**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Friday, February 12, 2016**

**MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF MEDICINE TAKES DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

**WAKEFIELD:** At its meeting on February 11, 2016, the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine took disciplinary action against the medical licenses of Heidi W. Ashih, M.D., Christine M. Murcott, M.D., Paul Robert Sklarew, M.D., Sharad Kothari, M.D. and Thomas C. Sterne, M.D.

The Board summarily suspended the medical license of Dr. Heidi W. Ashih after finding that she poses an immediate and serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. The Board alleges that Dr. Ashih engaged in boundary violations with a patient. Dr. Ashih has the right to a hearing at the Division of Administrative Law Appeals within seven days. Dr. Ashih, a board-certified psychiatrist, graduated from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in 2006 and has been licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts since 2009. She last practiced medicine in a private practice in Boston.

In a Consent Order, the Board indefinitely suspended Dr. Christine M. Murcott after she agreed that she had sent a prescription for Vicodin to a local pharmacy for a patient of the practice, signed that prescription using the name of a nurse practitioner in the practice and then picked up the prescription for her own use. Dr. Murcott, a 1997 graduate of Hahnemann University School of Medicine, is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine. She has been licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts since 2000. Dr. Murcott was employed by a private practice in Swampscott until July, 2014.

The Board also reprimanded Dr. Paul Robert Sklarew after he agreed in a Consent Order that he failed to disclose on his medical license renewal application that he had been charged with three criminal offenses. Dr. Sklarew, a board-certified allergist and immunologist, was also fined $2,500. Dr. Slarew graduated from Albany Medical College of Union University in 1984 and has been licensed in Massachusetts since 1994. He currently maintains a private practice in Yarmouthport.

In another Consent Order, the Board reprimanded Dr. Sharad Kothari after he prescribed controlled substances to his building superintendent outside of an office setting without taking an appropriate medical history or conducting an adequate physical examination. Dr. Kothari, a 2002 graduate of Dr. S.N. Medical College, University of Rajasthan, India, has been licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts since 2012. He is also licensed to practice medicine in Connecticut. Dr. Kothari, who specializes in geriatric and internal medicine, is currently employed at Community Health Programs, Neighborhood Health Center in Pittsfield.

Finally, the Board accepted the resignation of the license to practice medicine of Dr. Thomas C. Sterne. Resignation is a disciplinary action that permanently removes a physician from the practice of medicine. Dr. Sterne, a board-certified internist, is a 1979 graduate of Harvard Medical School. He has been licensed to practice medicine in Massachusetts since 1981. Until January, Dr. Sterne worked part-time at South End Community Health Center in Boston. Dr. Sterne was previously disciplined by the Board in 2005 for failing to respond to a patient complaint.

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine licenses more than 40,000 physicians, osteopaths and acupuncturists. The Board was created in 1894 to protect the public health and safety by setting standards for the practice of medicine and ensuring that doctors who practice in the Commonwealth are appropriately qualified and competent. The Board investigates complaints and determines sanctions. More information is available at [www.mass.gov/massmedboard](http://www.mass.gov/massmedboard), or you may contact Bridgette Sanders at (781) 876-8202.

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