# BEFORE THE BOARD OF PHARMACY DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation Against:

COLORADO PHARMACY, INC. dba
COLORADO PHARMACY;
VADIM BELITSKY,
CEO/PRESIDENT/TREASURER/CFO;
MANI MANOUCHEHRIAN, SECRETARY
Original Permit No. PHY 52413; and

MICHAEL PAUL LOWE, Pharmacist License No. RPH 37609,

Respondents

Agency Case No. 6562

#### **DECISION AND ORDER**

The attached Stipulated Surrender of License and Order is hereby adopted by the Board of Pharmacy, Department of Consumer Affairs, as its Decision in this matter.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on December 9, 2020.

It is so ORDERED on November 9, 2020.

BOARD OF PHARMACY DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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By

Greg Lippe Board President

1	v. D					
1	XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California					
2	MARC D. GREENBAUM Supervising Deputy Attorney General					
3	MORGAN MALEK					
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 223382					
5	300 So. Spring Street, Suite 1702 Los Angeles, CA 90013					
6	Telephone: (213) 269-6278 Facsimile: (916) 731-2126					
7	Attorneys for Complainant					
8	DEFOR					
	BEFORE BOARD OF P					
9	DEPARTMENT OF CO					
10	STATE OF CA	ALIFORNIA				
11	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 6562				
12	COLORADO PHARMACY, INC. DBA					
13	COLORADO PHARMACY;	COUNTY ATTEN CUIDDENINED OF				
14	VADIM BELITSKY, CEO/PRESIDENT/TREASURER/CFO;	STIPULATED SURRENDER OF LICENSE AND ORDER AS TO				
15	MANI MANOUCHEHRIAN, SECRETARY 2455 Colorado Blvd, Space 6	MICHAEL PAUL LOWE ONLY				
16	Los Angeles, CA 90041					
	Original Permit No. PHY 52413,					
17	MICHAEL PAUL LOWE,					
18	Pharmacist-In-Charge 5414 Newcastle Ave, #42					
19	Encino, CA 91316					
20	Pharmacist License No. RPH 37609,					
21	Respondents.					
22	- Respondents.					
23						
24	IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by and between the parties to the above-					
25	entitled proceedings that the following matters are true:					
26	<u>PARTIES</u>					
	1. Anne Sodergren (Complainant) is the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy					
27	(Board). She brought this action solely in her office	cial capacity and is represented in this matter by				
28						
	1					

Xavier Becerra, Attorney General of the State of California, by Morgan Malek, Deputy Attorney General.

- 2. Michael Paul Lowe (Respondent) is represented in this proceeding by attorney Rob Cucher whose address is 315 S. Beverly Drive, Suite 310, Beverly Hills, CA 90212.
- 3. On or about March 30, 1983, the Board of Pharmacy issued Pharmacist License
  Number RPH 37609 to Michael Paul Lowe (PIC Lowe). The Pharmacist License was in full
  force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will expire on October 31,
  2020, unless renewed. Board of Pharmacy records confirm Michael Paul Lowe was the
  Pharmacist-In-Charge of Respondent Pharmacy during all times applicable to the charges brought
  in this accusation.

#### **JURISDICTION**

4. Second Amended Accusation No. 6562 was filed on or about August 11, 2020 before the Board, and is currently pending against the Respondent. The Second Amended Accusation and all other statutorily required documents were properly served on the Respondent on August 16, 2020. Respondent timely filed its Notice of Defense contesting the Second Amended Accusation. A copy of the Second Amended Accusation No. 6562 is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.

#### ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS

- 5. Respondent has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the charges and allegations in Second Amended Accusation No. 6562. Respondent also has carefully read, fully discussed with counsel, and understands the effects of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order.
- 6. Respondent is fully aware of his legal rights in this matter, including the right to a hearing on the charges and allegations in the Second Amended Accusation; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against him; the right to present evidence and to testify on his own behalf; the right to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision;

and all other rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws.

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

#### **CULPABILITY**

- 8. Respondent understands that the charges and allegations in the Second Amended Accusation No. 6562, if proven at a hearing, constitute cause for imposing discipline upon his Pharmacist License.
- 9. For the purpose of resolving the Second Amended Accusation without the expense and uncertainty of further proceedings, Respondent agrees that, at a hearing, Complainant could establish a factual basis for the charges in the Second Amended Accusation and that those charges constitute cause for discipline. Respondent hereby gives up his right to contest that cause for discipline exists based on those charges.
- 10. Respondent understands that by signing this stipulation, he enables the Board to issue an order accepting the surrender of his Pharmacist License without further process.

#### **CONTINGENCY**

- 11. This stipulation shall be subject to approval by the Board. Respondent understands and agrees that counsel for Complainant and the staff of the Board may communicate directly with the Board regarding this stipulation and surrender, without notice to or participation by Respondent or his counsel. By signing the stipulation, Respondent understands and agrees that they may not withdraw his 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 as its Decision and Order, the Stipulated Surrender and Disciplinary Order 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.
- 12. The parties understand and agree that Portable Document Format (PDF) and facsimile copies of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order, including PDF and facsimile signatures thereto, shall have the same force and effect as the originals.

