



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine

200 Harvard Mill Square, Suite 330  
Wakefield, Massachusetts 01880  
(781) 876-8200

[www.mass.gov/massmedboard](http://www.mass.gov/massmedboard)

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Department of Public Health

July 12, 2018

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Danielle M. Roncari, M.D.  
Tufts Medical Center  
800 Washington Street, Box 22  
Boston, MA 02111

91 7199 9991 7038 5914 7925

Re: Docket Number: 18-270

Dear Dr. Roncari:

The Board of Registration in Medicine has received a complaint regarding your conduct in the practice of medicine, a copy of which is enclosed. Please provide a written response to the issues raised in the enclosed material. As part of your response, you may include any materials you feel are relevant in connection with the investigation of this matter. Pursuant to Board regulations and statutes, the person filing the enclosed complaint may have access to your response and any attachments.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) provides that otherwise protected health information may be disclosed to a health oversight agency for activities that include disciplinary actions. See 45 CFR section 164.512 (d). The Board clearly meets the definition of a health oversight agency. See 45 CFR section 164.501.

You are welcome to have an attorney represent you in this matter. Please note that if an attorney does represent you, either you or your attorney may write your response, but you must sign or co-sign it as the licensee. Your response must be sent to me within thirty days of this letter.

Upon receipt, your response will be reviewed to determine the course of action. You will be notified of this decision. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Very truly yours,

Paula Hannon  
Consumer Protection Coordinator

PH/bmh  
Enclosure



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Department of Public Health

July 12, 2018

RE: Danielle M. Roncari, M.D.  
Docket Number: 18-270

Dear

The Board of Registration in Medicine has received your complaint regarding the above named physician. The physician has been asked to respond in writing to your complaint.

If you wish to bring additional information about your complaint to the attention of the Board, please provide it to me in writing at the address above. Any future correspondence regarding your complaint should include the name of the physician and the docket number as it appears in this letter.

Once our review of your complaint has been completed, you will receive a letter informing you of the outcome.

Thank you for bringing this matter to the attention of the Board.

Very truly yours,

Paula Hannon  
Consumer Protection Coordinator

PH/bmh



Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

RECEIVED  
August 2, 2018  
Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
Tel: 617 616 1665  
www.ppim.org  
Board of Registration in Medicine

August 2, 2018

Paula Hannon, Consumer Protection Coordinator  
Board of Registration in Medicine  
200 Harvard Mill Square, Suite 330  
Wakefield, MA 01880

Re: Complaint of  
Docket No. 18-270

Dear Ms. Hannon:

The following is my response to the complaint advanced by \_\_\_\_\_, dated March 18, 2018 and mailed to me under cover letter from the Board on July 12, 2018, concerning treatment given to \_\_\_\_\_ at the Planned Parenthood clinic in Worcester on \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

## INTRODUCTION

I categorically deny that I did anything improper with respect to the care rendered to \_\_\_\_\_ at the Planned Parenthood clinic in Worcester on \_\_\_\_\_, 2015. I also deny that any health care professional involved in \_\_\_\_\_ care provided anything less than good, safe and competent care which in all respects conformed to good and acceptable standards of practice, or that any events occurring during the course of the treatment resulted from any breach of duty on the part of any practitioner. As explained in greater detail below, \_\_\_\_\_ presented for a therapeutic abortion on \_\_\_\_\_, 2015 when she was at approximately 16 weeks of gestation and underwent the first stage of a two-stage process on that date. Prior to the procedure she reviewed and signed a detailed consent. It appears from the medical record that she went home after the procedure having received standard discharge instructions concerning contact with medical professionals in the event of pain, fever, bleeding or other sequelae. It also appears from the record that proper informed consent was obtained prior to her having any procedure that listed possible risks of the procedure. The following morning, it is believed that she experienced an extramural delivery while at home and was transported to UMass Medical Center for further care. This event did not result from any lack of care on the part of any practitioners at the clinic, or because of my failure to supervise those practitioners, despite the allegations of the complainant.

## PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



RECEIVED

AUG 13 2018

Board of Registration in Medicine

1055 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
p: 800.258.4448 · f: 617.616.1665  
www.ppim.org

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

In light of the complainant's assertions as to my level of skill, I would like, at the outset, to review my professional credentials and qualifications insofar as they relate to the subject matter of this complaint. I am a board certified obstetrician/gynecologist employed as the Director of Family Planning at Tufts Medical Center and the Medical Director of Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM). I completed my residency at Tufts Medical Center after which I did a two year fellowship in Family Planning at Boston University. This fellowship included specific training in abortion provision.

I had no direct contact with [redacted] during her care at Planned Parenthood. My role at that time, and at present, is that of Medical Director of PPLM. In that capacity, it is my responsibility to assure that all facilities operated by PPLM provide care within current medical standards and guidelines as dictated by Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). All guidelines and standards are regularly reviewed and updated as is required by PPFA Consent forms are updated and reviewed at the time that our guidelines are updated to assure conformity to current methods of practice. I oversee this process, as well as the process of staff training which is monitored through a series of audits. I directly supervise the physicians who provide care in the facilities through the development of and adherence to protocols, audits and incident reviews, and a comprehensive sign-off process to make sure that all physicians are adhering to the standards of practice. I also reviewed the credentials of the attending physician in this case and granted her privileges at the facility. All physicians including the physician providing care to the patient in this case have a yearly performance review that includes a review of any incidents that occurred in the health center under their care. Although I do not directly supervise the staff nurses, nursing supervision is provided by the manager of centralized services and abortion services. Nurse performance is also regularly reviewed and audited.

