19 a "non-compliance" letter via certified and standard mail. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong,
20 Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.") A copy of the February 29, 2016 letter is attached as Exhibit
21 "K," and is incorporated herein by reference.

22 20. On or about March 18, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong mailed to Respondent a
23 letter regarding a clinical diagnostic evaluation scheduled for her for April 5, 2016, with Dr.
24 Nathan Lavid. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

25 21. On or about March 25, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong attempted to contact
26 Respondent via telephone to discuss her recent non-compliance with the terms and conditions of
27 her probation. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")
28 Probation Inspector Armstrong was unable to speak with Respondent, but she did leave a detailed

1 voicemail message for Respondent. (*Ibid.*) In that message, Probation Inspector Armstrong
2 informed Respondent of her April 5, 2016 clinical diagnostic evaluation. (*Ibid.*) Finally,
3 Probation Inspector Armstrong requested that Respondent contact her as soon as possible to
4 discuss the non-compliance issues. (*Ibid.*)

5 22. On or about March 25, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong received a memorandum
6 entitled "Failure to Participate in Biological Fluid Testing: Sacha Comden, M.D.," drafted by
7 Staff Service Manager I, Anne Potter, along with attachments from Virginia Gerard detailing
8 Respondent's failure to participate in the biological fluid testing program.

9 23. On or about April 7, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong received a letter from Dr.
10 Lavid informing her that Respondent failed to appear for her April 5, 2016 Clinical Diagnostic
11 Evaluation, in violation of the terms and condition of Respondent's probation. (See Declaration
12 of Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H." and Declaration of Dr. Nathan Lavid,
13 and Attachment, Exhibit "L.")

14 24. On or about April 11, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong mailed to respondent a
15 "non-compliance" letter via certified and standard mail. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong,
16 Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.") A copy of the April 11, 2016 letter is attached as Exhibit "M,"
17 and is incorporated herein by reference.

18 25. On or about April 27, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong drafted a first quarter
19 progress report for the period January 2016 – March 2016 that detailed Respondent's non-
20 compliance with the terms and conditions of probation. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong,
21 Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

22 26. On or about July 15, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong drafted a second quarter
23 progress report for the period April 2016 – June 2016 that detailed Respondent's continued non-
24 compliance with the terms and conditions of probation. (See Declaration of Regina Armstrong,
25 Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

26 27. On or about October 4, 2016, Probation Inspector Armstrong drafted a third quarter
27 progress report for the period July 2016 – September 2016 that detailed Respondent's continued
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1 non-compliance with the terms and conditions of probation. (See Declaration of Regina
2 Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

3 28. On or about February 8, 2017, Probation Inspector Armstrong drafted a fourth quarter
4 progress report for the period October 2016 – December 2016 that detailed Respondent's
5 continued non-compliance with the terms and conditions of probation. (See Declaration of
6 Regina Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

7 29. On or about April 6, 2017, Probation Inspector Armstrong drafted a first quarter
8 progress report for the period January 2017 – March 2017 that detailed Respondent's continued
9 non-compliance with the terms and conditions of probation. (See Declaration of Regina
10 Armstrong, Probation Inspector, Exhibit "H.")

11 30. Business and Professions Code section 118 states, in pertinent part:

12 "(b) The suspension, expiration, or forfeiture by operation of law of a license issued by a
13 board in the department, or its suspension, forfeiture, or cancellation by order of the board or by
14 order of a court of law, or its surrender without the written consent of the board, shall not, during
15 any period in which it may be renewed, restored, reissued, or reinstated, deprive the board of its
16 authority to institute or continue a disciplinary proceeding against the licensee upon any ground
17 provided by law or to enter an order suspending or revoking the license or otherwise taking
18 disciplinary action against the license on any such ground."

19 31. Government Code section 11506 states, in pertinent part:

20 "(c) The respondent shall be entitled to a hearing on the merits if the respondent files a
21 notice of defense, and the notice shall be deemed a specific denial of all parts of the accusation
22 not expressly admitted. Failure to file a notice of defense shall constitute a waiver of
23 respondent's right to a hearing, but the agency in its discretion may nevertheless grant a hearing."

24 32. California Government Code section 11520 states, in pertinent part:

25 "(a) If the respondent either fails to file a notice of defense or to appear at the hearing, the
26 agency may take action based upon the respondent's express admissions or upon other evidence
27 and affidavits may be used as evidence without any notice to respondent."

28 33. Pursuant to its authority under Government Code section 11520, the Board finds

1 Respondent is in default. The Board will take action without further hearing and, based on
2 Respondent's express admissions by way of default and the evidence before it, contained in
3 exhibits A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, and M, finds that the allegations in Petition to Revoke
4 Probation No. 800-2016-021196 are true.

5 DETERMINATION OF ISSUES

6 1. Based on the foregoing findings of fact, Respondent SACHA COMDEN, M.D. has
7 subjected her Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A112824 to discipline.

8 2. A copy of the Petition to Revoke Probation and the related documents and
9 Declaration of Service are attached.

10 3. The agency has jurisdiction to adjudicate this case by default.

11 4. The Medical Board of California is authorized to revoke Respondent's Physician's
12 and Surgeon's Certificate based upon the following violations alleged in the Petition to Revoke
13 Probation:

14 a. Failure to Complete a Clinical Diagnostic Evaluation, pursuant to the terms and
15 condition of probation;

16 b. Failure to Participate in Biological Fluid Testing, pursuant to the terms and
17 condition of probation;

18 c. Failure to Participate in Psychotherapy, pursuant to the terms and condition of
19 probation;

20 d. Failure to Complete Medical Evaluation and Treatment, pursuant to the terms
21 and condition of probation;

22 e. Failure to Provide Notice of Employer or Supervisor Information, pursuant to
23 the terms and condition of probation;

24 f. Failure to Name or Obtain a Worksite Monitor, pursuant to the terms and
25 condition of probation;

26 g. Failure to Provide Notification, pursuant to the terms and condition of
27 probation;

28 h. Failure to Comply with General Probation Requirements, pursuant to the terms

1 and condition of probation; and

2 i. Failure to Pay Outstanding Probation Monitoring Costs, pursuant to the terms

3 and condition of probation.

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ORDER

IT IS SO ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A112824, heretofore issued to Respondent SACHA COMDEN, M.D., is revoked.

Pursuant to Government Code section 11520, subdivision (c), Respondent may serve a written motion requesting that the Decision be vacated and stating the grounds relied on within seven (7) days after service of the Decision on Respondent. The agency in its discretion may vacate the Decision and grant a hearing on a showing of good cause, as defined in the statute.

This Decision shall become effective on July 5, 2017.

It is so ORDERED June 5, 2017



FOR THE MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
Kimberly Kirchmeyer
Executive Director

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FILED
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
SACRAMENTO July 18 2016
BY ANALYST

8 BEFORE THE
9 MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
10 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

11 In the Matter of the Petition to Revoke
Probation Against,
12 SACHA COMDEN, M.D.
13 2708 Wilshire Blvd., #397
Santa Monica, CA 90403
14 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No.
A112824,
15
16 Respondent.

Case No. 800-2016-021196

PETITION TO REVOKE PROBATION

17 Complainant alleges:

18 PARTIES

- 19 1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) brings this Petition to Revoke Probation solely
20 in her official capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of California, Department
21 of Consumer Affairs.
- 22 2. On or about June 16, 2010, the Medical Board of California issued Physician's and
23 Surgeon's Certificate Number A112824 to SACHA COMDEN, M.D. (Respondent). The
24 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate expired on February 29, 2016, and has not been renewed.
- 25 3. In a disciplinary action entitled "*In the Matter of Accusation and Petition to Revoke*
26 *Probation Against Sacha Comden, M.D.*," Case No. 8002014006033, the Medical Board of
27 California, issued a decision, effective November 25, 2015, in which Respondent's Physician's
28 and Surgeon's Certificate was revoked. However, the revocation was stayed and Respondent's

1 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate was placed on probation for a period of six (6) years with
2 certain terms and conditions. A copy of that decision is attached as Exhibit "A" and is
3 incorporated by reference.

4 JURISDICTION

5 4. This Petition to Revoke Probation is brought before the Medical Board of California
6 (Board), Department of Consumer Affairs, under the authority of the following laws. All section
7 references are to the Business and Professions Code unless otherwise indicated.

8 5. Section 2004 of the Code states:

9 "The board shall have the responsibility for the following:

10 "(a) The enforcement of the disciplinary and criminal provisions of the Medical Practice
11 Act.

12 "(b) The administration and hearing of disciplinary actions.

13 "(c) Carrying out disciplinary actions appropriate to findings made by a panel or an
14 administrative law judge.

15 "(d) Suspending, revoking, or otherwise limiting certificates after the conclusion of
16 disciplinary actions.

17 "(e) Reviewing the quality of medical practice carried out by physician and surgeon
18 certificate holders under the jurisdiction of the board.

19 "(f) Approving undergraduate and graduate medical education programs.

20 "(g) Approving clinical clerkship and special programs and hospitals for the programs in
21 subdivision (f).

22 "(h) Issuing licenses and certificates under the board's jurisdiction.

23 "(i) Administering the board's continuing medical education program."

24 6. Section 2227 of the Code states:

25 "(a) A licensee whose matter has been heard by an administrative law judge of the Medical
26 Quality Hearing Panel as designated in Section 11371 of the Government Code, or whose default
27 has been entered, and who is found guilty, or who has entered into a stipulation for disciplinary
28 action with the board, may, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter:

1 “(1) Have his or her license revoked upon order of the board.

2 “(2) Have his or her right to practice suspended for a period not to exceed one year upon
3 order of the board.

4 “(3) Be placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation monitoring upon
5 order of the board.

6 “(4) Be publicly reprimanded by the board. The public reprimand may include a
7 requirement that the licensee complete relevant educational courses approved by the board.

8 “(5) Have any other action taken in relation to discipline as part of an order of probation, as
9 the board or an administrative law judge may deem proper.

10 “(b) Any matter heard pursuant to subdivision (a), except for warning letters, medical
11 review or advisory conferences, professional competency examinations, continuing education
12 activities, and cost reimbursement associated therewith that are agreed to with the board and
13 successfully completed by the licensee, or other matters made confidential or privileged by
14 existing law, is deemed public, and shall be made available to the public by the board pursuant to
15 Section 803.1.”

16 7. Section 2228 of the Code states:

17 “The authority of the board or the California Board of Podiatric Medicine to discipline a
18 licensee by placing him or her on probation includes, but is not limited to, the following:

19 “(a) Requiring the licensee to obtain additional professional training and to pass an
20 examination upon the completion of the training. The examination may be written or oral, or
21 both, and may be a practical or clinical examination, or both, at the option of the board or the
22 administrative law judge.

23 “(b) Requiring the licensee to submit to a complete diagnostic examination by one or more
24 physicians and surgeons appointed by the board. If an examination is ordered, the board shall
25 receive and consider any other report of a complete diagnostic examination given by one or more
26 physicians and surgeons of the licensee's choice.

27 “(c) Restricting or limiting the extent, scope, or type of practice of the licensee, including
28 requiring notice to applicable patients that the licensee is unable to perform the indicated

1 participation in an inpatient or outpatient treatment program, the evaluator shall consider the
2 following factors: Respondent's license type; Respondent's history; Respondent's documented
3 length of sobriety (i.e., length of time that has elapsed since Respondent's last substance use);
4 Respondent's scope and pattern of substance abuse; Respondent's treatment history, medical
5 history and current medical condition; the nature, duration and severity of Respondent's substance
6 abuse problem or problems; and whether Respondent is a threat to herself or the public.

7 "For all clinical diagnostic evaluations, a final written report shall be provided to the Board
8 no later than ten (10) days from the date the evaluator is assigned the matter. If the evaluator
9 requests additional information or time to complete the evaluation and report, an extension may
10 be granted, but shall not exceed thirty (30) days from the date the evaluator was originally
11 assigned the matter.

12 "The Board shall review the clinical diagnostic evaluation report within five (5) business
13 days of receipt to determine whether Respondent is safe to return to either part-time or full-time
14 practice and what restrictions or recommendations shall be imposed on Respondent based on the
15 recommendations made by the evaluator. Respondent shall not be returned to practice until she
16 has at least thirty (30) days of negative biological fluid tests or biological fluid tests indicating
17 that she has not used, consumed, ingested, or administered to herself a prohibited substance, as
18 defined in section 1361.51, subdivision (e), of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations.

19 "Clinical diagnostic evaluations conducted prior to the effective date of this Decision shall
20 not be accepted towards the fulfillment of this requirement. The cost of the clinical diagnostic
21 evaluation, including any and all testing deemed necessary by the examiner, the Board or its
22 designee, shall be borne by the licensee.

23 "Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine until notified by the Board or its
24 designee that he or she is fit to practice medicine safely. The period of time that Respondent is
25 not practicing medicine shall not be counted toward completion of the term of probation.
26 Respondent shall undergo biological fluid testing as required in this Decision at least two (2)
27 times per week while awaiting the notification from the Board if she is fit to practice medicine
28 safely.

1 "Respondent shall comply with all restrictions or conditions recommended by the examiner
2 conducting the clinical diagnostic evaluation within fifteen (15) calendar days after being notified
3 by the Board or its designee."

4 9 Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
5 Probation Condition 2, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation are
6 as follows:

7 A. On or about March 18, 2016, Medical Board Probation Inspector R.A.¹ provided
8 notice to Respondent via First Class US and Certified Mail that she was scheduled for a Clinical
9 Diagnostic Evaluation with Dr. N. L. on April 5, 2016.