- 13. This Stipulated Surrender of License and Order is intended by the parties to be an integrated writing representing the complete, final, and exclusive embodiment of their agreement. It supersedes any and all prior or contemporaneous agreements, understandings, discussions, negotiations, and commitments (written or oral). This Stipulated Surrender of License and Order may not be altered, amended, modified, supplemented, or otherwise changed except by a writing executed by an authorized representative of each of the parties.
- 14. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following Order:

#### **ORDER**

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that Pharmacist License Number RPH 37609 issued to Michael Paul Lowe is surrendered and accepted by the Board.

- 1. The surrender of Respondent's Pharmacist License and the acceptance of the surrendered license by the Board shall constitute the imposition of discipline against the Respondent. This stipulation constitutes a record of the discipline and shall become a part of Respondent's license history with the Board.
- 2. Respondent shall lose all rights and privileges as a pharmacist in California as of the effective date of the Board's Decision and Order.
- 3. Respondent shall cause to be delivered to the Board his pocket license and, if one was issued, its wall certificate on or before the effective date of the Decision and Order.
- 4. Respondent may not apply, reapply, or petition for any licensure or registration of the Board for three (3) years from the effective date of the Decision and Order.
- 5. If Respondent ever files an application for licensure or a petition for reinstatement in the State of California, the Board shall treat it as a new application. Respondent must comply with all the laws, regulations and procedures for new application of a revoked or surrendered license in effect at the time the petition is filed, and all of the charges and allegations contained in Second Amended Accusation No. 6562 shall be deemed to be true, correct and admitted by the Respondent when the Board determines whether to grant or deny the new application.

- 6. Respondent shall pay the agency its costs of investigation and enforcement in the amount of \$28,251.25 prior to issuance of a new or reinstated license.
- 7. If Respondent should ever apply or reapply for a new license or certification, or petition for reinstatement of a license, by any other health care licensing agency in the State of California, all of the charges and allegations contained in Second Amended Accusation, No. 6562 shall be deemed to be true, correct, and admitted by Respondent for the purpose of any Statement of Issues or any other proceeding seeking to deny or restrict licensure.

#### **ACCEPTANCE**

I have carefully read the above Stipulated Surrender of License and Order and have fully discussed it with my attorney. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Pharmacist License. I enter into this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Board of Pharmacy.

DATED: 9-29-20 MICH

MICHAEL PAUL LOWE Respondent

I have read and fully discussed with Respondent Michael Paul Lowe the terms and conditions and other matters contained in this Stipulated Surrender of License and Order. I approve its form and content.

DATED: 9/29/20

ROB CUCHER Attorney for Respondent

1	<u>E</u>	NDORSEMENT			
2	The foregoing Stipulated Surrender of License and Order is hereby respectfully submitted				
3	for consideration by the Board of Pharma	cy of the Department of Consumer Affairs.			
4	DATED:	Respectfully submitted,			
5		XAVIER BECERRA			
6		Attorney General of California MARC D. GREENBAUM Supervising Deputy Attorney General			
7					
8		Morgan Malek			
10		Deputy Attorney General Attorneys for Complainant			
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#### **ENDORSEMENT**

The foregoing Stipulated Surrender of License and Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Board of Pharmacy of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

DATED: 9/30/20

Respectfully submitted,

XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California MARC D. GREENBAUM Supervising Deputy Attorney General

MORGAN MALEK Deputy Attorney General Attorneys for Complainant

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#### Exhibit A

**Second Amended Accusation No. 6562** 

1	XAVIER BECERRA Attorney General of California	
2	MARC D. GREENBAUM Supervising Deputy Attorney General	
3	MORGAN MALEK Deputy Attorney General	
4	State Bar No. 223382 300 So. Spring Street, Suite 1702	
5	Los Angeles, CA 90013 Telephone: (213) 269-6278	
6	Facsimile: (916) 731-2126 Attorneys for Complainant	
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8	BEFOR BOARD OF F	
10	DEPARTMENT OF CO STATE OF C	
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12		
13	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 6562
14	COLORADO PHARMACY, INC. DBA COLORADO PHARMACY;	
15	VADIM BELITSKY, CEO/PRESIDENT/TREASURER/CFO	SECOND AMENDED ACCUSATION
16	2455 Colorado Blvd, Space 6 Los Angeles, CA 90041	
17	Original Permit No. PHY 52413,	
18	MICHAEL PAUL LOWE, Pharmacist-In-Charge	
19	5414 Newcastle Ave, #42 Encino, CA 91316	
20	Pharmacist License No. RPH 37609,	
21	D 1	4.
22	Respond	ents.
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#### **PARTIES**

