

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS



830 Union Street, Suite 100
Telephone: (504) 524-6763
FAX (504) 569-8893
New Orleans, LA 70112-1499

June 3, 1993

Federal Express

Robert McKim Bell
Deputy Attorney General
Department of Justice
State of California
5th Floor
300 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90013

RE: EDTA Chelation Therapy;
James Puckett Carter, M.D.

Dear Mr. Bell:

This will reply to your several recent letters on behalf of the California Medical Board, requesting information on the referenced subjects.

EDTA Chelation Therapy. While the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners (the "Board") has never articulated a formal statement of its position respecting the validity, legitimacy or efficacy of EDTA chelation therapy in the treatment of peripheral vascular disease and coronary artery disease, it has had involvement with at least two physicians who either used or promoted use of such therapy. In the course of such investigations, most recently concluded in 1986, the Board determined that there was no scientific, theoretical or clinical basis for such therapy. No new information has been brought to the Board's attention which would, I believe, alter those views.

More particularly, in 1974 the Board held a hearing on the application of H. Ray Evers, M.D., for a Louisiana medical license. After having issued a temporary permit to Dr. Evers, it came to the Board's attention that the physician, personally and through other physicians, had previously and was then currently intravenously administering large dosages of EDTA to patients in a small Louisiana hospital as treatment for a variety of conditions, including arteriosclerosis, arthritis, hypoglycemia, hypertension, prostatic

hypertrophy, cerebral ischemia and multiple sclerosis. Following evidentiary hearing in November 1974, the Board found, *inter alia*, that Dr. Evers had, in fact, routinely used chelation therapy for arteriosclerosis, without medical justification for such use and in the presence of contraindicating conditions. Substantial evidence also indicated that one or more patients treated by Dr. Evers with EDTA chelation therapy had suffered fatal kidney failure. Based on its findings, the Board concluded that Dr. Evers was medically incompetent and defined him Louisiana licensure. Certified copies of the Board's initial notice of hearing and its final decision in the matter are enclosed. Relative to your inquiry, your attention is directed to Findings of Fact nos. 9, 10 and 11 and Conclusion of Law (c). A supplemental hearing was held in March 1975, focusing on Dr. Evers' use of chelation therapy. A certified copy of the Board's April 15, 1975, supplemental decision is also enclosed and best expresses the Board's estimation of chelation therapy at that time.

For your information, I enclose excerpts from a 1984 report on quackery by a House subcommittee, including a section on chelation therapy (beginning at p. 96) and noting the Board's and the Louisiana courts' actions regarding Dr. Evers (p. 97). Prior to coming to Louisiana, Dr. Evers' use of chelation therapy had been questioned in Georgia, as indicated in the enclosed article from the May 20, 1974 issue of the *American Medical News*. And following the Board's denial of a Louisiana license (and extensive litigation thereafter in which the Board's decision was upheld), Dr. Evers relocated to Alabama, where there began an extended administrative and litigation conflict between the physician and the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners. Some of the history, which resulted in revocation of his Alabama licensure and closure of a clinic he operated, is related in a 1986 article in the *Mobile Register*, a copy of which is enclosed for your information. If you have not already done so, you may wish to contact the Alabama board for further information.

We understand that Dr. Evers died in October 1990 at the age of 77. At the time he was living in El Paso, Texas (where he had moved when his Alabama clinic was closed by regulatory authorities in 1989), operating a medical clinic in Juarez, Mexico.

James Puckette Carter, M.D. As you requested, with respect to James Puckette Carter, M.D., we enclose: (a) certification of the physician's current Louisiana medical licensure status; (b) a certified copy of Dr. Carter's original application for medical licensure and his most recent application for renewal; and (c) certified copies of documents pertaining to a formerly pending disciplinary investigation.

In late 1983 the Board initiated an inquiry and investigation into Dr. Carter's professional involvement with and promotion of edetate disodium (EDTA) chelation therapy in the treatment or prevention of coronary or other arterial atherosclerosis;¹ vegan, mac-

¹From the information reported, it appeared that in 1984 Dr. Carter had developed and was promoting a proposal for a study entitled A Retrospective Study of the Effectiveness of the Calcium Chemical

robiotic diet in the treatment or prevention of colonic, prostate, pancreatic, breast and other carcinoma; gamma-linoleic acid (evening primrose) in the treatment of obesity; and extract of flower pollen (bee pollen) in the treatment of prostatitis, to enhance immunological resistance to infection and to increase energy, strength and stamina. Then, as now, Dr. Carter was Chairman and Professor of the Department of Nutrition of the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, New Orleans. As a result, the Board reported the information it had received to the Tulane University School of Medicine and asked that it conduct an internal inquiry as to Dr. Carter's activities.

Pending conclusion of the Tulane investigation, at the Board's request Dr. Carter appeared informally before the Board in May 1986, but, on the advice of legal counsel, declined to answer any of the Board's questions respecting his theories regarding or clinical use of the several therapies in question. The Board subsequently noticed Dr. Carter for formal hearing, charging efforts to deceive or defraud the public, professional or medical incompetency, unprofessional conduct, and continuing or recurring medical practice which fails to satisfy the prevailing and usually accepted standards of practice—all grounds for disciplinary action under the Louisiana Medical Practice Act.

While the hearing was pending, the Board was provided with the results of the Tulane University School of Medicine inquiry, a copy of which is attached. Based on information provided by Tulane, the Board *sua sponte* dismissed its proceedings against Dr. Carter pursuant to a letter of concern dated October 23, 1986. Certified copies of the Order of dismissal and of the letter of concern are enclosed. Also enclosed is a copy of an interview with Dr. Carter which appeared in the July 1984 issue of *Prevention*, a publication on which Dr. Carter then served as Editorial Advisor. You may find it of interest.

I hope this is responsive to your requests.

Very truly yours,

LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF
MEDICAL EXAMINERS

By: 

Delmar Rorison
Executive Director

DR/fo

enclosures

Blocker, EDTA, in the Treatment of Coronary Artery Disease and Its Impact on Survival after Myocardial Infarction. It is not known whether such a study was ever conducted.