10 B. On or about March 25, 2016, Inspector R.A. left a voice message for Respondent
11 regarding the April 5, 2016 Clinical Diagnostic Evaluation appointment with Dr. N.L.

12 C. On April 5, 2016, Inspector R.A. received a call from Dr. N.L., who stated that
13 Respondent failed to appear for the scheduled Clinical Diagnostic Evaluation appointment.

14 D. On or about April 7, 2016, Dr. N.L. provided a letter to the Medical board that
15 confirmed Respondent's failure to appear for the April 5, 2016 Clinical Diagnostic Evaluation
16 appointment.

17 E. To date, Respondent has yet to complete a Clinical Diagnostic Evaluation pursuant to
18 the terms and conditions of her probation.

19 **SECOND CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

20 (Failure to Participate in Biological Fluid Testing)

21 10. At all times after the effective date of Respondent's probation, Condition 5 stated:
22 "BIOLOGICAL FLUID TESTING. Respondent shall immediately submit to biological
23 fluid testing, at Respondent's expense, upon request of the Board or its designee. "Biological
24 fluid testing" may include, but is not limited to, urine, blood, breathalyzer, hair follicle testing, or
25 similar drug screening approved by the Board or its designee. Respondent shall make daily
26 contact with the Board or its designee to determine whether biological fluid testing is required.

27 _____
28 ¹ Individuals are identified by initials to protect their privacy.

1 Respondent shall be tested on the date of the notification as directed by the Board or its designee.
2 The Board may order a respondent to undergo a biological fluid test on any day, at any time,
3 including weekends and holidays. Except when testing on a specific date as ordered by the Board
4 or its designee, the scheduling of biological fluid testing shall be done on a random basis. The
5 cost of biological fluid testing shall be borne by the Respondent.

6 "During the first year of probation, Respondent shall be subject to 52 to 104 random tests.
7 During the second year of probation and for the duration of the probationary term, up to five (5)
8 years, Respondent shall be subject to 36 to 104 random tests per year. Only if there has been no
9 positive biological fluid tests in the previous five (5) consecutive years of probation, may testing
10 be reduced to one (1) time per month. Nothing precludes the Board from increasing the number
11 of random tests to the first-year level of frequency for any reason.

12 "Prior to practicing medicine, Respondent shall contract with a laboratory or service,
13 approved in advance by the Board or its designee, that will conduct random, unannounced,
14 observed, biological fluid testing and meets all the following standards:

15 "(a) Its specimen collectors are either certified by the Drug and Alcohol Testing
16 Industry Association or have completed the training required to serve as a collector for the
17 United States Department of Transportation.

18 "(b) Its specimen collectors conform to the current United States Department of
19 Transportation Specimen Collection Guidelines.

20 "(c) Its testing locations comply with the Urine Specimen Collection Guidelines
21 published by the United States Department of Transportation without regard to the type of
22 test administered.

23 "(d) Its specimen collectors observe the collection of testing specimens.

24 "(e) Its laboratories are certified and accredited by the United States Department of
25 Health and Human Services.

26 "(f) Its testing locations shall submit a specimen to a laboratory within one (1)
27 business day of receipt and all specimens collected shall be handled pursuant to chain of
28 custody procedures. The laboratory shall process and analyze the specimens and provide

1 legally defensible test results to the Board within seven (7) business days of receipt of the
2 specimen. The Board will be notified of non-negative results within one (1) business day
3 and will be notified of negative test results within seven (7) business days.

4 “(g) Its testing locations possess all the materials, equipment, and technical
5 expertise necessary in order to test Respondent on any day of the week.

6 “(h) Its testing locations are able to scientifically test for urine, blood, and hair
7 specimens for the detection of alcohol and illegal and controlled substances.

8 “(i) It maintains testing sites located throughout California.

9 “(j) It maintains an automated 24-hour toll-free telephone system and/or a secure
10 on-line computer database that allows the Respondent to check in daily for testing.

11 “(k) It maintains a secure, HIPAA-compliant website or computer system that
12 allows staff access to drug test results and compliance reporting information that is
13 available 24 hours a day.

14 “(l) It employs or contracts with toxicologists that are licensed physicians and have
15 knowledge of substance abuse disorders and the appropriate medical training to interpret
16 and evaluate laboratory biological fluid test results, medical histories, and any other
17 information relevant to biomedical information.

18 “(m) It will not consider a toxicology screen to be negative if a positive result is
19 obtained while practicing, even if the Respondent holds a valid prescription for the
20 substance.

21 “Prior to changing testing locations for any reason, including during vacation or other
22 travel, alternative testing locations must be approved by the Board and meet the requirements
23 above.

24 “The contract shall require that the laboratory directly notify the Board or its designee of
25 non-negative results within one (1) business day and negative test results within seven (7)
26 business days of the results becoming available. Respondent shall maintain this laboratory or
27 service contract during the period of probation.

28 “A certified copy of any laboratory test result may be received in evidence in any

1 proceedings between the Board and Respondent.

2 "If a biological fluid test result indicates Respondent has used, consumed, ingested, or
3 administered to herself a prohibited substance, the Board shall order Respondent to cease practice
4 and instruct Respondent to leave any place of work where Respondent is practicing medicine or
5 providing medical services. The Board shall immediately notify all of Respondent's employers,
6 supervisors and work monitors, if any, that Respondent may not practice medicine or provide
7 medical services while the cease-practice order is in effect.

8 "A biological fluid test will not be considered negative if a positive result is obtained while
9 practicing, even if the practitioner holds a valid prescription for the substance. If no prohibited
10 substance use exists, the Board shall lift the cease-practice order within one (1) business day.

11 "After the issuance of a cease-practice order, the Board shall determine whether the positive
12 biological fluid test is in fact evidence of prohibited substance use by consulting with the
13 specimen collector and the laboratory, communicating with the licensee, his or her treating
14 physician(s), other health care provider, or group facilitator, as applicable.

15 "For purposes of this condition, the terms "biological fluid testing" and "testing" mean the
16 acquisition and chemical analysis of a respondent's urine, blood, breath, or hair.

17 "For purposes of this condition, the term "prohibited substance" means an illegal drug, a
18 lawful drug not prescribed or ordered by an appropriately licensed health care provider for use by
19 Respondent and approved by the Board, alcohol, or any other substance the Respondent has been
20 instructed by the Board not to use, consume, ingest, or administer to herself.

21 "If the Board confirms that a positive biological fluid test is evidence of use of a prohibited
22 substance, Respondent has committed a major violation, as defined in section 1361.52(a), and the
23 Board shall impose any or all of the consequences set forth in section 1361.52(b), in addition to
24 any other terms or conditions the Board determines are necessary for public protection or to
25 enhance Respondent's rehabilitation."

26 11. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
27 Probation Condition 5, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation are
28 as follows:

1 A. Respondent failed to submit to biological fluid testing on the following dates: January
2 18, 2016, February 10, 2016, February 16, 2016, and February 23, 2016.

3 B. Respondent submitted untestable samples on the following dates: November 25,
4 2015, December 2, 2015, and December 3, 2015.

5 C. Respondent failed to contact the testing company to determine if she was selected to
6 provide a sample on the following dates: January 21, 2016, February 11, 2016, February 19, 2016,
7 and February 22, 2016.

8 D. On or about February 23, 2016, Respondent's account with FirstLab was suspended
9 for nonpayment.

10 D. Between February 23, 2016 and the present date, Respondent has failed to provide
11 biological fluid samples, as required per the terms and conditions of her probation.

12 E. Between February 23, 2016 and the present date, Respondent has failed to contact the
13 testing company daily, as required per the terms and conditions of her probation.

14 **THIRD CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

15 (Failure to Participate in Psychotherapy)

16 12. At all times after the effective date of Respondent's probation, Condition 7 stated:
17 "PSYCHOTHERAPY. Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision,
18 Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for prior approval the name and
19 qualifications of a California-licensed board certified psychiatrist or a licensed psychologist who
20 has a doctoral degree in psychology and at least five years of postgraduate experience in the
21 diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders. Upon approval, Respondent shall
22 undergo and continue psychotherapy treatment, including any modifications to the frequency of
23 psychotherapy, until the Board or its designee deems that no further psychotherapy is necessary.

24 "The psychotherapist shall consider any information provided by the Board or its designee
25 and any other information the psychotherapist deems relevant and shall furnish a written
26 evaluation report to the Board or its designee. Respondent shall cooperate in providing the
27 psychotherapist any information and documents that the psychotherapist may deem pertinent.

28 "Respondent shall have the treating psychotherapist submit quarterly status reports to the

1 Board or its designee. The Board or its designee may require Respondent to undergo psychiatric
2 evaluations by a Board-appointed board certified psychiatrist. If, prior to the completion of
3 probation, Respondent is found to be mentally unfit to resume the practice of medicine without
4 restrictions, the Board shall retain continuing jurisdiction over Respondent's license and the
5 period of probation shall be extended until the Board determines that Respondent is mentally fit to
6 resume the practice of medicine without restrictions.

7 "Respondent shall pay the cost of all psychotherapy and psychiatric evaluations."

8 13. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
9 Probation Condition 7, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation are
10 as follows:

11 A. On or about February 11, 2016 and February 16, 2016, Respondent failed to attend
12 required meetings at the Physicians Assistance Group (PAG).

13 B. On or about February 17, 2016, Respondent contacted Dr. Z at PAG regarding her
14 intention to move out of state.

15 C. On or about February 22, 2016, Respondent was terminated from PAG due to non-
16 compliance with the terms of the program.

17 **FOURTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

18 (Failure to Complete Medical Evaluation and Treatment)

19 14. At all times after the effective date of Respondent's probation, Condition 8 stated:

20 "MEDICAL EVALUATION AND TREATMENT-Condition Precedent. Respondent shall
21 not engage in the practice of medicine until notified in writing by the Board or its designee of its
22 determination that Respondent is medically fit to practice safely.

23 "Within 30 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and on a periodic basis
24 thereafter as may be required by the Board or its designee, Respondent shall undergo a medical
25 evaluation by a Board-appointed physician who shall consider any information provided by the
26 Board or designee and any other information the evaluating physician deems relevant and shall
27 furnish a medical report to the Board or its designee. Respondent shall provide the evaluating
28 physician any information and documentation that the evaluating physician may deem pertinent.

1 "Following the evaluation, Respondent shall comply with all restrictions or conditions
2 recommended by the evaluating physician within 15 calendar days after being notified by the
3 Board or its designee. If Respondent is required by the Board or its designee to undergo medical
4 treatment, Respondent shall within 30 calendar days of the requirement notice, submit to the
5 Board or its designee for prior approval the name and qualifications of a California licensed
6 treating physician of Respondent's choice. Upon approval of the treating physician, Respondent
7 shall within 15 calendar days undertake medical treatment and shall continue such treatment until
8 further notice from the Board or its designee.

9 "The treating physician shall consider any information provided by the Board or its
10 designee or any other information the treating physician may deem pertinent prior to
11 commencement of treatment. Respondent shall have the treating physician submit quarterly
12 reports to the Board or its designee indicating whether or not the Respondent is capable of
13 practicing medicine safely. Respondent shall provide the Board or its designee with any and all
14 medical records pertaining to treatment, the Board or its designee deems necessary.

15 "If, prior to the completion of probation, Respondent is found to be physically incapable of
16 resuming the practice of medicine without restrictions, the Board shall retain continuing
17 jurisdiction over Respondent's license and the period of probation shall be extended until the
18 Board determines that Respondent is physically capable of resuming the practice of medicine
19 without restrictions. Respondent shall pay the cost of the medical evaluation(s) and treatment.

20 15. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
21 Probation Condition 8, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation are
22 as follows:

23 A. On or about February 9, 2016, Respondent informed Inspector R.A. that she
24 scheduled a Medical Evaluation appointment for February 18, 2016, with Dr. B.K.

25 B. On or about February 10, 2016, Inspector R.A. mailed Respondent a letter that
26 confirmed the February 18, 2016, medical evaluation appointment.

27 C. On or about February 18, 2016, Respondent failed to appear for the scheduled
28 Medical Evaluation appointment. Additionally, Respondent failed to contact Dr. B.K. to either

1 cancel or reschedule the appointment.

2 D. On or about February 24, 2016, Inspector R.A. contacted Dr. B.K. regarding
3 Respondent's appointment. Dr. B.K. informed Inspector R.A. that Respondent failed to appear
4 for the February 18, 2016 appointment.

5 E. On or about March 2, 2016, Dr. B.K. provided a letter to the Board that confirmed
6 Respondent's failure to appear for the February 18, 2016 Medical Evaluation appointment.

7 **FOURTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

8 (Failure to Provide Notice of Employer or Supervisor Information)

9 16. At all times after the effective date of Respondent's probation, Condition 9 stated:
10 "NOTICE OF EMPLOYER OR SUPERVISOR INFORMATION. Within seven (7) days
11 of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall provide to the Board the names, physical
12 addresses, mailing addresses, and telephone numbers of any and all employers and supervisors.
13 Respondent shall also provide specific, written consent for the Board, Respondent's worksite
14 monitor, and Respondent's employers and supervisors to communicate regarding Respondent's
15 work status, performance, and monitoring.