- Anne Sodergren (Complainant) brings this Second Amended Accusation solely in her
  official capacity as the Executive Officer of the Board of Pharmacy (Board), Department of
  Consumer Affairs.
- 2. On or about May 1, 2015, the Board of Pharmacy issued Original Permit Number PHY 52413 to Colorado Pharmacy, Inc. dba Colorado Pharmacy and Vadim Belitsky as Chief Executive Officer/President/Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (Respondent Pharmacy). Respondent Pharmacy's Permit was in full force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein. The Permit was canceled on January 14, 2019, due to discontinuance of business effective December 31, 2018.
- 3. On or about March 30, 1983, the Board of Pharmacy issued Pharmacist License
  Number RPH 37609 to Michael Paul Lowe (PIC Lowe). The Pharmacist License was in full
  force and effect at all times relevant to the charges brought herein and will expire on October 31,
  2020, unless renewed. Board of Pharmacy records confirm Michael Paul Lowe was the
  Pharmacist-In-Charge of Respondent Pharmacy during all times applicable to the charges brought
  in this accusation.
- 4. Respondent Pharmacy and PIC Lowe will be collectively referred to as "Respondents."

#### **Prior Discipline Against PIC Lowe**

5. On or about July 25, 2019, the Board issued a Decision against PIC Lowe in the case entitled *In the Matter of the Accusation Against: Anatomy RX, LLC, et al.*, Board of Pharmacy No. 5987, Office of Administrative Hearings Case No. 2018060116. In that case, PIC Lowe entered into a stipulated settlement wherein he admitted to the multiple violations charged against him, including sterile compounding violations, failure to maintain adequate records, and engaging in prohibited acts by purchasing, trading and/or transferring dangerous drugs at wholesale with entities in Canada and China who were not licensed with the Board. PIC Lowe stipulated to a

1	"Dangerous drug" or "dangerous device" means any drug of device unsafe for self-use in humans or animals, and includes the following:
2	
3	(c) Any other drug or device that by federal or state law can be lawfully dispensed only on prescription or furnished pursuant to Section 4006.
5	12. Section 4059 of the Code states in pertinent part:
	(a) A person may not furnish any dangerous drug, except upon the
6 7	prescription of a physician, dentist, podiatrist, optometrist, veterinarian, or naturopathic doctor
8	
9	13. Section 4081 of the Code states in pertinent part:
10	(a) All records of manufacture and of sale, acquisition, or disposition of
11	dangerous drugs or dangerous devices shall be at all times during business hours
12	open to inspection by authorized officers of the law, and shall be preserved for at least three years from the date of making. A current inventory shall be kept by
13	every pharmacy or establishment holding a currently valid and unrevoked certificate, license, permit, registration, or exemption who maintains a stock of dangerous drugs or dangerous devices.
14	dangerous drugs of dangerous devices.
15	14. Section 4105 of the Code states in pertinent part:
16	
17	(a) All records or other documentation of the acquisition and disposition of dangerous drugs and dangerous devices by any entity licensed by the board shall be retained on the licensed premises in a readily retrievable form.
18	
19	
20	(c) The records required by this section shall be retained on the licensed premises for a period of three years from the date of making.
21	
22	15. Section 4156 of the Code states:
23	A pharmacy corporation shall not do, or fail to do, any act where doing or
24	failing to do the act would constitute unprofessional conduct under any statute or regulation. In the conduct of its practice, a pharmacy corporation shall observe and
25	be bound by the laws and regulations that apply to a person licensed under this chapter.
26	16. Section 4201 of the Code states in pertinent part:
27	(a) Each application to conduct a pharmacy shall be made on a form
28	furnished by the board and shall state the name, address, usual occupation, and professional qualifications, if any, of the applicant. If the applicant is other than a

1	natural person, the application shall state the information as to each person beneficially interested therein or any person with management or control over the license.
2	
3	
4	(f) Notwithstanding any other law, the pharmacy license shall authorize the holder to conduct a pharmacy. The license shall be renewed annually and shall not be
5	transferable.
6	
7	(j) For licenses referred to in subdivisions (f), (g), (h), and (i), any change in the proposed beneficial ownership interest shall be reported to the board within 30 days thereafter upon a form to be furnished by the board.
8	
9	17. Section 4301 of the Code states, in pertinent part:
10	The board shall take action against any holder of a license who is guilty of unprofessional
11	conduct Unprofessional conduct shall include, but is not limited to, any of the following:
12	
13	(b) Incompetence;
14	(c) Gross Negligence;
15	
16	(f) The commission of any act involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, fraud,
17	deceit, or corruption, whether the act is committed in the course of relations as a licensee or otherwise, and whether the act is a felony or misdemeanor or not.
18	(g) Knowingly making or signing any certificate or other document that falsely represents the existence or nonexistence of a state of facts.
19	raisery represents the existence of honexistence of a state of facts.
20	(j) The violation of any of the statutes of this state, of any other state, or of the
21	United States regulating controlled substances or dangerous drugs;
22	
23	(o) Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, or assisting in or
24	abetting the violation of or conspiring to violate any provision or term of this chapter or of the applicable federal and state laws and regulations governing pharmacy, including regulations
25	established by the board or by any other state or federal regulator agency;
26	
	(q) Engaging in any conduct that subverts or attempts to subvert an
27	investigation of the board.
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- 32. *Emla* or *Oraqix* is a lidocaine-prilocaine cream used as a local anesthetic and is available by prescription only.
- 33. *Fenoprofen* is used to relieve mild to moderate pain from various conditions. It also reduces pain, swelling, and joint stiffness from arthritis.
- 34. Under Section 4059 of the Code, each of the drugs listed in Paragraphs 22-32, and relevant to the charges brought and cited herein, are dangerous drugs as defined under Business and Professions Code, section 4022 and are available by prescription only.