#### CARE PROVIDED TO

The available records indicate that [redacted] presented at Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts in Worcester for a therapeutic abortion at approximately 16 weeks gestation. She reviewed and signed a detailed consent explaining the risks and benefits of the proposed procedure. This consent included a description of the use of dilators and misoprostol, and a specific warning that the procedure posed a possible risk of injury. She was given an ultrasound examination by which pregnancy was confirmed and gestational age was established. She wished to proceed with the abortion. She was given detailed information about the dilation and evacuation procedure, including the use of dilators, the sedation, the possible complications, and the symptoms requiring a follow-up call to the clinic. She was informed that cervical preparation was the first step, and she was informed of the risks, benefits and alternatives to cervical prep. Osmotic dilators were placed at 11:06 a.m., after which she was transported to the recovery room. Vital signs were monitored by nursing staff. She was discharged at 12:31 p.m. after having been given discharge instructions and medications which included Percocet, azithromycin and ibuprofen. She was scheduled to return the following day for a D & E suction procedure.

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

did not thereafter return to Planned Parenthood. Records indicate that she underwent an extramural delivery at home, summoned EMTs, and was transported to UMass Medical Center for further care. UMass Medical Center is our referring facility in Worcester and is also the institution at which the physician named in this case is on faculty and has admitting privileges.

## RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS

I note that the complaint is filed by a person identified as \_\_\_\_\_, who has never been a patient at PPLM. There is no indication that \_\_\_\_\_ has the assent of \_\_\_\_\_ to pursue this complaint, and in fact does not even know her address. No complaint has been brought to the Board by the patient, \_\_\_\_\_ although an attorney representing \_\_\_\_\_ has filed a complaint for damages against the treating physician in Superior Court. Neither that lawsuit, nor the present complaint, have any merit. In particular, nothing that I did or failed to do fell below the standard of care, constituted any professional misconduct or caused any adverse outcome in \_\_\_\_\_ treatment or condition.

I note that the first step of the D & E procedure appears to have been properly performed. The procedure was entirely appropriate, given the patient's gestational age. \_\_\_\_\_ appears to have been fully informed of the nature of the procedure, and of its risks and benefits. The records indicate that she was properly prepared, medicated, treated and monitored. The treating physician followed all applicable protocols and rendered care which was entirely appropriate. Standard discharge instructions were given. These include contact with the clinic or a hospital in the event that the patient experiences pain or bleeding. There were no deviations from standard practice by the treating physician. The proposition that I failed to properly supervise the physician has no basis in fact.

Next, \_\_\_\_\_ asserts that \_\_\_\_\_ was not advised of the risk of delivery following the insertion of the dilators. The thirteen-page consent form adequately describes the risks of the procedure, including potential injuries and complications, such as bleeding and leaking of fluid. The consent form is regularly reviewed and updated by the national Planned Parenthood organization. The proper Massachusetts state required midtrimester abortion consent was also signed by the patient prior to her procedure. Finally, the patient was provided with discharge instructions setting forth a toll-free telephone number for the patient to call immediately if she experienced bleeding, leakage of fluid, or severe cramping or pain not relieved by OTC medications. There is no lack of oversight, supervision or leadership in either organization, and all appropriate warnings and monitoring were provided to \_\_\_\_\_ in light of the particular procedure she was having.

Finally, \_\_\_\_\_ seems to imply that the complication that \_\_\_\_\_ experienced should have been treated at PPLM, and that the failure to treat her at the facility somehow put her at risk. Of course, the opposite is true: any complication of an abortion procedure is required to be treated in a hospital setting, and follow-up care at UMass Medical Center was entirely appropriate.



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p: 800.258.4448 · f: 617.616.1665  
www.pp/m.org

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

In summary, all of the care and treatment which \_\_\_\_\_ received was proper, and all appropriate warnings were given and consents obtained. I had no direct contact with \_\_\_\_\_ and all of the practitioners under my supervision performed appropriately. All protocols were properly formulated and adhered to. In conclusion, I believe the records show that treatment was appropriate and in accordance with the standard of care. I regret that \_\_\_\_\_ experienced a complication, but I do not believe I did anything that was unacceptable or inappropriate with respect to her treatment.

I hope this response answers your questions and will be sufficient for the Board to dismiss the letter of complaint without further investigation. Should you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Roncari', with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

Danielle Roncari, MD MPH  
Medical Director  
Planned Parenthood League of  
Massachusetts  
1055 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
Phone: 617-616-1632



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Department of Public Health

REDACTED COPY

November 21, 2018

Danielle M. Roncari, M.D.  
C/o Eric P. Finamore, Esquire  
Weston Patrick  
84 State Street, 11th Floor  
Boston, MA 02109

RE: Docket Number: 18-270

Dear Dr. Roncari:

The Complaint Committee of the Board of Registration in Medicine met on November 21, 2018, and considered the above-referenced matter. We have decided not to recommend disciplinary action and closed the complaint.

However, information concerning this matter will be kept on file at the Board. We reserve the right to reopen the complaint should you commit any violation of Board statutes or regulations in the future.

Sincerely,

George M. Abraham, M.D.  
Complaint Committee Chair

GMA/jec



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Department of Public Health

November 21, 2018

RE: Danielle M. Roncari, M.D.  
Docket Number: 18-270

Dear

Thank you for the information that you provided to the Board of Registration in Medicine. A copy of your complaint, referenced above, was sent to the physician, who was required to respond in writing.

After considering this matter on November 21, 2018, the Board's Complaint Committee did not recommend disciplinary action and closed the complaint. However, your complaint and the physician's response will be placed in the physician's file at the Board.

Thank you again for bringing this matter to the Board's attention.

Very truly yours,

  
Paula Hannon  
Consumer Protection Coordinator

PH/jec