16 "For purposes of this section, "supervisors" shall include the Chief of Staff and Health or
17 Well Being Committee Chair, or equivalent, if applicable, when the Respondent has medical staff
18 privileges."

19 17. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
20 Probation Condition 9, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation are
21 as follows:

22 A. On or before February 12, 2016, Respondent was required to submit to the Board the
23 names, physical addresses, and telephone numbers of any and all employers and supervisors.
24 Additionally, Respondent was required to execute written releases for the Board to contact any
25 and all employers, supervisors, and/or workplace monitors to determine work status and
26 performance.

27 B. To date, Respondent has yet to comply with either of the above requirements.

28 //

1 FIFTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION

2 (Failure to Name or Obtain a Worksite Monitor)

3 18. At all times after the effective date of Respondent's probation, Condition 10 stated:
4 "WORKSITE MONITOR. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the effective date of this
5 Decision, Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for prior approval as a worksite
6 monitor, the name and qualifications of one or more licensed physician and surgeon, other
7 licensed health care professional if no physician and surgeon is available, or, as approved by the
8 Board or its designee, a person in a position of authority who is capable of monitoring the
9 Respondent at work.

10 "The worksite monitor shall not have a current or former financial, personal, or familial
11 relationship with Respondent, or any other relationship that could reasonably be expected to
12 compromise the ability of the monitor to render impartial and unbiased reports to the Board or its
13 designee. If it is impractical for anyone but Respondent's employer to serve as the worksite
14 monitor, this requirement may be waived by the Board or its designee, however, under no
15 circumstances shall Respondent's worksite monitor be an employee or supervisee of the licensee.

16 "The worksite monitor shall have an active unrestricted license with no disciplinary action
17 within the last five (5) years, and shall sign an affirmation that he or she has reviewed the terms
18 and conditions of Respondent's disciplinary order and agrees to monitor Respondent as set forth
19 by the Board or its designee.

20 "Respondent shall pay all worksite monitoring costs.

21 "The worksite monitor shall have face-to-face contact with Respondent in the work
22 environment on as frequent a basis as determined by the Board or its designee, but not less than
23 once per week; interview other staff in the office regarding Respondent's behavior, if requested
24 by the Board or its designee; and review Respondent's work attendance.

25 "The worksite monitor shall verbally report any suspected substance abuse to the Board and
26 Respondent's employer or supervisor within one (1) business day of occurrence. If the suspected
27 substance abuse does not occur during the Board's normal business hours, the verbal report shall
28 be made to the Board or its designee within one (1) hour of the next business day. A written

1 report that includes the date, time, and location of the suspected abuse; Respondent's actions; and
2 any other information deemed important by the worksite monitor shall be submitted to the Board
3 or its designee within 48 hours of the occurrence.

4 "The worksite monitor shall complete and submit a written report monthly or as directed by
5 the Board or its designee which shall include the following: (1) Respondent's name and
6 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate number; (2) the worksite monitor's name and signature; (3)
7 the worksite monitor's license number, if applicable; (4) the location or location(s) of the
8 worksite; (5) the dates Respondent had face-to-face contact with the worksite monitor; (6) the
9 names of worksite staff interviewed, if applicable; (7) a report of Respondent's work attendance;
10 (8) any change in Respondent's behavior and/or personal habits; and (9) any indicators that can
11 lead to suspected substance abuse by Respondent. Respondent shall complete any required
12 consent forms and execute agreements with the approved worksite monitor and the Board, or its
13 designee, authorizing the Board, or its designee, and worksite monitor to exchange information.

14 "If the worksite monitor resigns or is no longer available, Respondent shall, within five (5)
15 calendar days of such resignation or unavailability, submit to the Board or its designee, for prior
16 approval, the name and qualifications of a replacement monitor who will be assuming that
17 responsibility within fifteen (15) calendar days. If Respondent fails to obtain approval of a
18 replacement monitor within sixty (60) calendar days of the resignation or unavailability of the
19 monitor, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the
20 practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. Respondent shall
21 cease the practice of medicine until a replacement monitor is approved and assumes monitoring
22 responsibility."

23 19. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
24 Probation Condition 10, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation
25 are as follows: During the course of probation, Respondent failed to submit to the Board any
26 names of potential worksite monitors.

27 //

28 //

1 this Decision.

2 “Address Changes

3 “Respondent shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of Respondent’s business and
4 residence addresses, email address (if available), and telephone number. Changes of such
5 addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no
6 circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business
7 and Professions Code section 2021(b).

8 “Place of Practice

9 “Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine in Respondent’s or patient’s place
10 of residence, unless the patient resides in a skilled nursing facility or other similar licensed
11 facility.

12 “License Renewal

13 “Respondent shall maintain a current and renewed California physician’s and surgeon’s
14 license.

15 “Travel or Residence Outside California

16 “Respondent shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any
17 areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty
18 (30) calendar days.

19 “In the event Respondent should leave the State of California to reside or to practice
20 Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing 30 calendar days prior to the dates of
21 departure and return.”

22 23. Respondent’s probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
23 Probation Condition 15, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation
24 are as follows:

25 A. On or about February 17, 2016 Respondent failed to notify the Board of a change of
26 address and/or failed to notify the board of any travel or relocation outside the state of California.

27 B. Respondent failed to renew Physician’s and Surgeon’s License No. A112824.

28 //

1 EIGHTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION

2 (Failure to Pay Outstanding Probation Monitoring Costs)

3 24. At all times after the effective date of Respondent's probation, Condition 21 stated:
4 "PROBATION MONITORING COSTS. Respondent shall pay the costs associated with
5 probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which may be
6 adjusted on an annual basis. Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California and
7 delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar year."

8 25. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
9 Probation Condition 21, referenced above. The facts and circumstances regarding this violation
10 are as follows:

11 A. Respondent has failed to timely pay all costs associated with probation monitoring.
12 Specifically, Respondent owes \$4,080.00 for 2013, \$4,029.00 for 2014, and \$4,106.00 for 2015.

13 DISCIPLINARY CONSIDERATIONS

14 26. In the Decision and Order effective June 15, 2010, the Medical Board of California
15 issued a probationary Physician's and Surgeons Certificate to Respondent pursuant to an action
16 entitled "*In the Matter of the Application of Sacha Susan Comden,*" case number 20-2010-
17 206930. Respondent was placed on five years of probation and was required to submit to
18 biological fluid testing, to abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages, and to comply with other
19 standard terms and conditions of probation. A true and correct copy of the Decision and Order
20 granting a probationary Physician's and Surgeons Certificate to Respondent is attached as Exhibit
21 "B."

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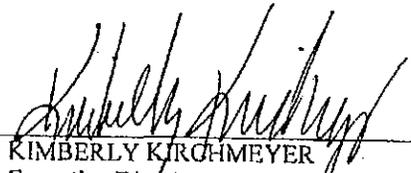
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PRAYER

WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision:

1. Revoking the probation that was granted by the Medical Board of California in Case No. 8002014006033 and imposing the disciplinary order that was stayed thereby revoking Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A112824 issued to SACHA COMDEN, M.D.;
2. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A112824, issued to SACHA COMDEN, M.D.;
3. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Sacha Comden, M.D.'s authority to supervise physician's assistants, pursuant to section 3527 of the Code;
4. Ordering SACHA COMDEN, M.D. to pay the Medical Board of California, if continued on probation, the costs of probation monitoring; and
5. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

DATED: July 15, 2016


KIMBERLY KIRGHMEYER
Executive Director
Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant

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Exhibit A

Decision and Order

Medical Board of California Case No. 800-2016-021196

BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation
and Petition to Revoke Probation
Against:

SACHA SUSAN COMDEN, M.D.

Case No. 8002014006033

Physician's and Surgeon's
Certificate No. A112824

Respondent

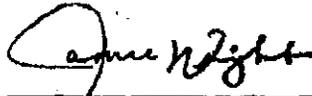
DECISION

The attached Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby adopted as the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, State of California.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on November 25, 2015.

IT IS SO ORDERED: October 26, 2015.

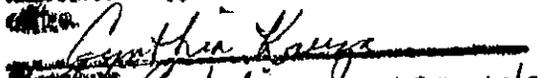
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA



Jamie Wright, J.D., Chair
Panel A

MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

I do hereby certify that this document is a true
and correct copy of the original on file in this
office.


Cynthia Kays
Custodian of records
Date 03/24/2016

1 KAMALA D. HARRIS
Attorney General of California
2 JUDITH T. ALVARADO
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
3 State Bar No. 155307
California Department of Justice
4 300 South Spring Street, Suite 1702
Los Angeles, California 90013
5 Telephone: (213) 576-7149
Facsimile: (213) 897-9395
6 *Attorneys for Complainant*

7
8 **BEFORE THE**
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
9 **DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

10 In the Matter of the Accusation and Petition to
11 Revoke Probation Against:

Case No. 800-2014-006033

12 **SACHA COMDEN, M.D.**

OAH No. 2015020847

13 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate
14 No. A 112824

**STIPULATED SETTLEMENT AND
DISCIPLINARY ORDER**

15 Respondent.

16
17 IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by and between the parties to the above-
18 entitled proceedings that the following matters are true:

19 PARTIES

20 1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer ("Complainant") is the Executive Director of the Medical
21 Board of California. She brought this action solely in her official capacity and is represented in
22 this matter by Kamala D. Harris, Attorney General of the State of California, by Judith T.
23 Alvarado, Supervising Deputy Attorney General.

24 2. Respondent Sacha Comden, M.D. ("Respondent") is represented in this proceeding
25 by attorney Theodore A. Cohen, Esq., whose address is: Law Offices of Theodore A. Cohen,
26 3550 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1280, Los Angeles, CA 90010.

27 3. On or about June 16, 2010, the Medical Board of California issued Physician's and
28 Surgeon's Certificate No. A 112824 to Sacha Comden, M.D. That certificate was in full force and

1 effect at all times relevant to the charges brought in Accusation No. 800-2014-006033 and will
2 expire on February 29, 2016, unless renewed.

3 JURISDICTION

4 4. Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2014-006033 was filed before
5 the Medical Board of California (Board), Department of Consumer Affairs, and is currently
6 pending against Respondent. The Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation and all other
7 statutorily required documents were properly served on Respondent on November 26, 2014.
8 Respondent timely filed her Notice of Defense contesting the Accusation and Petition to Revoke
9 Probation.

10 5. A copy of Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2014-006033 is
11 attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

12 ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS

13 6. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the
14 charges and allegations in Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2014-006033.
15 Respondent has also carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the effects of
16 this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order.

17 7. Respondent is fully aware of her legal rights in this matter, including the right to a
18 hearing on the charges and allegations in the Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation; the
19 right to be represented by counsel at her own expense; the right to confront and cross-examine the
20 witnesses against her; the right to present evidence and to testify on her own behalf; the right to
21 the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of
22 documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other
23 rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws.

24 8. Respondent voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and
25 every right set forth above.

26 ///

27 ///

28 ///

1 CULPABILITY

2 9. Respondent admits that at a hearing, Complainant could set forth a prima facie case
3 for the charges and allegations in Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2014-
4 006033, and Respondent declines to defend same. Respondent further agrees that her Physician's
5 and Surgeon's Certificate is subject to discipline and she agrees to be bound by the Board's
6 imposition of discipline as set forth in the Disciplinary Order below.

7 10. Respondent further agrees that if she ever petitions for early termination or
8 modification of probation, or if the Board ever petitions for revocation of probation, all of the
9 charges and allegations contained in Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2014-
10 006033, shall be deemed true, correct and fully admitted by Respondent for purposes of that
11 proceeding or any other licensing proceeding involving Respondent in the State of California.

12 CONTINGENCY

13 11. This stipulation shall be subject to approval by the Medical Board of California.
14 Respondent understands and agrees that counsel for Complainant and the staff of the Medical
15 Board of California may communicate directly with the Board regarding this stipulation and
16 settlement, without notice to or participation by Respondent or her counsel. By signing the
17 stipulation, Respondent understands and agrees that she may not withdraw her agreement or seek
18 to rescind the stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it. If the Board fails
19 to adopt this stipulation as its Decision and Order, the Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary
20 Order shall be of no force or effect, except for this paragraph, it shall be inadmissible in any legal
21 action between the parties, and the Board shall not be disqualified from further action by having
22 considered this matter.

23 12. The parties understand and agree that Portable Document Format (PDF) and facsimile
24 copies of this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order, including (PDF) and facsimile
25 signatures thereto, shall have the same force and effect as the originals.

26 13. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that
27 the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following
28 Disciplinary Order:

1 DISCIPLINARY ORDER

2 IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate No. A 112824 issued
3 to Respondent Sacha Comden, M.D. is revoked. However, the revocation is stayed and
4 Respondent is placed on probation for six (6) years on the following terms and conditions.

5 1. ACTUAL SUSPENSION-Condition Satisfied. As part of probation, Respondent is
6 suspended from the practice of medicine for one year.

7 2. CLINICAL DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION-Condition Precedent.

8 Within thirty (30) calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and on whatever
9 periodic basis thereafter as may be required by the Board or its designee, Respondent shall
10 undergo and complete a clinical diagnostic evaluation, including any and all testing deemed
11 necessary, by a Board-appointed board certified physician and surgeon. The examiner shall
12 consider any information provided by the Board or its designee and any other information he or
13 she deems relevant, and shall furnish a written evaluation report to the Board or its designee.