#### **COST RECOVERY**

35. Business and Professions Code section 125.3 provides, in pertinent part, that a board may request the administrative law judge to direct a licentiate found to have committed a violation or violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case.

#### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Inspection of October 27, 2017**

- 36. On or about June 7, 2017, the Board received a complaint from RL, the office manager of an Internal Medicine/Cardiology Practice (Practice). RL advised the Board that Respondents had delivered approximately 50 bottles of medication to the Practice. The medications were in the names of various patients of the Practice, but none of the medication had been ordered by any of the physicians in the Practice.
- 37. RL advised Board Inspector ED that in July 2016, Respondents attempted to deliver medication to a patient of the Practice. Although the medication was prescribed by one of the Practice's physicians, it was an unscheduled delivery and therefore was refused by the patient, who also notified the Practice of the incident. When RL contacted Respondents, RL was told that the delivery was a mistake and that the patient had a similar name to another patient.
- 38. RL advised Inspector ED that in or around May 2017, while conducting an internal investigation regarding fraudulent Medicare billing by an employee, they located a box of high cost medications being stored in an office room which none of the physicians had issued any

prescriptions, but which Respondents had unilaterally filled. On or about July 14, 2017, Inspector ED inspected the box of medications believed to be a part of the billing fraud and being safeguarded by the Practice in a locked cabinet in one of the offices. Inspector ED identified those medications as:

DRUG	NDC NUMBER	TOTAL QUANTITY
Demacinrx Lexitral	59088034300	10
Demacinrx Surgical	59088035300	6
Vanatol LQ Oral Solution	58809082016	11
Dermasilkrx SDS Pak	69329025001	3
Dermawerx Surgical Plus Pak	69329027001	1
Dermacinrx SilaPak	590880336700	1

39. On October 27, 2017, Inspector ED conducted an inspection of Respondents' premises. The Pharmacist-In-Charge at the time was PIC Lowe. In reviewing Respondents Patient History Reports between January 1, 2016 and October 26, 2017, Inspector ED confirmed through Respondent's dispensing reports that Respondents had filled and/or delivered to patients, multiple unauthorized prescriptions and had billed those prescriptions to patient insurance companies, including (bold entries designate the same prescription being filled multiple times):

RXNO	Rx Date	<u>Doctor</u>	NDC	<u>Drug</u>	Quantity	<u>Plan</u>
12425	6/8/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	Express
				Solution		Scripts
12425	7/7/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	Express
				Solution		Scripts
12425	8/3/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	Express
				Solution		Scripts
12425	9/1/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	Express
				Solution		Scripts
12703	6/23/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	AETNA
				Solution		
12665	6/22/16	Chang	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	AETNA
				Solution		
12665	8/9/16	Chang	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	AETNA

				Solution		
12528	6/14/16	Drury	69329027001	DermaweRX	1	Commercia
				Surgical Plus Pak		AL 610457
12529	6/14/16	Drury	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	Commercia
		_		Lexitral Pharmapak		AL 610458
12571	6/16/16	Chang	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	AETNA
				Lexitral Pharmapak		
12573	6/21/16	Chang	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	AETNA
				Solution		
12623	6/17/16	Drury	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	AETNA
				Lexitral Pharmapak		
12622	6/21/16	Drury	58809082016	Vantol LQ Oral	946	AETNA
				Solution		
12622	8/26/16	Drury	58809082016	Vantol LQ Oral	946	AETNA
				Solution		
12619	6/17/16	Chang	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	AETNA
				Lexitral Pharmapak		
12621	6/17//16	Chang	59088035300	DermacinRX	1	AETNA
				Surgical		
				Pharmapak		
12557	6/16/16	Chang	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	AETNA
				Lexitral Pharmapak		
12560	6/16/16	Chang	59088035300	DermacinRX	1	AETNA
				Surgical		
				Pharmapak		
12534	6/15/16	Drury	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	AETNA
				Lexitral Pharmapak		
12462	6/10/16	Davidson	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	Secure
				Lexitral		Horizons
				Pharmapak		
12462	7/12/16	Davidson	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	Secure
				Lexitral		Horizons
				Pharmapak		
12462	8/8/16	Davidson	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	Secure
				Lexitral		Horizons
				Pharmapak		
12409	6/8/16	Davidson	59088035300	DermacinRX	1	AETNA
				Surgical		
				Pharmapak		
12519	6/13/16	Drury	59088034300	DermacinRX	387	Express
				Lexitral Pharmapak		Scripts
12488	6/13/16	Drury	59088036700	DermacinRX	1	Retainrx
				Silapak		
12434	6/9/16	Chang	59088035300	DermacinRX	1	AETNA
				Surgical		
				Pharmapak		
12474	6/10/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral	946	AETNA
	1	1		Solution		

