

PRESS RELEASE
IOWA BOARD OF MEDICINE
(September 16, 2010)

Recently, the Iowa Board of Medicine took the following action:

Robert A. Bischoff, M.D., a 55 year-old physician who formerly practiced family medicine in Belle Plaine, Iowa, entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Board on September 9, 2010. The Board received information which indicated that Dr. Bischoff engaged in a pattern of sexual misconduct, unprofessional conduct and disruptive behavior in the practice of medicine. On June 18, 2009, the Board ordered Dr. Bischoff to complete a comprehensive physical, neuropsychological, mental health, sexual misconduct and substance abuse evaluation and he completed the evaluation on July 29-31, 2009. On September 2, 2009, the Board charged Dr. Bischoff for engaging in a pattern of sexual misconduct, unprofessional conduct and disruptive behavior. Under the terms of the September 9, 2010, Settlement Agreement, Dr. Bischoff received a public reprimand and voluntarily surrendered his Iowa medical license.

Joshua W. Payer, M.D., a 35-year-old physician who formerly practiced family medicine in Spirit Lake, Iowa, had formal disciplinary charges filed against him and he entered into an Agreement Not to Practice Medicine with the Iowa Board on September 9, 2010. On August 3, 2010, an Indictment was filed against Dr. Payer in the United States District Court, District of South Dakota, Southern Division, alleging that he distributed controlled substances for other than a lawful purpose and engaged in the sex trafficking of a minor, in violation of federal law. On August 10, 2010, Dr. Payer surrendered his South Dakota medical license. On September 9, 2010, the Board charged Dr. Payer with engaging in unethical or unprofessional conduct, improperly prescribing drugs for other than a lawful purpose, entering into a voluntary agreement to restrict his medical practice in South Dakota and engaging in practice harmful or detrimental to the public. On September 9, 2010, Dr. Payer entered into an Agreement Not to Practice Medicine with the Iowa Board and he agreed not to engage in any aspect of the practice of medicine under his Iowa medical license until the charges in this matter have been resolved.

Vernon P. Varner, M.D., a 67-year-old psychiatrist from Iowa City, Iowa, entered into a combined Statement of Charges and Settlement Agreement with the Board on September 3, 2010. The Board charged Dr. Varner with suffering from a physical, neuropsychological or mental condition which may impair his ability to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety. Under the terms of the September 3, 2010, Settlement Agreement, Dr. Varner's medical license is indefinitely suspended and he must demonstrate that he is safe to practice medicine prior to seeking reinstatement of his Iowa medical license.

Consumers can submit complaints against physicians through the Board's Website at www.medicalboard.iowa.gov, by calling (515) 281-5847, or by mail at 400 SW 8th Street, Suite C, Des Moines, IA 50309-4686.