14 The clinical diagnostic evaluation shall be conducted by a licensed physician and surgeon
15 who holds a valid, unrestricted license, has three (3) years' experience in providing evaluations of
16 physicians and surgeons with substance abuse disorders, and is approved by the Board or its
17 designee. The clinical diagnostic evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with acceptable
18 professional standards for conducting substance abuse clinical diagnostic evaluations. The
19 evaluator shall not have a current or former financial, personal, or business relationship with
20 Respondent within the last five (5) years. The evaluator shall provide an objective, unbiased, and
21 independent evaluation. The clinical diagnostic evaluation report shall set forth, in the
22 evaluator's opinion, whether Respondent has a substance abuse problem, whether Respondent is a
23 threat to herself or others, and recommendations for substance abuse treatment, practice
24 restrictions, or other recommendations related to Respondent's rehabilitation and ability to
25 practice safely. If the evaluator determines during the evaluation process that Respondent is a
26 threat to herself or others, the evaluator shall notify the Board within twenty-four (24) hours of
27 such a determination.

28 In formulating his or her opinion as to whether Respondent is safe to return to either part-

1 time or full-time practice and what restrictions or recommendations should be imposed, including
2 participation in an inpatient or outpatient treatment program, the evaluator shall consider the
3 following factors: Respondent's license type; Respondent's history; Respondent's documented
4 length of sobriety (i.e., length of time that has elapsed since Respondent's last substance use);
5 Respondent's scope and pattern of substance abuse; Respondent's treatment history, medical
6 history and current medical condition; the nature, duration and severity of Respondent's
7 substance abuse problem or problems; and whether Respondent is a threat to herself or the
8 public.

9 For all clinical diagnostic evaluations, a final written report shall be provided to the Board
10 no later than ten (10) days from the date the evaluator is assigned the matter. If the evaluator
11 requests additional information or time to complete the evaluation and report, an extension may
12 be granted, but shall not exceed thirty (30) days from the date the evaluator was originally
13 assigned the matter.

14 The Board shall review the clinical diagnostic evaluation report within five (5) business
15 days of receipt to determine whether Respondent is safe to return to either part-time or full-time
16 practice and what restrictions or recommendations shall be imposed on Respondent based on the
17 recommendations made by the evaluator. Respondent shall not be returned to practice until she
18 has at least thirty (30) days of negative biological fluid tests or biological fluid tests indicating
19 that she has not used, consumed, ingested, or administered to herself a prohibited substance, as
20 defined in section 1361.51, subdivision (e), of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations.

21 Clinical diagnostic evaluations conducted prior to the effective date of this Decision shall
22 not be accepted towards the fulfillment of this requirement. The cost of the clinical diagnostic
23 evaluation, including any and all testing deemed necessary by the examiner, the Board or its
24 designee, shall be borne by the licensee.

25 Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine until notified by the Board or its
26 designee that he or she is fit to practice medicine safely. The period of time that Respondent is
27 not practicing medicine shall not be counted toward completion of the term of probation.

28 Respondent shall undergo biological fluid testing as required in this Decision at least two (2)

1 times per week while awaiting the notification from the Board if she is fit to practice medicine
2 safely.

3 Respondent shall comply with all restrictions or conditions recommended by the examiner
4 conducting the clinical diagnostic evaluation within fifteen (15) calendar days after being notified
5 by the Board or its designee.

6 3. CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES - ABSTAIN FROM USE. Respondent shall abstain
7 completely from the personal use or possession of controlled substances as defined in the
8 California Uniform Controlled Substances Act, dangerous drugs as defined by Business and
9 Professions Code section 4022, and any drugs requiring a prescription. This prohibition does not
10 apply to medications lawfully prescribed to Respondent by another practitioner for a bona fide
11 illness or condition.

12 Within 15 calendar days of receiving any lawfully prescribed medications, Respondent
13 shall notify the Board or its designee of the: issuing practitioner's name, address, and telephone
14 number; medication name, strength, and quantity; and issuing pharmacy name, address, and
15 telephone number.

16 If Respondent has a confirmed positive biological fluid test for any substance (whether or
17 not legally prescribed) and has not reported the use to the Board or its designee, Respondent
18 shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to immediately cease the practice of
19 medicine. The Respondent shall not resume the practice of medicine until final decision on an
20 accusation and/or a petition to revoke probation. An accusation and/or petition to revoke
21 probation shall be filed by the Board within 15 days of the notification to cease practice. If the
22 Respondent requests a hearing on the accusation and/or petition to revoke probation, the Board
23 shall provide the Respondent with a hearing within 30 days of the request, unless the Respondent
24 stipulates to a later hearing. A decision shall be received from the Administrative Law Judge or
25 the Board within 15 days unless good cause can be shown for the delay. The cessation of practice
26 shall not apply to the reduction of the probationary time period.

27 If the Board does not file an accusation or petition to revoke probation within 15 days of the
28 issuance of the notification to cease practice or does not provide Respondent with a hearing

1 within 30 days of a such a request, the notification of cease practice shall be dissolved.

2 4. ALCOHOL - ABSTAIN FROM USE. Respondent shall abstain completely from the
3 use of products or beverages containing alcohol.

4 If Respondent has a confirmed positive biological fluid test for alcohol, Respondent shall
5 receive a notification from the Board or its designee to immediately cease the practice of
6 medicine. The Respondent shall not resume the practice of medicine until final decision on an
7 accusation and/or a petition to revoke probation. An accusation and/or petition to revoke
8 probation shall be filed by the Board within 15 days of the notification to cease practice. If the
9 Respondent requests a hearing on the accusation and/or petition to revoke probation, the Board
10 shall provide the Respondent with a hearing within 30 days of the request, unless the Respondent
11 stipulates to a later hearing. A decision shall be received from the Administrative Law Judge or
12 the Board within 15 days unless good cause can be shown for the delay. The cessation of practice
13 shall not apply to the reduction of the probationary time period.

14 If the Board does not file an accusation or petition to revoke probation within 15 days of the
15 issuance of the notification to cease practice or does not provide Respondent with a hearing
16 within 30 days of a such a request, the notification of cease practice shall be dissolved.

17 5. BIOLOGICAL FLUID TESTING. Respondent shall immediately submit to
18 biological fluid testing, at Respondent's expense, upon request of the Board or its designee.
19 "Biological fluid testing" may include, but is not limited to, urine, blood, breathalyzer, hair
20 follicle testing, or similar drug screening approved by the Board or its designee. Respondent shall
21 make daily contact with the Board or its designee to determine whether biological fluid testing is
22 required. Respondent shall be tested on the date of the notification as directed by the Board or its
23 designee. The Board may order a respondent to undergo a biological fluid test on any day, at any
24 time, including weekends and holidays. Except when testing on a specific date as ordered by the
25 Board or its designee, the scheduling of biological fluid testing shall be done on a random basis.
26 The cost of biological fluid testing shall be borne by the Respondent.

27 During the first year of probation, Respondent shall be subject to 52 to 104 random tests.

28 During the second year of probation and for the duration of the probationary term, up to five (5)

1 years, Respondent shall be subject to 36 to 104 random tests per year. Only if there has been no
2 positive biological fluid tests in the previous five (5) consecutive years of probation, may testing
3 be reduced to one (1) time per month. Nothing precludes the Board from increasing the number
4 of random tests to the first-year level of frequency for any reason.

5 Prior to practicing medicine, Respondent shall contract with a laboratory or service,
6 approved in advance by the Board or its designee, that will conduct random, unannounced,
7 observed, biological fluid testing and meets all the following standards:

8 (a) Its specimen collectors are either certified by the Drug and Alcohol Testing
9 Industry Association or have completed the training required to serve as a collector for the
10 United States Department of Transportation.

11 (b) Its specimen collectors conform to the current United States Department of
12 Transportation Specimen Collection Guidelines.

13 (c) Its testing locations comply with the Urine Specimen Collection Guidelines
14 published by the United States Department of Transportation without regard to the type of
15 test administered.

16 (d) Its specimen collectors observe the collection of testing specimens.

17 (e) Its laboratories are certified and accredited by the United States Department of
18 Health and Human Services.

19 (f) Its testing locations shall submit a specimen to a laboratory within one (1)
20 business day of receipt and all specimens collected shall be handled pursuant to chain of
21 custody procedures. The laboratory shall process and analyze the specimens and provide
22 legally defensible test results to the Board within seven (7) business days of receipt of the
23 specimen. The Board will be notified of non-negative results within one (1) business day
24 and will be notified of negative test results within seven (7) business days.

25 (g) Its testing locations possess all the materials, equipment, and technical expertise
26 necessary in order to test Respondent on any day of the week.

27 (h) Its testing locations are able to scientifically test for urine, blood, and hair
28 specimens for the detection of alcohol and illegal and controlled substances.

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(i) It maintains testing sites located throughout California.

(j) It maintains an automated 24-hour toll-free telephone system and/or a secure on-line computer database that allows the Respondent to check in daily for testing.

(k) It maintains a secure, HIPAA-compliant website or computer system that allows staff access to drug test results and compliance reporting information that is available 24 hours a day.

(l) It employs or contracts with toxicologists that are licensed physicians and have knowledge of substance abuse disorders and the appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate laboratory biological fluid test results, medical histories, and any other information relevant to biomedical information.

(m) It will not consider a toxicology screen to be negative if a positive result is obtained while practicing, even if the Respondent holds a valid prescription for the substance.

Prior to changing testing locations for any reason, including during vacation or other travel, alternative testing locations must be approved by the Board and meet the requirements above.

The contract shall require that the laboratory directly notify the Board or its designee of non-negative results within one (1) business day and negative test results within seven (7) business days of the results becoming available. Respondent shall maintain this laboratory or service contract during the period of probation.

A certified copy of any laboratory test result may be received in evidence in any proceedings between the Board and Respondent.

If a biological fluid test result indicates Respondent has used, consumed, ingested, or administered to herself a prohibited substance, the Board shall order Respondent to cease practice and instruct Respondent to leave any place of work where Respondent is practicing medicine or providing medical services. The Board shall immediately notify all of Respondent's employers, supervisors and work monitors, if any, that Respondent may not practice medicine or provide medical services while the cease-practice order is in effect.

A biological fluid test will not be considered negative if a positive result is obtained while

1 practicing, even if the practitioner holds a valid prescription for the substance. If no prohibited
2 substance use exists, the Board shall lift the cease-practice order within one (1) business day.

3 After the issuance of a cease-practice order, the Board shall determine whether the positive
4 biological fluid test is in fact evidence of prohibited substance use by consulting with the
5 specimen collector and the laboratory, communicating with the licensee, his or her treating
6 physician(s), other health care provider, or group facilitator, as applicable.

7 For purposes of this condition, the terms "biological fluid testing" and "testing" mean the
8 acquisition and chemical analysis of a respondent's urine, blood, breath, or hair.

9 For purposes of this condition, the term "prohibited substance" means an illegal drug, a
10 lawful drug not prescribed or ordered by an appropriately licensed health care provider for use by
11 Respondent and approved by the Board, alcohol, or any other substance the Respondent has been
12 instructed by the Board not to use, consume, ingest, or administer to herself.

13 If the Board confirms that a positive biological fluid test is evidence of use of a prohibited
14 substance, Respondent has committed a major violation, as defined in section 1361.52(a), and the
15 Board shall impose any or all of the consequences set forth in section 1361.52(b), in addition to
16 any other terms or conditions the Board determines are necessary for public protection or to
17 enhance Respondent's rehabilitation.

18 6. CLINICAL TRAINING PROGRAM-Condition Precedent-Should Respondent
19 Return to Direct Patient Care. Prior to Respondent returning to a medical practice where she
20 provides direct patient care, Respondent shall enroll in a clinical training or educational program
21 equivalent to the Physician Assessment and Clinical Education Program (PACE) offered at the
22 University of California - San Diego School of Medicine ("Program"). Respondent shall
23 successfully complete the Program not later than six (6) months after Respondent's initial
24 enrollment unless the Board or its designee agrees in writing to an extension of that time.

25 The Program shall consist of a Comprehensive Assessment program comprised of a two-
26 day assessment of Respondent's physical and mental health; basic clinical and communication
27 skills common to all clinicians; and medical knowledge, skill and judgment pertaining to
28 Respondent's area of practice in which Respondent was alleged to be deficient, and at minimum,

1 a 40 hour program of clinical education in the area of practice in which Respondent was alleged
2 to be deficient and which takes into account data obtained from the assessment, Decision(s),
3 Accusation(s), and any other information that the Board or its designee deems relevant.
4 Respondent shall pay all expenses associated with the clinical training program.

5 Based on Respondent's performance and test results in the assessment and clinical
6 education, the Program will advise the Board or its designee of its recommendation(s) for the
7 scope and length of any additional educational or clinical training, treatment for any medical
8 condition, treatment for any psychological condition, or anything else affecting Respondent's
9 practice of medicine. Respondent shall comply with Program recommendations.

10 At the completion of any additional educational or clinical training, Respondent shall
11 submit to and pass an examination. Determination as to whether Respondent successfully
12 completed the examination or successfully completed the program is solely within the program's
13 jurisdiction.

14 The Respondent shall not resume direct patient care until enrollment or participation in the
15 clinical training program have been completed and Respondent has been so notified by the Board
16 or its designee in writing. If the Respondent did not successfully complete the clinical training
17 program, the Respondent shall not resume direct patient care.