12474	8/4/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral Solution	946	AETNA
12474	7/8/16	Davidson	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral Solution	946	ESI
12609	6/17/16	Drury	59088035300	DermacinRX Surgical Pharmapak	1	
12527	6/14/16	Drury	69329025001	DermasilkRX SDS Pak	1	Commercial 610456
12626	6/21/16	Drury	69329025001	DermasilkRX SDS Pak	1	
12631	9/13/16	Drury	69329025001	DermasilkRX SDS Pak		
12631	6/21/16	Drury	69329025001	DermasilkRX SDS Pak	1	
12631	8/17/16	Drury	69329025001	DermasilkRX SDS Pak		
12570	6/21/16	Chang	58809082016	Vanatol LQ Oral Solution	946	Restat Suprep Coupon
12405	6/8/16	Davidson	59088034300	DermacinRX Lexitral Pharmapak	387	AETNA
12475	6/10/16	Davidson	59088035300	DermacinRX Surgical Pharmapak	1	AETNA

- 40. In each case above in Paragraph 38, PIC Lowe was the dispensing pharmacist.
- 41. During the inspection of October 27, 2017, Inspector ED requested that Respondents' manager, LO provide the Respondents' Drug Utilization Report (DUR) for the period May 1, 2015 through October 26, 2017. Respondents were unable to provide the requested reports due to alleged internet connectivity problems.
- 42. During the course of the inspection, Inspector ED made multiple requests for Respondents to produce copies of original prescriptions, labels and delivery manifests. When Respondents produced the requested records, Inspector ED cross referenced the prescriptions with the drugs suspected of being the subject of billing fraud described above in Paragraphs 33-36. Inspector ED determined that almost all of the drugs suspected of being a part of the billing fraud and described in Paragraphs 35-38, each were logged by Respondent Pharmacy as having been delivered to patients and had also been billed to various insurance carriers.

43. During the course of the investigation, Inspector ED noted that the DURs provided by
manager LO had inconsistencies and variations. Accordingly, Inspector ED asked PIC Lowe to
provide an explanation and to identify which DUR was the most accurate reflection of
Respondents' disposition records. Inspector ED noted that Respondents' records were
inconsistent in that some prescriptions for the drugs that were believed to be a part of the billing
fraud described in Paragraphs 33-36, were reported as dispensed in the DUR, but were not listed
as delivered in the delivery manifest or although a prescription copy and delivery manifest for a
particular prescription had been produced by Respondents, there was no correlating dispensing
record of that prescription.

- 44. Because of the inconsistent pharmacy records, Inspector ED conducted a patient survey of patients for whom Respondents had a confirmed delivery in the delivery manifest and patients identified on the prescriptions suspected of billing fraud as described above in Paragraphs 35-38. Fifty total surveys were mailed. Twenty-five surveys had no response. Six surveys were undeliverable. Of the 19 surveys returned, the results indicated that multiple patients never received the prescription, did not sign for the prescription, and/or the signature in the delivery manifest was not the patient's real signatures.
- 45. Inspector ED requested records of purchases, credits, and dispositions from drug wholesalers that provided some of the drugs being filled by Respondents between May 1, 2015 and October 26, 2017. The results of the audit showed negative variances:

<u>Drug</u>	<u>NDC</u>	VARIANCE
Dermacinrx-Lexitral Pharmapak	59088034300	-363
Dermacinrx-Lexitral Silapak	59088036700	-183
Dermacinrx-Surgical Pharmapak	59088035300	-140
Vanatol LQ	58809082016	-1057

46. A negative variance indicates that more prescriptions were sold/dispensed by Respondents than were purchased from wholesalers during the audit period. Thus, the audit

indicates that Respondents billed patient insurance and/or allegedly dispensed medication during the audit period without actually having purchased the medication from wholesalers.

47. Under Code section 4113, subdivision (c), as the Pharmacist-In-Charge, each of the alleged violations against Respondent Pharmacy are also attributable to PIC Lowe.

#### **Inspection of November 6, 2018**

- 48. On or about April 15, 2018, the Board received a complaint from Blue Shield reporting that Respondent Pharmacy had been billing an abnormally high volume of prescription pain cream. Blue Shield advised the Board that it suspected Respondent Pharmacy of billing Blue Shield for drugs that Blue Shield members did not want or without the member's knowledge.
- 49. Blue Shield indicated the top suspicious prescribers were Drs. VD, RC, NG, and JP. Additionally, Blue Shield indicated that upon their own investigation, they determined that patient JW had not seen Dr. VD for pain or psoriasis, had not received prescriptions from Respondent Pharmacy and was not familiar with Respondent Pharmacy. Patient PH advised Blue Shield that he only received two deliveries of lidocaine on April 11 and May 16, but not June 13 or July 13 as indicated by Respondent Pharmacy, not did Respondent Pharmacy charge PH Blue Shield's \$120 co-payment.
- 50. On or about November 6, 2018, Inspector ED conducted a second inspection of Respondents facility. At that time, the Pharmacist-In-Charge was PIC Lowe. Inspector ED requested, and PIC Lowe provided, an Inventory-On-Hand report for *lidocaine 5% ointment*, calcipotriene 0.005%, diclofenac sodium gel 1%, diclofenac sodium gel 3%, and the Respondents' Drug Utilization Report between January 1, 2017 and November 6, 2018. PIC Lowe provided a written statement to Inspector ED, confirming the reports provided were an accurate reflection of Respondent Pharmacy's dispensing records.
- 51. Inspector ED requested from Respondents, and was provided with, copies of Respondents prescription and delivery manifests for all prescriptions processed and dispensed to patients JW and PH as well as a random sample of prescriptions written by Drs. VD, RC, and NG for lidocaine 0.5% ointment, calcipotriene 0.005%, diclofenac sodium gel 1%, and diclofenac

sodium gel 3%. Inspector ED also requested Respondents acquisition records from all wholesalers between January 1, 2017 and November 6, 2018, disposition records, and delivery manifests for any prescriptions not provided already.

52. Inspector ED determined that between the period of January 1, 2017 and November 6, 2018, Respondent Pharmacy's most commonly dispensed medications were:

Lidocaine 5% Ointment	1,261,514 grams		
Diclofenac Sodium 3% Gel	504,740 grams		
Calcipotriene 0.005% Cream	400,620 grams		

53. Auditing the period between January 1, 2017 and November 6, 2018, Inspector ED determined:

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<b>TOTAL</b>	
<u>DRUG</u>	<u>ACQUISITION</u>	<u>DISPOSITION</u>	<u>VARIANCE</u>
Lidocaine 5%			
Ointment	627,296 grams	1,264,370 grams	-637,074 grams
Diclofenac Sodium			
3% Gel	560,900 grams	507,224 grams	53,676 grams

- 54. A negative variance indicates that more prescriptions were sold/dispensed by Respondents than were purchased from wholesalers during the audit period. A positive variance indicates more drugs were purchased than sold by Respondents during the audit period. Thus, the audit indicates that Respondents billed and allegedly dispensed 637,074 grams of *lidocaine 5% ointment* to patients without having purchased it from wholesalers and purchased 53,676 grams of *diclofenac 3% gel* from wholesalers without dispensing it.
- 55. While specifically auditing Respondent Pharmacy's prescription numbers 50398 relating to patient CW and 49477 relating to patient GB, Inspector ED determined that Respondent Pharmacy provided Inspector ED with fraudulent dispensing records in that the patients in question, confirmed neither had signed for the receipt of their prescriptions, neither were expecting the medications from Respondent Pharmacy, neither had been contacted by Respondent Pharmacy about the prescriptions, and the signature on the delivery manifest provided by Respondent Pharmacy was not patient CW or GB's signature.

#### Audit Relating to Humana Complaint filed February 26, 2019

- 56. On or about February 26, 2019, the Board received a complaint from Humana, managed care company. The complaint reported that an internal investigation indicated that Respondent Pharmacy had issued prescriptions to Humana members, without a valid prescriber and two members had denied receiving prescriptions which were billed to Humana by Respondent Pharmacy.
- 57. On or about May 7, 2019, Humana provided Inspector ED with a Final Report documenting discrepancies with prescriptions filled by Respondent Pharmacy and Drs. Kesler and Farr and patients CF and GK. Humana reported that there were five instances of medications filled in Dr. Kesler's name which he denied prescribing; four instances where patient GK discrepancies in the number of times a prescription was actually filled by Respondent Pharmacy; 10 instances where patient CF verified discrepancies in the number of times a prescription was actually filled by Respondent Pharmacy; and two instances of medications filled in Dr. Farr's name which he denied prescribing.
- 58. On or about July 2, 2019, Inspector ED interviewed Dr. Kesler regarding Humana's contention that Respondent Pharmacy had filled prescriptions that he did not prescribe. Dr. Kesler indicated that he did not recall ever prescribing calcipotriene cream (0.005%) and confirmed that the following prescriptions were not authorized by him, as indicated by Respondent Pharmacy:

RXNO	Rx Date	<u>Doctor</u>	Drug	Quantity	<u>Plan</u>
46395	5/7/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Health Net
46395	6/5/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Health Net
46395	7/5/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Health Net
48910	8/10/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Humana
48910	7/17/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Humana
48910	9/10/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Humana
48910	10/12/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene	120	Humana