18 7. PSYCHOTHERAPY. Within 60 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision,
19 Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for prior approval the name and
20 qualifications of a California-licensed board certified psychiatrist or a licensed psychologist who
21 has a doctoral degree in psychology and at least five years of postgraduate experience in the
22 diagnosis and treatment of emotional and mental disorders. Upon approval, Respondent shall
23 undergo and continue psychotherapy treatment, including any modifications to the frequency of
24 psychotherapy, until the Board or its designee deems that no further psychotherapy is necessary.

25 The psychotherapist shall consider any information provided by the Board or its designee
26 and any other information the psychotherapist deems relevant and shall furnish a written
27 evaluation report to the Board or its designee. Respondent shall cooperate in providing the
28 psychotherapist any information and documents that the psychotherapist may deem pertinent.

1 Respondent shall have the treating psychotherapist submit quarterly status reports to the
2 Board or its designee. The Board or its designee may require Respondent to undergo psychiatric
3 evaluations by a Board-appointed board certified psychiatrist. If, prior to the completion of
4 probation, Respondent is found to be mentally unfit to resume the practice of medicine without
5 restrictions, the Board shall retain continuing jurisdiction over Respondent's license and the
6 period of probation shall be extended until the Board determines that Respondent is mentally fit
7 to resume the practice of medicine without restrictions.

8 Respondent shall pay the cost of all psychotherapy and psychiatric evaluations.

9 8. MEDICAL EVALUATION AND TREATMENT-Condition Precedent. Respondent
10 shall not engage in the practice of medicine until notified in writing by the Board or its designee
11 of its determination that Respondent is medically fit to practice safely.

12 Within 30 calendar days of the effective date of this Decision, and on a periodic basis
13 thereafter as may be required by the Board or its designee, Respondent shall undergo a medical
14 evaluation by a Board-appointed physician who shall consider any information provided by the
15 Board or designee and any other information the evaluating physician deems relevant and shall
16 furnish a medical report to the Board or its designee. Respondent shall provide the evaluating
17 physician any information and documentation that the evaluating physician may deem pertinent.

18 Following the evaluation, Respondent shall comply with all restrictions or conditions
19 recommended by the evaluating physician within 15 calendar days after being notified by the
20 Board or its designee. If Respondent is required by the Board or its designee to undergo medical
21 treatment, Respondent shall within 30 calendar days of the requirement notice, submit to the
22 Board or its designee for prior approval the name and qualifications of a California licensed
23 treating physician of Respondent's choice. Upon approval of the treating physician, Respondent
24 shall within 15 calendar days undertake medical treatment and shall continue such treatment until
25 further notice from the Board or its designee.

26 The treating physician shall consider any information provided by the Board or its designee
27 or any other information the treating physician may deem pertinent prior to commencement of
28 treatment. Respondent shall have the treating physician submit quarterly reports to the Board or

1 its designee indicating whether or not the Respondent is capable of practicing medicine safely.
2 Respondent shall provide the Board or its designee with any and all medical records pertaining to
3 treatment, the Board or its designee deems necessary.

4 If, prior to the completion of probation, Respondent is found to be physically incapable of
5 resuming the practice of medicine without restrictions, the Board shall retain continuing
6 jurisdiction over Respondent's license and the period of probation shall be extended until the
7 Board determines that Respondent is physically capable of resuming the practice of medicine
8 without restrictions. Respondent shall pay the cost of the medical evaluation(s) and treatment.

9 9. NOTICE OF EMPLOYER OR SUPERVISOR INFORMATION. Within seven (7)
10 days of the effective date of this Decision, Respondent shall provide to the Board the names,
11 physical addresses, mailing addresses, and telephone numbers of any and all employers and
12 supervisors. Respondent shall also provide specific, written consent for the Board, Respondent's
13 worksite monitor, and Respondent's employers and supervisors to communicate regarding
14 Respondent's work status, performance, and monitoring.

15 For purposes of this section, "supervisors" shall include the Chief of Staff and Health or
16 Well Being Committee Chair, or equivalent, if applicable, when the Respondent has medical staff
17 privileges.

18 10. WORKSITE MONITOR. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the effective date of
19 this Decision, Respondent shall submit to the Board or its designee for prior approval as a
20 worksite monitor, the name and qualifications of one or more licensed physician and surgeon,
21 other licensed health care professional if no physician and surgeon is available, or, as approved by
22 the Board or its designee, a person in a position of authority who is capable of monitoring the
23 Respondent at work.

24 The worksite monitor shall not have a current or former financial, personal, or familial
25 relationship with Respondent, or any other relationship that could reasonably be expected to
26 compromise the ability of the monitor to render impartial and unbiased reports to the Board or its
27 designee. If it is impractical for anyone but Respondent's employer to serve as the worksite
28 monitor, this requirement may be waived by the Board or its designee, however, under no

1 circumstances shall Respondent's worksite monitor be an employee or supervisee of the licensee.

2 The worksite monitor shall have an active unrestricted license with no disciplinary action
3 within the last five (5) years, and shall sign an affirmation that he or she has reviewed the terms
4 and conditions of Respondent's disciplinary order and agrees to monitor Respondent as set forth
5 by the Board or its designee.

6 Respondent shall pay all worksite monitoring costs.

7 The worksite monitor shall have face-to-face contact with Respondent in the work
8 environment on as frequent a basis as determined by the Board or its designee, but not less than
9 once per week; interview other staff in the office regarding Respondent's behavior, if requested
10 by the Board or its designee; and review Respondent's work attendance.

11 The worksite monitor shall verbally report any suspected substance abuse to the Board and
12 Respondent's employer or supervisor within one (1) business day of occurrence. If the suspected
13 substance abuse does not occur during the Board's normal business hours, the verbal report shall
14 be made to the Board or its designee within one (1) hour of the next business day. A written
15 report that includes the date, time, and location of the suspected abuse; Respondent's actions; and
16 any other information deemed important by the worksite monitor shall be submitted to the Board
17 or its designee within 48 hours of the occurrence.

18 The worksite monitor shall complete and submit a written report monthly or as directed by
19 the Board or its designee which shall include the following: (1) Respondent's name and
20 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate number; (2) the worksite monitor's name and signature; (3)
21 the worksite monitor's license number, if applicable; (4) the location or location(s) of the
22 worksite; (5) the dates Respondent had face-to-face contact with the worksite monitor; (6) the
23 names of worksite staff interviewed, if applicable; (7) a report of Respondent's work attendance;
24 (8) any change in Respondent's behavior and/or personal habits; and (9) any indicators that can
25 lead to suspected substance abuse by Respondent. Respondent shall complete any required
26 consent forms and execute agreements with the approved worksite monitor and the Board, or its
27 designee, authorizing the Board, or its designee, and worksite monitor to exchange information.

28 If the worksite monitor resigns or is no longer available, Respondent shall, within five (5)

1 calendar days of such resignation or unavailability, submit to the Board or its designee, for prior
2 approval, the name and qualifications of a replacement monitor who will be assuming that
3 responsibility within fifteen (15) calendar days. If Respondent fails to obtain approval of a
4 replacement monitor within sixty (60) calendar days of the resignation or unavailability of the
5 monitor, Respondent shall receive a notification from the Board or its designee to cease the
6 practice of medicine within three (3) calendar days after being so notified. Respondent shall
7 cease the practice of medicine until a replacement monitor is approved and assumes monitoring
8 responsibility.

9 11. NOTIFICATION. Within seven (7) days of the effective date of this Decision, the
10 Respondent shall provide a true copy of this Decision and Accusation and Petition to Revoke
11 Probation to the Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer at every hospital where privileges
12 or membership are extended to Respondent, at any other facility where Respondent engages in the
13 practice of medicine, including all physician and locum tenens registries or other similar agencies,
14 and to the Chief Executive Officer at every insurance carrier which extends malpractice insurance
15 coverage to Respondent. Respondent shall submit proof of compliance to the Board or its
16 designee within 15 calendar days.

17 This condition shall apply to any change(s) in hospitals, other facilities or insurance carrier.

18 12. SUPERVISION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS. During probation, Respondent is
19 prohibited from supervising physician assistants.

20 13. OBEY ALL LAWS. Respondent shall obey all federal, state and local laws, all rules
21 governing the practice of medicine in California and remain in full compliance with any court
22 ordered criminal probation, payments, and other orders.

23 14. QUARTERLY DECLARATIONS. Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations
24 under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the Board, stating whether there has been
25 compliance with all the conditions of probation.

26 Respondent shall submit quarterly declarations not later than 10 calendar days after the end
27 of the preceding quarter.

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1 15. GENERAL PROBATION REQUIREMENTS.

2 Compliance with Probation Unit

3 Respondent shall comply with the Board's probation unit and all terms and conditions of
4 this Decision.

5 Address Changes

6 Respondent shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of Respondent's business and
7 residence addresses, email address (if available), and telephone number. Changes of such
8 addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no
9 circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business
10 and Professions Code section 2021(b).

11 Place of Practice

12 Respondent shall not engage in the practice of medicine in Respondent's or patient's place
13 of residence, unless the patient resides in a skilled nursing facility or other similar licensed
14 facility.

15 License Renewal

16 Respondent shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's
17 license.

18 Travel or Residence Outside California

19 Respondent shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any
20 areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty
21 (30) calendar days.

22 In the event Respondent should leave the State of California to reside or to practice
23 Respondent shall notify the Board or its designee in writing 30 calendar days prior to the dates of
24 departure and return.

25 16. INTERVIEW WITH THE BOARD OR ITS DESIGNEE. Respondent shall be
26 available in person upon request for interviews either at Respondent's place of business or at the
27 probation unit office, with or without prior notice throughout the term of probation.

28 17. NON-PRACTICE WHILE ON PROBATION. Respondent shall notify the Board or

1 its designee in writing within 15 calendar days of any periods of non-practice lasting more than
2 30 calendar days and within 15 calendar days of Respondent's return to practice. Non-practice is
3 defined as any period of time Respondent is not practicing medicine in California as defined in
4 Business and Professions Code sections 2051 and 2052 for at least 40 hours in a calendar month
5 in direct patient care, clinical activity or teaching, or other activity as approved by the Board. All
6 time spent in an intensive training program which has been approved by the Board or its designee
7 shall not be considered non-practice. Practicing medicine in another state of the United States or
8 Federal jurisdiction while on probation with the medical licensing authority of that state or
9 jurisdiction shall not be considered non-practice. A Board-ordered suspension of practice shall
10 not be considered as a period of non-practice.

11 In the event Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation exceeds 18 calendar
12 months, Respondent shall successfully complete a clinical training program that meets the criteria
13 of Condition 18 of the current version of the Board's "Manual of Model Disciplinary Orders and
14 Disciplinary Guidelines" prior to resuming the practice of medicine.

15 Respondent's period of non-practice while on probation shall not exceed two (2) years.

16 Periods of non-practice will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term.

17 Periods of non-practice will relieve Respondent of the responsibility to comply with the
18 probationary terms and conditions with the exception of this condition and the following terms
19 and conditions of probation: Obey All Laws; and General Probation Requirements.

20 18. COMPLETION OF PROBATION. Respondent shall comply with all financial
21 obligations (e.g., restitution, probation costs) not later than 120 calendar days prior to the
22 completion of probation. Upon successful completion of probation, Respondent's certificate shall
23 be fully restored.

24 19. VIOLATION OF PROBATION. Failure to fully comply with any term or condition
25 of probation is a violation of probation.

26 A. If Respondent commits a major violation of probation as defined by section
27 1361.52, subdivision (a), of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, the Board shall
28 take one or more of the following actions:

1 (1) Issue an immediate cease-practice order and order Respondent to undergo a
2 clinical diagnostic evaluation to be conducted in accordance with section 1361.5,
3 subdivision (c)(1), of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, at Respondent's
4 expense. The cease-practice order issued by the Board or its designee shall state that
5 Respondent must test negative for at least a month of continuous biological fluid testing
6 before being allowed to resume practice. For purposes of the determining the length of
7 time a respondent must test negative while undergoing continuous biological fluid testing
8 following issuance of a cease-practice order, a month is defined as thirty calendar (30)
9 days. Respondent may not resume the practice of medicine until notified in writing by the
10 Board or its designee that he or she may do so.

11 (2) Increase the frequency of biological fluid testing.

12 (3) Refer Respondent for further disciplinary action, such as suspension,
13 revocation, or other action as determined by the Board or its designee.

14 B. If Respondent commits a minor violation of probation as defined by section 1361.52,
15 subdivision (c), of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, the Board shall take one
16 or more of the following actions:

17 (1) Issue a cease-practice order;

18 (2) Order practice limitations;

19 (3) Order or increase supervision of Respondent;

20 (4) Order increased documentation;

21 (5) Issue a citation and fine, or a warning letter;

22 (6) Order Respondent to undergo a clinical diagnostic evaluation to be conducted
23 in accordance with section 1361.5, subdivision (c)(1), of Title 16 of the California Code of
24 Regulations, at Respondent's expense;

25 (7) Take any other action as determined by the Board or its designee.

26 C. Nothing in this Decision shall be considered a limitation on the Board's authority to
27 revoke Respondent's probation if she has violated any term or condition of probation. If
28 Respondent violates probation in any respect, the Board, after giving Respondent notice and the

1 opportunity to be heard, may revoke probation and carry out the disciplinary order that was
2 stayed. If an Accusation, or Petition to Revoke Probation, or an Interim Suspension Order is filed
3 against Respondent during probation, the Board shall have continuing jurisdiction until the matter
4 is final, and the period of probation shall be extended until the matter is final.