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1				Cream (0.005%)		
2	37674	5/14/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	UHC of California (HMO)
3	37674	4/18/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	UHC of California (HMO)
4	37674	3/20/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene	120	UHC of California
	27.674	2/21/10	77 1	Cream (0.005%)	120	(HMO)
5	37674	2/21/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	UHC of California (HMO)
6	37674	1/25/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	UHC of California (HMO)
7 8	37674	12/21/17	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	UHC of California (HMO)
9	39979	3/15/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene	120	BCBS
10	39979	4/11/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	BCBS
11	39979	2/16/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	BCBS
12	39979	1/23/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	BCBS
13	44539	7/24/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Primetherapeutics
14	44539	6/28/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Primetherapeutics
15 16	44539	8/17/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Primetherapeutics
17	44539	5/30/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Primetherapeutics
18	44539	5/01/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Primetherapeutics
19	44539	4/4/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Primetherapeutics
20	46586	10/16/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Pinnacle
21	46586	8/27/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Pinnacle
22	46586	7/31/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Pinnacle
<ul><li>23</li><li>24</li></ul>	46586	7/6/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Pinnacle
25	46586	9/20/18	Kesler	Cream (0.005%) Calcipotriene	120	Pinnacle
26				Cream (0.005%)		
27	46586	6/5/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Pinnacle
28	46586	5/9/18	Kesler	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Pinnacle
20		1				1

59. Between July 9, 2019 and July 17, 2019, Inspector ED spoke with Dr. Farr and his staff regarding prescriptions filled by Respondent Pharmacy. Inspector ED confirmed the prescriptions were filled by Respondent Pharmacy as though allegedly authorized by Dr. Farr, but Dr. Farr did not prescribe them:

RXNO	Rx Date	<b>Doctor</b>	Drug	<b>Quantity</b>	<u>Plan</u>
40977	2/5/18	Farr	Voltaren	100	Health Net
40977	3/1/18	Farr	Voltaren	100	Health Net
40977	3/28/18	Farr	Voltaren	100	Health Net
40978	2/5/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Health Net
40978	3/1/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Health Net
40978	3/28/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Health Net
38696	3/27/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Prescript Solutions Med-D
38696	2/28/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Prescript Solutions Med-D
38696	2/2/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Prescript Solutions Med-D
38696	1/8/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	Prescript Solutions Med-D
32804	1/29/18	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	ADV/P
32804	12/8/17	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	ADV/P
32804	10/18/17	Farr	Calcipotriene Cream (0.005%)	120	ADV/P

60. As a part of the audit into Respondent Pharmacy's practices, Inspector ED mailed surveys to patients CF and GK to inquire about the prescriptions received from Respondent Pharmacy. On July 15, 2019, Inspector ED received a phone call from patient CF who indicated although he received medications from Respondent Pharmacy, he had never authorized them to fill his prescriptions and that he had a regular pharmacy that he used, which was not Respondent Pharmacy. CF also stated that although he never ordered medication from Respondent Pharmacy, Respondent Pharmacy continued to deliver unwanted and unauthorized creams. CF advised Investigator ED that he confirmed with his provider that Respondent Pharmacy was delivering unauthorized refills.

61. On or about January 31, 2019, Inspector ED was advised by Manouchehrian that he had disassociated from Respondent Pharmacy in 2016 by selling his interest in the business to Vadim Belitsky. On or about February 11, 2019, Manouchehrian submitted documentation to substantiate his disassociation from Respondent Pharmacy in 2016. The Board has no records of any change in ownership relating to Respondent Pharmacy in 2016 or subsequent to that year.

#### **INVESTIGATION OF FEB 21, 2019**

- 62. On August 5, 2018, the Board received an online complaint from JC stating on July 24, 2018, Respondent Pharmacy delivered GL fenoprofen 400mg prescription to her home in error. JC explained that on July 24, 2018, GL's prescription was left hanging on her door. GL was the former owner of JC's home and JC moved in on June 1, 2018.
- 63. On July 27, JC called Respondent Pharmacy and left a message stating they delivered GL's prescription to the wrong house. On July 30, 2018, Respondent Pharmacy called her back stating they would pick up the prescription within three days and JC left the prescription hanging on her door. On August 2, 2018, the prescription was still not picked up and JC called Respondent Pharmacy stating she would only leave it on her door for one more day. She was told that they tried to pick it up earlier in the week, however, they were unable to find her house. Respondent Pharmacy picked up the prescription the next day.
- 64. On January 17, 2019, Inspector A.Y. spoke with JC who stated she submitted the complaint as a concerned citizen. She was concerned GL's prescription would get into the wrong hands and accordingly, she contacted Respondent Pharmacy. JC explained that she informed Respondent Pharmacy of the delivery error, however, Respondent Pharmacy failed to pick it up for several days. Later that day, JC e-mailed Inspector A.Y. the photographs of GL's prescription and copies of the delivery paperwork.
- 65. On February 4, 2019, Inspector A.Y. called and left a message for PIC Lowe to contact her. She contacted Respondent Pharmacy's owner, Vadirn Belitsky, and informed him about JC's complaint. Mr. Belitsky stated it was unbelievable JC complained even after the pharmacy picked up the incorrectly delivered prescription. Mr. Belitsky stated mistakes could happen. Inspector A.Y. explained the delivery error was a patient prescription privacy violation

and that she would be issuing a written notice to the Respondent Pharmacy and PIC Lowe. She requested a written statement in response to the notice within 14 days. Inspector A.Y. asked Mr. Belitsky if he was still in contact with PIC Lowe, and he stated yes. She informed him that she left a voice mail message for PIC Lowe. Inspector A.Y requested Mr. Belitsky to inform PIC Lowe of the complaint and written notice being issued. Later that day, she sent a written notice of non-compliance to Respondent Pharmacy and PIC Lowe for the following violation: 16 CCR 1764, and Civ. Code section 56.10(a) in that, on or about July 24, 2018, while PIC Lowe was the pharmacist-in-charge, Respondent Pharmacy incorrectly delivered GL's fenoprofen 400mg Rx:#49129 to JC, without GL's authorization, therefore, Respondent disclosed GL's prescription

On February 18, 2019, Inspector A.Y. received a signed faxed copy of Respondent Pharmacy's written notice. PIC Lowe signed the notice and stated drivers were retrained on delivery procedures and HIP AA (Health Insurance Portability and Affordability Act)

#### FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE (Furnishing Dangerous Drugs without a Prescription)

Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(f), 4301(g), 4301(j), and 4301(o) in that Respondents violated Code section 4059(a) by dispensing prescriptions for dangerous drugs without a prescriber's authorization, including *Dermacinrx Lexitral*, *Dermacinrx* Surgical, Dermasilkrx SDS Pak, Dermawerx Surgical Plus Pak, Vanatol LQ Oral Solution, Voltaren, calfipotriene cream, and lidocaine-prilocaine as set forth more particularly in

#### SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

(Conduct Involving Moral Turpitude, Dishonesty, Fraud, Deceit, or Corruption – Billing Fraud)

Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(f) and 4301(g) in that Respondents engaged in conduct that involved moral turpitude, dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or

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1	corruption by knowingly charging patient insurance carriers for unauthorized prescriptions as set
2	forth more particularly in Paragraphs 36 through 66.
3	THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
4	(Conduct Involving Moral Turpitude, Dishonesty,
5	Fraud, Deceit, or Corruption – Producing Fraudulent Records to Board Inspector)
6	69. Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist
7	License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(f) and 4301(g) in that
8	Respondents engaged in conduct that involved moral turpitude, dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or
9	corruption by knowingly providing Inspector ED with fraudulent dispensing and delivery records
10	and fraudulent delivery manifests with fraudulent patient signatures relating to prescription
11	numbers 50398 regarding patient CW and 49477 regarding patient GB, as set forth more
12	particularly in Paragraphs 36 through 66.
13	FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
14	(Failure to Keep Accurate Acquisition and Disposition Records)
15	70. Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist
16	License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(j) and 4301(o) in that
17	Respondents violated Code section 4081(a), 4105(a), and 4105(c) by failing to keep for at least
18	three years, and/or make available for inspection, its records of manufacture, sale, acquisition,
19	receipt, shipment, or disposition of dangerous drugs and as set forth more particularly in
20	Paragraphs 36 through 66.
	FIFTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
21	(Failure to Maintain Current Inventory)
22	71. Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist
23	License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(j) and 4301(o) in that
24	Respondents violated Code section 4081(a) by failing to keep a current inventory of all dangerous
25	drugs for at least three years as set forth more particularly in Paragraphs 36 through 66.
26	SIXTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
27	(Subverting an Investigation)
28	

72. Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(q) in that Respondents subverted and/or attempted to subvert the investigation of Inspector ED by knowingly providing Inspector ED with fraudulent dispensing records and fraudulent Delivery Manifest records and as set forth more particularly in Paragraphs 36 through 66.

# SEVENTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE (Failing to Report Change in Beneficial Ownership)

73. Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist License are subject to disciplinary action under Code section 4301(o) in that Respondents violated Code section 4201(a) and 4201(j) by not reporting to the Board within 30-days, a change in the beneficial ownership interest of Respondent Pharmacy and as set forth more particularly in Paragraphs 36 through 66.

## **EIGHTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE** (Disclosing Medical Information without Authorization)

74. Respondent Pharmacy's Original Permit and Respondent PIC Lowe's Pharmacist License are subject to disciplinary action under California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 1764, and California Civil Code section 56.10, subsection (a), in that on or about July 24, 2018, Respondents violated California Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 1764, and California Civil Code section 56.10, subsection (a), by disclosing medical information regarding a patient of the provider of health care without first obtaining an authorization, as set forth more particularly in Paragraphs 36 through 66.

#### OTHER MATTERS

75. Under Code section 4307, if discipline is imposed on Original Permit Number PHY 52413 issued to Colorado Pharmacy, Inc. dba Colorado Pharmacy and Vadim Belitsky as Chief Executive Officer/President/Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer, Vadim Belitsky shall be prohibited from serving as a manager, administrator, owner, member, officer, director, associate, or partner of a licensee for five years if Original Permit Number PHY 52413 is placed on probation, or until Original Permit Number PHY 52413 is reissued or reinstated, if it is revoked.