5 20. LICENSE SURRENDER. Following the effective date of this Decision, if
6 Respondent ceases practicing due to retirement or health reasons or is otherwise unable to satisfy
7 the terms and conditions of probation, Respondent may request to surrender his or her license.
8 The Board reserves the right to evaluate Respondent's request and to exercise its discretion in
9 determining whether or not to grant the request, or to take any other action deemed appropriate
10 and reasonable under the circumstances. Upon formal acceptance of the surrender, Respondent
11 shall within 15 calendar days deliver Respondent's wallet and wall certificate to the Board or its
12 designee and Respondent shall no longer practice medicine. Respondent will no longer be subject
13 to the terms and conditions of probation. If Respondent re-applies for a medical license, the
14 application shall be treated as a petition for reinstatement of a revoked certificate.

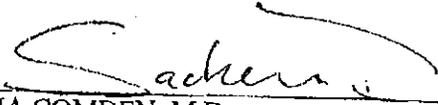
15 21. PROBATION MONITORING COSTS. Respondent shall pay the costs associated
16 with probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which
17 may be adjusted on an annual basis. Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of
18 California and delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar
19 year.

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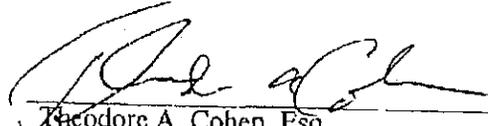
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ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order and have fully discussed it with my attorney, Theodore A. Cohen, Esq. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate. I enter into this Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Medical Board of California.

DATED: 09/03/15 
SACHA COMDEN, M.D.
Respondent

I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Sacha Comden, M.D. the terms and conditions and other matters contained in the above Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order. I approve its form and content.

DATED 9/03/15 
Theodore A. Cohen, Esq.
Attorney for Respondent

ENDORSEMENT

The foregoing Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Medical Board of California.

Dated: 9/3/2015 Respectfully submitted,

KAMALA D. HARRIS
Attorney General of California


JUDITH T. ALVARADO
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
Attorneys for Complainant

LA2013610847

Exhibit A

Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation No. 800-2014-006033

1 KAMALA D. HARRIS
Attorney General of California
2 JUDITH T. ALVARADO
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
3 State Bar No. 155307
California Department of Justice
4 300 South Spring Street, Suite 1702
Los Angeles, California 90013
5 Telephone: (213) 576-7149
Facsimile: (213) 897-9395
6 *Attorneys for Complainant*

7
8 **BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**
9

10 In the Matter of the Accusation and Petition to
Revoke Probation Against:

Case No. 800-2014-006033

11 SACHA SUSAN COMDEN, M.D.

**ACCUSATION AND PETITION TO
REVOKE PROBATION**

12 2973 Harbor Boulevard, #244
13 Costa Mesa, California 92626

14 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate
15 No. A 112824,

16 Respondent.

17
18 Complainant alleges:

19 **PARTIES**

20 1. Kimberly Kirchmeyer (Complainant) brings this Accusation and Petition to Revoke
21 Probation solely in her official capacity as the Executive Director of the Medical Board of
22 California, Department of Consumer Affairs.

23 2. On or about June 16, 2010, the Medical Board of California issued Physician's and
24 Surgeon's Certificate Number A 112824 to Sacha Susan Comden, M.D. (Respondent). The
25 Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the
26 charges brought herein and will expire on February 29, 2016, unless renewed.

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1 6. Section 2227 of the Code provides that a licensee who is found guilty under the
2 Medical Practice Act may have his or her license revoked, suspended for a period not to exceed
3 one year, placed on probation and be required to pay the costs of probation monitoring, or such
4 other action taken in relation to discipline as the board deems proper.

5 7. Section 2234 of the Code, states:

6 "The board shall take action against any licensee who is charged with unprofessional
7 conduct. In addition to other provisions of this article, unprofessional conduct includes, but is not
8 limited to, the following:

9 "(a) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, assisting in or abetting the
10 violation of, or conspiring to violate any provision of this chapter.

11 "(b) Gross negligence.

12 "(c) Repeated negligent acts. To be repeated, there must be two or more negligent acts or
13 omissions. An initial negligent act or omission followed by a separate and distinct departure from
14 the applicable standard of care shall constitute repeated negligent acts.

15 "(1) An initial negligent diagnosis followed by an act or omission medically appropriate
16 for that negligent diagnosis of the patient shall constitute a single negligent act.

17 "(2) When the standard of care requires a change in the diagnosis, act, or omission that
18 constitutes the negligent act described in paragraph (1), including, but not limited to, a
19 reevaluation of the diagnosis or a change in treatment, and the licensee's conduct departs from the
20 applicable standard of care, each departure constitutes a separate and distinct breach of the
21 standard of care.

22 "(d) Incompetence.

23 "(e) The commission of any act involving dishonesty or corruption which is substantially
24 related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a physician and surgeon.

25 "(f) Any action or conduct which would have warranted the denial of a certificate.

26 "(g) The practice of medicine from this state into another state or country without meeting
27 the legal requirements of that state or country for the practice of medicine. Section 2314 shall not
28

1 apply to this subdivision. This subdivision shall become operative upon the implementation of
2 the proposed registration program described in Section 2052.5.

3 "(h) The repeated failure by a certificate holder, in the absence of good cause, to attend and
4 participate in an interview scheduled by the mutual agreement of the certificate holder and the
5 board. This subdivision shall only apply to a certificate holder who is the subject of an
6 investigation by the board."

7 8. Section 2238 of the Code states:

8 AA violation of any federal statute or federal regulation or any of the statutes or regulations
9 of this state regulating dangerous drugs or controlled substances constitutes unprofessional
10 conduct.@

11 9. Section 2242 of the Code states:

12 "(a) Prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing dangerous drugs as defined in Section 4022
13 without an appropriate prior examination and a medical indication, constitutes unprofessional
14 conduct.

15 "(b) No licensee shall be found to have committed unprofessional conduct within the
16 meaning of this section if, at the time the drugs were prescribed, dispensed, or furnished, any of
17 the following applies:

18 "(1) The licensee was a designated physician and surgeon or podiatrist serving in the
19 absence of the patient's physician and surgeon or podiatrist, as the case may be, and if the drugs
20 were prescribed, dispensed, or furnished only as necessary to maintain the patient until the return
21 of his or her practitioner, but in any case no longer than 72 hours.

22 "(2) The licensee transmitted the order for the drugs to a registered nurse or to a licensed
23 vocational nurse in an inpatient facility, and if both of the following conditions exist:

24 "(A) The practitioner had consulted with the registered nurse or licensed vocational nurse
25 who had reviewed the patient's records.

26 "(B) The practitioner was designated as the practitioner to serve in the absence of the
27 patient's physician and surgeon or podiatrist, as the case may be.

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1 "(3) The licensee was a designated practitioner serving in the absence of the patient's
2 physician and surgeon or podiatrist, as the case may be, and was in possession of or had utilized
3 the patient's records and ordered the renewal of a medically indicated prescription for an amount
4 not exceeding the original prescription in strength or amount or for more than one refill.

5 "(4) The licensee was acting in accordance with Section 120582 of the Health and Safety
6 Code."

7 10. Section 2266 of the Code states: AThe failure of a physician and surgeon to maintain
8 adequate and accurate records relating to the provision of services to their patients constitutes
9 unprofessional conduct.@

10 11. Business and Professions Code section 725 provides:

11 "(a) Repeated acts of clearly excessive prescribing, furnishing, dispensing, or administering
12 of drugs or treatment, repeated acts of clearly excessive use of diagnostic procedures, or repeated
13 acts of clearly excessive use of diagnostic or treatment facilities as determined by the standard of
14 the community of licensees is unprofessional conduct for a physician and surgeon, dentist,
15 podiatrist, psychologist, physical therapist, chiropractor, optometrist, speech-language
16 pathologist, or audiologist.

17 "(b) Any person who engages in repeated acts of clearly excessive prescribing or
18 administering of drugs or treatment is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine of
19 not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than six hundred dollars (\$600), or by
20 imprisonment for a term of not less than 60 days nor more than 180 days, or by both that fine and
21 imprisonment.

22 "(c) A practitioner who has a medical basis for prescribing, furnishing, dispensing, or
23 administering dangerous drugs or prescription controlled substances shall not be subject to
24 disciplinary action or prosecution under this section.

25 "(d) No physician and surgeon shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to this section
26 for treating intractable pain in compliance with Section 2241.5."

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1 FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

2 (Gross Negligence)

3 12. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2234, subdivision (b), of
4 the Code, in that she wrongfully prescribed scheduled medications to S.G., A.M. and J.M.¹ The
5 circumstances are as follows:

6 13. Between 2010 and May 31, 2013, Respondent worked at Harbor-UCLA Medical
7 Center as a hospitalist. As a hospitalist at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Respondent was
8 permitted to write prescriptions on the "Los Angeles County Department of Health Services
9 Coastal Cluster" pre-printed prescription forms that bore Respondent's name. Such prescriptions
10 were to be written only for patients of Harbor-UCLA Medical Center who were provided medical
11 care/services by Respondent. After May 31, 2013, when Respondent terminated her employment
12 with Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, she was no longer permitted to use the "Los Angeles County
13 Department of Health Services Coastal Cluster" pre-printed prescription forms to write
14 prescriptions.

15 S.G.

16 14. Between June 26, 2012, and November 4, 2012, Respondent wrote five prescriptions
17 for S.G. S.G. was a nurse practitioner at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center and a co-worker of
18 Respondent. There was no reason for Respondent to provide medical care and treatment to S.G.
19 or for Respondent to write prescriptions for S.G.

20 15. Respondent wrote prescriptions for Acetaminophen with Codeine;² Zolpidem;³ and
21 Clonazepam,⁴ for S.G. without medical indication.

22 A.M.

23 16. Between August 19, 2011, and August 1, 2013, Respondent wrote twenty-eight
24 prescriptions for A.M. A.M. was never a patient at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Respondent
25

26 ¹ Individuals are referred to by initial to preserve privacy.

27 ² An opiate narcotic analgesic; a Schedule III controlled substance.

28 ³ Ambien, a benzodiazepine; a Schedule IV controlled substance.

⁴ Klonopin, a benzodiazepine; a Schedule IV controlled substance.

1 did not provide any medical care or treatment to A.M. at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, therefore
2 there was no clinical indication for her to write any prescription for A.M.

3 17. Respondent wrote prescriptions for Hydrocodone with Acetaminophen;⁵ Oxycodone;⁶
4 Clonazepam; and Zolpidem for A.M. without medical indication.

5 **J.M.**

6 18. Between May 13, 2011, and August 1, 2013, Respondent wrote sixty-three
7 prescriptions for J.M. J.M. was never a patient at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Respondent
8 did not provide any medical care or treatment to J.M. at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, therefore
9 there was no clinical indication for her write any prescription for J.M.

10 19. Respondent wrote prescriptions for Hydromorphone;⁷ Endocet;⁸ Hydrocodone and
11 Bitartrate and Acetaminophen; Lorazepam;⁹ Oxycodone; Acetaminophen and Codeine;
12 Clonazepam; and Zolpidem for J.M. without medical indication.

13 **SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

14 **(Repeated Negligent Acts)**

15 20. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2234, subdivision (c), of
16 the Code, in that she wrongfully prescribed scheduled medications to S.G., A.M. and J.M. The
17 circumstances are as follows:

18 21. The allegations of the First Cause for Discipline are incorporated herein by reference
19 as if fully set forth.

20 **THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

21 **(Prescribing Without Medical Indication)**

22 22. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2242 of the Code in that
23 she prescribed controlled substances and other dangerous drugs to S.G., A.M., and J.M. without
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26 ⁵ Norco, an opiate narcotic analgesic; a Schedule III controlled substance.

27 ⁶ A semi-synthetic opioid narcotic analgesic; a Schedule II controlled substance.

28 ⁷ Dilaudid, an opiate narcotic analgesic; a Schedule II controlled substance.

⁸ Oxycodone and Acetaminophen.

⁹ Ativan, a benzodiazepine; a Schedule IV controlled substance.

1 performing a physical examination or determining a medical indication. The circumstances are as
2 follows:

3 23. The allegations of the First Cause for Discipline are incorporated herein by reference
4 as if fully set forth.

5 **FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

6 **(Excessive Prescribing)**

7 24. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 725 of the Code in that she
8 wrote clearly excessive prescriptions for S.G., A.M., and J.M. The circumstances are as follows:

9 25. The allegations of the First Cause for Discipline are incorporated herein by reference
10 as if fully set forth.

11 **FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

12 **(Violation of Drug Statutes)**

13 26. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2238 of the Code, in
14 conjunction with sections 2242 and 725, in that she violated drug statutes when she wrongfully
15 prescribed Scheduled Controlled Substances to S.G., A.M., and J.M. The circumstances are as
16 follows:

17 27. The allegations of the First Cause for Discipline are incorporated herein by reference
18 as if fully set forth.

19 **SIXTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE**

20 **(Failure to Maintain Adequate and Accurate Medical Records)**

21 28. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2266 of the Code in that
22 she failed to prepare and maintain adequate and accurate records pertaining to her prescriptions of
23 Scheduled Controlled Substances to S.G., A.M., and J.M. The circumstances are as follows:

24 29. The allegations of the First Cause for Discipline are incorporated herein by reference
25 as if fully set forth.

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1 **FIRST CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

2 **(Failure to Comply: Biological Fluid Testing)**

3 30. Condition (2) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

4 "Applicant shall immediately submit to biological fluid testing, at applicant's
5 expense, upon request of the Board or its designee. Prior to practicing medicine, applicant shall,
6 at applicant's expense, contract with a laboratory service-approved in advance by the Board or its
7 designee-that will conduct random, unannounced, observed, urine testing a minimum of four
8 times each month. The contract shall require results of the urine tests to be transmitted by the
9 laboratory or service directly to the Board or its designee within four hours of the results
10 becoming available. Failure to maintain this laboratory or service during the period of probation
11 is a violation of probation. A certified copy of any laboratory test may be received in evidence in
12 any proceedings between the Board and applicant. Failure to submit to or comply with the time
13 frame for submitting to, or failure to complete the required biological fluid testing, is a violation
14 of probation."

15 31. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
16 Condition (2) of the June 8, 2010, Decision, referenced above. The facts and circumstances
17 regarding this violation are as follows:

18 32. Respondent missed biological fluid testing on the following dates: January 23, 2013;
19 May 5, 2013; May 16, 2013; May 23, 2013; June 18, 2013; June 19, 2013; June 20, 2013; July
20 25, 2013; July 26, 2013; July 29, 2013; August 15, 2013; August 22, 2013; August 27, 2013;
21 September 12, 2013; October 7, 2013; October 8, 2013; October 31, 2013; November 5, 2013,
22 November 13, 2013; November 18, 2013; November 19, 2013; November 21, 2013; December
23 10, 2013; December 13, 2013; December 18, 2013, and December 30, 2013. Respondent has not
24 submitted herself for biological testing in 2014.

25 33. The majority of the biological fluid tests that Respondent did complete were not
26 observed tests.

27 34. Respondent violated her probation by failing to undergo the required, observed
28 biological fluid testing.

1 "Applicant shall obey all federal, state and local laws, and all rules governing the
2 practice of medicine in California."

3 44. Condition (15) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

4 "Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of
5 probation."

6 45. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
7 Condition (8) of the June 8, 2010, Decision, referenced above. The facts and circumstances
8 regarding this violation are as follows:

9 46. The allegations of the First through Sixth Causes for Discipline are incorporated
10 herein by reference as if fully set forth.

11 47. Respondent violated probation in that she violated the Medical Practice Act, as more
12 fully set forth in the First, Second, Third, Fifth, and Sixth Causes for Discipline and when she
13 violated Code section 725, as more fully set forth in the Fourth Cause for Discipline.

14 **FIFTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

15 **(Failure to Submit Quarterly Declarations)**

16 48. Condition (9) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

17 "Applicant shall submit quarterly declarations under penalty of perjury on forms
18 provided by the Board, stating whether there has been compliance with all conditions of
19 probation. Applicant shall submit quarterly declarations not later than ten (10) calendar days after
20 the end of the preceding quarter."

21 49. Condition (15) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

22 "Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of
23 probation."

24 50. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
25 Condition (9) of the June 8, 2010, Decision, referenced above. The facts and circumstances
26 regarding this violation are as follows:

27 51. Respondent has not been in compliance with Condition 9, submission of quarterly
28 declarations, since the third quarter of 2013, and as such, has violated probation.

1 **SIXTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

2 **(Failure to Comply with the Probation Unit)**

3 52. Condition (10) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

4 "Applicant shall comply with the Board's probation unit. Applicant shall, at all
5 times, keep the Board informed of applicant's business and residence addresses. Changes of such
6 addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no
7 circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business
8 and Professions Code Section 2021(b).

9 "Applicant shall not engage in the practice of medicine in applicant's place of
10 residence. Applicant shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's
11 probationary license.

12 "Applicant shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to
13 any areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than
14 thirty (30) calendar days."

15 53. Condition (15) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

16 "Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of
17 probation."

18 54. Respondent's probation is subject to revocation because she failed to comply with
19 Condition (10) of the June 8, 2010, Decision, referenced above. The facts and circumstances
20 regarding this violation are as follows:

21 55. Respondent has not been in compliance with Condition 10, since June 2013, because
22 she has failed to respond to repeated requests for her new business address, and as such, has
23 violated probation.

24 **SEVENTH CAUSE TO REVOKE PROBATION**

25 **(Failure to Present for Interview with the Board or its Designee)**

26 56. Condition (11) of the June 8, 2010, Decision and Order states:

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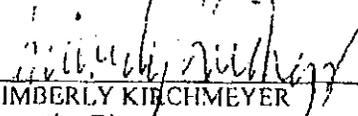
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PRAYER

WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, and that following the hearing, the Medical Board of California issue a decision:

1. Revoking the probationary license that was granted by the Medical Board of California in Case No. 20-2010-206930 to Sacha Susan Comden, M.D.;
2. Revoking or suspending Physician's and Surgeon's Certificate Number A 112824, issued to Sacha Susan Comden, M.D.;
3. Revoking, suspending or denying approval of Sacha Susan Comden, M.D.'s authority to supervise physician assistants, pursuant to section 3527 of the Code;
4. Ordering Sacha Susan Comden, M.D. to pay the Medical Board of California, if placed on probation, the costs of probation monitoring; and
5. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper.

DATED: November 26, 2014


KIMBERLY KITCHMEYER
Executive Director
Medical Board of California
Department of Consumer Affairs
State of California
Complainant

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Exhibit A

Decision and Order

Medical Board of California Case No. 20-2010-206930

BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of:)
)
SACHA SUSAN COMDEN)
)
For a Physician's and Surgeon's)
License)
_____)

Case No. 20-2010-206930
STIPULATION FOR A
PROBATIONARY LICENSE

- 1) Sacha Susan Comden, applicant for a physician's and surgeon's license (hereinafter "applicant"), and Deborah Pellegrini, Chief of the Licensing Program of the Medical Board of California, hereby stipulate as follows:
- 2) The applicant has satisfactorily met all of the requirements for medical licensure in California. She is not licensed to practice medicine in any state.
- 3) In March 2009, the applicant submitted an application for physician's and surgeon's licensure in the state of California. In response to Questions #14, 18 and 19 on the application relative to postgraduate training and substance addiction diagnosis and treatment, the applicant responded in the affirmative. The applicant has sustained a documented period of recovery and rehabilitation from his condition.
- 4) Section 480 (a) of the Business and Professions Code states that a board may deny a license on the grounds that the applicant has one of the following: (a)(3) done any act which if done by a licentiate of the business or profession in question, would be grounds for suspension or revocation of license. Sections 2234 and 2239 states that the Board may take action for unprofessional conduct, including conduct related to excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs. The above support a conclusion that grounds exist pursuant to Sections 480(a)(3), 2234 and 2239 of the Business and Professions Code to deny her application for a license.
- 5) Under Section 2221 of the Business and Professions Code, the Medical Board of California (Board) may deny a license to an applicant because of unprofessional conduct. Alternatively, the Board has the discretionary authority to issue a probationary license with terms and conditions.
- 6) The applicant acknowledges she has a right to request a Statement of Issues and a hearing upon denial of license for cause. Applicant waives notice of hearing and judicial review in favor of this Stipulation for a Probationary License, which is subject to approval by the Board. If not approved, this Stipulation is null and void and may not be used for any purpose.

7) This Stipulation for a Probationary License shall be subject to approval by the Medical Board of California. Applicant understands and agrees that counsel for the staff of the Medical Board of California may communicate directly with the Board regarding this proposed Stipulation, without notice to or participation by applicant or his counsel. By signing the Stipulation, applicant understands and agrees that she may not withdraw her agreement or seek to rescind the Stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it. If the Board fails to adopt this Stipulation, the offer of a Stipulation for a Probationary License shall be of no force or effect, except for this paragraph, it shall be inadmissible in any legal action between the parties, and the Board shall not be disqualified from further action by having considered this matter.

The staff recommends to the Board that a Probationary License be issued as follows:

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED THAT SACHA SUSAN COMDEN, applicant, be issued a physician's and surgeon's license on a probationary basis, subject to the following terms and conditions:

- 1) Applicant is placed on probation for a period of five years. Probation shall begin on the date the applicant is issued a probationary license.
- 2) Applicant shall immediately submit to biological fluid testing, at applicant's expense, upon request of the Board or its designee. Prior to practicing medicine, applicant shall, at applicant's expense, contract with a laboratory service-approved in advance by the Board or its designee-that will conduct random, unannounced, observed, urine testing a minimum of four times each month. The contract shall require results of the urine tests to be transmitted by the laboratory or service directly to the Board or its designee within four hours of the results becoming available. Failure to maintain this laboratory or service during the period of probation is a violation of probation. A certified copy of any laboratory test may be received in evidence in any proceedings between the Board and applicant. Failure to submit to or comply with the time frame for submitting to, or failure to complete the required biological fluid testing, is a violation of probation.
- 3) Applicant shall continue enrollment and participation in an approved monitoring program, such as the California Physicians Health Group. Within ten days of the effective date, applicant shall provide the Board with a copy of the monitoring contract and shall execute a release authorizing the Board to receive reports of the applicant's compliance with the specified terms and conditions, including the results of biological fluid testing. Applicant shall participate in that monitoring program at least for the period of probation.

The monitoring program shall notify the Board in writing within 5 calendar days after applicant is notified by the monitoring program of a determination that further treatment and rehabilitation are necessary. The Board shall retain continuing jurisdiction over applicant's license and the period of probation shall be extended until the monitoring

program determines that further treatment and rehabilitation are no longer necessary. Such a determination shall not be made without the applicant first having successfully completed an independent evaluation. The applicant shall provide the evaluation to the Board not less than 30 days prior to termination from the program. If the monitoring program determines the applicant is not safe to practice medicine, the monitoring program shall notify both the applicant and the Board within 24 hours of its determination. The applicant shall cease the practice of medicine and shall not engage in the practice of medicine until notified in writing by the Board or its designee that applicant may resume the practice of medicine. Failure to cooperate or comply with the monitoring program requirements and recommendations, quitting the program without permission, or being expelled for cause is a violation of probation.

4) Applicant shall abstain completely from the use of products or beverages containing alcohol.

5) Applicant shall abstain completely from the personal use or possession of controlled substances as defined in the California Uniform Controlled Substances Act, dangerous drugs as defined by Business and Professions Code section 4022, and any drugs requiring a prescription. This prohibition does not apply to medications lawfully prescribed to applicant by another practitioner for a bona fide illness or condition.

Within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving any lawful prescription medications, applicant shall notify the Board or its designee of the: issuing practitioner's name, address and telephone number; medication name and strength; and issuing pharmacy name, address and telephone number.

6) Prior to engaging in the practice of medicine the applicant shall provide a true copy of the Stipulation to the Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer at every hospital where privileges or membership are extended to applicant, at any other facility where applicant engages in the practice of medicine, including all physician and locum tenens registries or other similar agencies, and to the Chief Executive Officer at every insurance carrier which extends malpractice insurance coverage to applicant. Applicant shall submit proof of compliance to the Board or its designee within fifteen (15) calendar days.

7) During probation, applicant is prohibited from supervising physician assistants.

8) Applicant shall obey all federal, state and local laws, and all rules governing the practice of medicine in California.

9) Applicant shall submit quarterly declarations under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the Board, stating whether there has been compliance with all conditions of probation. Applicant shall submit quarterly declarations not later than ten (10) calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

10) Applicant shall comply with the Board's probation unit. Applicant shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of applicant's business and residence addresses. Changes of

such addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business and Professions Code Section 2021(b).

Applicant shall not engage in the practice of medicine in applicant's place of residence. Applicant shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's probationary license.

Applicant shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty (30) calendar days.

11) Applicant shall be available in person for interviews either at applicant's place of business or at the probation unit office, with the Board or its designee upon request at various intervals and either with or without prior notice throughout the term of probation.

12) In the event applicant should leave the State of California to reside or to practice applicant shall notify the Board or its designee in writing thirty (30) calendar days prior to the dates of departure and return. Non-practice is defined as any period of time exceeding thirty (30) calendar days in which applicant is not engaging in any activities defined in Sections 2051 and 2052 of the Business and Professions Code.

All time spent in an intensive training program outside the State of California which has been approved by the Board or its designee shall be considered as time spent in the practice of medicine within the State. A Board-order suspension of practice shall not be considered as a period of non-practice. Periods of temporary or permanent residence or practice outside California will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term. Periods of temporary or permanent residence or practice outside California will relieve applicant of the responsibility to comply with the probationary terms and conditions with the exception of this condition and the following terms and conditions of probation: Obey All Laws (condition #8) and Probation Unit Compliance (condition #10).

13) In the event applicant resides in the State of California and for any reason applicant stops practicing medicine in California, applicant shall notify the Board or its designee in writing within thirty (30) calendar days prior to the dates of non-practice and return to practice. Any period of non-practice within California, as defined in this condition, will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term and does not relieve applicant of the responsibility to comply with the terms and conditions of probation. Non-practice is defined as any period of time exceeding thirty calendar days in which applicant is not engaging in any activities defined in Sections 2051 and 2052 of the Business and Professions Code.

All time spent in an intensive training program that has been approved by the Board or its designee shall be considered time spent in the practice of medicine. For purposes of this condition, non-practice due to a Board-ordered suspension or in compliance with any other condition of probation, shall not be considered a period of non-practice.

14) The Medical Board of California reserves the right to evaluate the applicant's probationary history at or near the end of the probationary period and to exercise its discretion whether to grant a clear license without conditions, or to take any other action deemed appropriate and reasonable under the circumstances.

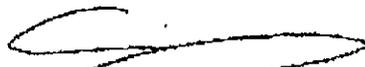
15) Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of probation. If applicant violates probation in any respect, the Board, after giving applicant notice and the opportunity to be heard, may revoke probation and terminate the probationary license. If an Accusation or Petition to Revoke Probation is filed against the applicant during probation, the Board or its designee shall have continuing jurisdiction until the matter is final, and the period of probation shall be extended until the matter is final.

16) Applicant shall pay all costs associated with probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which may be adjusted on an annual basis.

Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California and delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar year. Failure to pay costs within thirty (30) calendar days of the due date is a violation of probation.

17) Applicant shall comply with all financial obligations not later than 120 calendar days prior to the completion of probation. Upon successful completion of probation, applicant shall be issued a full and unrestricted license and applicant shall have fulfilled all terms and conditions of probation.

Applicant agrees to comply with the terms and conditions of the above Order.



Sacha Susan Comden, Applicant


Deborah Pellegrini, Chief of Licensing

05/13/10

Date

5/18/10

Date

Exhibit B

Decision and Order

Medical Board of California Case No. 800-2016-021196

BEFORE THE
MEDICAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of:)
SACHA SUSAN COMDEN)
For a Physician's and Surgeon's)
License)

Case No. 20-2010-206930
STIPULATION FOR A
PROBATIONARY LICENSE

- 1) Sacha Susan Comden, applicant for a physician's and surgeon's license (hereinafter "applicant"), and Deborah Pellegrini, Chief of the Licensing Program of the Medical Board of California, hereby stipulate as follows:
- 2) The applicant has satisfactorily met all of the requirements for medical licensure in California. She is not licensed to practice medicine in any state.
- 3) In March 2009, the applicant submitted an application for physician's and surgeon's licensure in the state of California. In response to Questions #14, 18 and 19 on the application relative to postgraduate training and substance addiction diagnosis and treatment, the applicant responded in the affirmative. The applicant has sustained a documented period of recovery and rehabilitation from his condition.
- 4) Section 480 (a) of the Business and Professions Code states that a board may deny a license on the grounds that the applicant has one of the following: (a)(3) done any act which if done by a licentiate of the business or profession in question, would be grounds for suspension or revocation of license. Sections 2234 and 2239 states that the Board may take action for unprofessional conduct, including conduct related to excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs. The above support a conclusion that grounds exist pursuant to Sections 480(a)(3), 2234 and 2239 of the Business and Professions Code to deny her application for a license.
- 5) Under Section 2221 of the Business and Professions Code, the Medical Board of California (Board) may deny a license to an applicant because of unprofessional conduct. Alternatively, the Board has the discretionary authority to issue a probationary license with terms and conditions.
- 6) The applicant acknowledges she has a right to request a Statement of Issues and a hearing upon denial of license for cause. Applicant waives notice of hearing and judicial review in favor of this Stipulation for a Probationary License, which is subject to approval by the Board. If not approved, this Stipulation is null and void and may not be used for any purpose.

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The staff recommends to the Board that a Probationary License be issued as follows:

ORDER

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- 3) Applicant shall continue enrollment and participation in an approved monitoring program, such as the California Physicians Health Group. Within ten days of the effective date, applicant shall provide the Board with a copy of the monitoring contract and shall execute a release authorizing the Board to receive reports of the applicant's compliance with the specified terms and conditions, including the results of biological fluid testing. Applicant shall participate in that monitoring program at least for the period of probation.

The monitoring program shall notify the Board in writing within 5 calendar days after applicant is notified by the monitoring program of a determination that further treatment and rehabilitation are necessary. The Board shall retain continuing jurisdiction over applicant's license and the period of probation shall be extended until the monitoring

program determines that further treatment and rehabilitation are no longer necessary. Such a determination shall not be made without the applicant first having successfully completed an independent evaluation. The applicant shall provide the evaluation to the Board not less than 30 days prior to termination from the program. If the monitoring program determines the applicant is not safe to practice medicine, the monitoring program shall notify both the applicant and the Board within 24 hours of its determination. The applicant shall cease the practice of medicine and shall not engage in the practice of medicine until notified in writing by the Board or its designee that applicant may resume the practice of medicine. Failure to cooperate or comply with the monitoring program requirements and recommendations, quitting the program without permission, or being expelled for cause is a violation of probation.

- 4) Applicant shall abstain completely from the use of products or beverages containing alcohol.
- 5) Applicant shall abstain completely from the personal use or possession of controlled substances as defined in the California Uniform Controlled Substances Act, dangerous drugs as defined by Business and Professions Code section 4022, and any drugs requiring a prescription. This prohibition does not apply to medications lawfully prescribed to applicant by another practitioner for a bona fide illness or condition.

Within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving any lawful prescription medications, applicant shall notify the Board or its designee of the: issuing practitioner's name, address and telephone number; medication name and strength; and issuing pharmacy name, address and telephone number.

- 6) Prior to engaging in the practice of medicine the applicant shall provide a true copy of the Stipulation to the Chief of Staff or the Chief Executive Officer at every hospital where privileges or membership are extended to applicant, at any other facility where applicant engages in the practice of medicine, including all physician and locum tenens registries or other similar agencies, and to the Chief Executive Officer at every insurance carrier which extends malpractice insurance coverage to applicant. Applicant shall submit proof of compliance to the Board or its designee within fifteen (15) calendar days.

- 7) During probation, applicant is prohibited from supervising physician assistants.

- 8) Applicant shall obey all federal, state and local laws, and all rules governing the practice of medicine in California.

- 9) Applicant shall submit quarterly declarations under penalty of perjury on forms provided by the Board, stating whether there has been compliance with all conditions of probation. Applicant shall submit quarterly declarations not later than ten (10) calendar days after the end of the preceding quarter.

- 10) Applicant shall comply with the Board's probation unit. Applicant shall, at all times, keep the Board informed of applicant's business and residence addresses. Changes of

such addresses shall be immediately communicated in writing to the Board or its designee. Under no circumstances shall a post office box serve as an address of record, except as allowed by Business and Professions Code Section 2021(b).

Applicant shall not engage in the practice of medicine in applicant's place of residence. Applicant shall maintain a current and renewed California physician's and surgeon's probationary license.

Applicant shall immediately inform the Board or its designee, in writing, of travel to any areas outside the jurisdiction of California which lasts, or is contemplated to last, more than thirty (30) calendar days.

11) Applicant shall be available in person for interviews either at applicant's place of business or at the probation unit office, with the Board or its designee upon request at various intervals and either with or without prior notice throughout the term of probation.

12) In the event applicant should leave the State of California to reside or to practice applicant shall notify the Board or its designee in writing thirty (30) calendar days prior to the dates of departure and return. Non-practice is defined as any period of time exceeding thirty (30) calendar days in which applicant is not engaging in any activities defined in Sections 2051 and 2052 of the Business and Professions Code.

All time spent in an intensive training program outside the State of California which has been approved by the Board or its designee shall be considered as time spent in the practice of medicine within the State. A Board-order suspension of practice shall not be considered as a period of non-practice. Periods of temporary or permanent residence or practice outside California will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term. Periods of temporary or permanent residence or practice outside California will relieve applicant of the responsibility to comply with the probationary terms and conditions with the exception of this condition and the following terms and conditions of probation: Obey All Laws (condition #8) and Probation Unit Compliance (condition #10).

13) In the event applicant resides in the State of California and for any reason applicant stops practicing medicine in California, applicant shall notify the Board or its designee in writing within thirty (30) calendar days prior to the dates of non-practice and return to practice. Any period of non-practice within California, as defined in this condition, will not apply to the reduction of the probationary term and does not relieve applicant of the responsibility to comply with the terms and conditions of probation. Non-practice is defined as any period of time exceeding thirty calendar days in which applicant is not engaging in any activities defined in Sections 2051 and 2052 of the Business and Professions Code.

All time spent in an intensive training program that has been approved by the Board or its designee shall be considered time spent in the practice of medicine. For purposes of this condition, non-practice due to a Board-ordered suspension or in compliance with any other condition of probation, shall not be considered a period of non-practice.

14) The Medical Board of California reserves the right to evaluate the applicant's probationary history at or near the end of the probationary period and to exercise its discretion whether to grant a clear license without conditions, or to take any other action deemed appropriate and reasonable under the circumstances.

15) Failure to fully comply with any term or condition of probation is a violation of probation. If applicant violates probation in any respect, the Board, after giving applicant notice and the opportunity to be heard, may revoke probation and terminate the probationary license. If an Accusation or Petition to Revoke Probation is filed against the applicant during probation, the Board or its designee shall have continuing jurisdiction until the matter is final, and the period of probation shall be extended until the matter is final.

16) Applicant shall pay all costs associated with probation monitoring each and every year of probation, as designated by the Board, which may be adjusted on an annual basis.

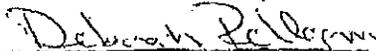
Such costs shall be payable to the Medical Board of California and delivered to the Board or its designee no later than January 31 of each calendar year. Failure to pay costs within thirty (30) calendar days of the due date is a violation of probation.

17) Applicant shall comply with all financial obligations not later than 120 calendar days prior to the completion of probation. Upon successful completion of probation, applicant shall be issued a full and unrestricted license and applicant shall have fulfilled all terms and conditions of probation.

Applicant agrees to comply with the terms and conditions of the above Order.



Sacha Susan Comden, Applicant


Deborah Pellegrini, Chief of Licensing

05/13/10
Date

5/18/10
Date

**Declaration of Socorro Tongco
(in Support of Notice of Provider Suspension)**

I, Socorro Tongco, hereby declare and state as follows:

1. I make this declaration of my own personal knowledge and if called to testify, I could and would testify competently to the matters stated herein.
2. I am employed by the State of California, Department of Industrial Relations (“Department”), Office of the Director, as a Special Investigator. I have been an investigator with the Department since 2006. I make this Declaration in support of the “Notice of Provider Suspension – Workers’ Compensation” issued by the Acting Administrative Director of the Division of Workers’ Compensation, attached herein.
3. As part of my duties as a Special Investigator, I have access to investigative tools and internet-based information databases such as Thomson Reuters Clear, and LexisNexis Accurint. These database resources provide access to public and non-public records that we use as necessary, for purposes of our legal work and representation of the Department in workers’ compensation cases and in other litigation, to locate individuals, uncover assets, and verify identities.
4. On or about October 17, 2017, I noted the address of record for Sacha Comden with the State of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, Medical Board as: 2708 Wilshire Blvd. #397 Santa Monica, CA 90403.
5. On or about October 17, 2017, I ran a search on Ms. Comden in the Lexis Nexis Accurint database. The searches provided the following information: Sacha Susan Comden resided at addresses in Long Beach, CA and Costa Mesa, CA (I will not state the addresses so as to not reveal Ms. Comden’s home address).

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 17th day of October, 2017, in Oakland, California.

Socorro Tongco

Socorro Tongco

1 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE BY MAIL**
2 (C.C.P. section 1013(a), 2015.5)

3 I am over the age of 18 years and not a party to the entitled action. My business address is
4 1515 Clay Street, 18th Floor, Oakland, California 94612.

5 I served the following documents:

- 6
- 7 • **Notice of Provider Suspension – Workers’ Compensation**
 - 8 • **Default Decision and Order – *In the Matter of the Petition to Revoke Probation Against Sacha Comden, M.D.* (Case No. 800-2016-021196), Before the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs**
 - 9 • **Petition to Revoke Probation – *In the Matter of the Petition to Revoke Probation Against Sacha Comden, M.D.* (Case No. 800-2016-021196), Before the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs**
 - 10 • **Decision and accompanying Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order - *In the Matter of the Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation Against Sacha Comden, M.D.* (Case No. 800-2014-006033), Before the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs**
 - 11 • **Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation- *In the Matter of the Accusation and Petition to Revoke Probation Against Sacha Comden, M.D.* (Case No. 800-2014-006033), Before the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs**
 - 12 • **Decision and Order with accompanying Stipulation for a Probationary License – *In the Matter of the Application of Sacha Susan Comden* (File No. 20-2010-206930), Before the Medical Board of California, Department of Consumer Affairs**
 - 13 • **Declaration of Socorro Tongco in Support of Notice of Provider Suspension**
- 14

15 on the following person(s) at the following address(es):

16
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18 **Sacha Comden**
19 **2708 Wilshire Blvd., #397**
20 **Santa Monica, CA 90403**

21 **Sacha Comden**
22 **1830 Tevis Avenue, Apt. 1**
23 **Long Beach, CA 90815**

24 **Sacha Comden**
25 **2973 Harbor Blvd., Apt. 244**
26 **Costa Mesa, CA 92626**

27 The documents were served by the following means:

28 **(BY U.S. CERTIFIED MAIL)** I enclosed the documents in a sealed envelope or package addressed to the person(s) at the address(es) listed above and:

1 [X] Placed the envelope or package for collection and mailing, following our ordinary business
2 practices. I am readily familiar with the firm's practice for collection and processing correspondence
3 for mailing. Under that practice, on the same day that correspondence is placed for collection and
4 mailing, it is deposited in the ordinary course of business with the U.S. Postal Service, in a sealed
envelope or package with the postage fully prepaid.

5 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of State of California that the above is true
and correct.

6 Executed on October 20, 2017, at Oakland, California.

7
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9 _____
CATHY FUJITA-LAM

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