



*Protecting, maintaining and improving the health of all Minnesotans*

*Effective: November 28, 2017*

October 27, 2017

Sandra Harder

SUBJECT: Determination  
MDH Case# OCC17002

Dear Ms. Harder:

Based on the facts and law in this matter as described in the enclosed Staff Determination, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has determined that you violated:

1. Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (c) when you failed to report yourself to MDH when you violated OCAP statutes;
2. Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (d) when you engaged in sexual contact with a complementary and alternative health care client; and
3. Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (f) when you demonstrated a willful or careless disregard for the health, welfare, or safety of a complementary and alternative health care client and
4. Minnesota Statute 146A.08, subdivision 1 (w) when you failed to provide a client with a recommendation to see a health care provider after the client admitted there is a reasonable likelihood that client needed to be seen by a licensed or registered health care provider.

Therefore, MDH is suspending your right to practice unlicensed complementary and alternative health care in Minnesota for three years. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.09, subdivision 1 (1) and section 146A.09, subdivision 1 (4) authorizes these actions.

This decision will be final and effective 30 days from the date you receive it. During that 30-day period, you have the right to challenge this decision in a contested-case hearing. This right is provided under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 14. In order to request a hearing, you must submit your request in writing. In this request, include specific grounds for challenging MDH's decision.

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If you wish to request a hearing, please send a written hearing request, within 30 days of your receipt of this letter to:

Catherine Lloyd, Manager  
Health Occupations Program  
Minnesota Department of Health  
PO Box 64882  
Saint Paul, MN 55164-0882

You may also fax your request, with attention to Catherine Lloyd, at (651) 201-3839. If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Lloyd at (651) 201-3706.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Winkelmann", written in a cursive style.

Susan Winkelmann, Assistant Division Director  
Health Regulation Division

Enclosure

Cc: Catherine Lloyd, Manager of the Health Occupations Program

**HEALTH OCCUPATIONS PROGRAM  
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**A Determination In the Matter of  
Sandra Harder  
Unlicensed Complementary and Alternative Health care Practitioner**

**AUTHORITY**

1. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.09, subdivision 1, authorizes the Office of Unlicensed Complementary and Alternative Health Care Practice (hereinafter "OCAP") within the Minnesota Department of Health (hereinafter "MDH"), to revoke, suspend, censure, reprimand, or impose limitations or conditions on an unlicensed complementary and alternative health care practitioner when there is a violation of law as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 146.08, subdivision 1.
2. Minnesota Statutes, sections 146A.01, subdivision 4 (a) (17) defines "complementary and alternative health care practices" as broad domain of complementary and alternative healing methods and treatments, including but not limited to bodywork, massage and massage therapy.
3. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.01, subdivision 6 (4) defines a complementary and alternative health care practitioner as providing complementary and alternative health care services for remuneration or is holding oneself out to the public as a practitioner of complementary and alternative health care practices.
4. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (c) prohibits failure to comply with the self-reporting requirements of Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.03, subdivision 7.
5. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (d) prohibits a complementary and alternative health care practitioner from engaging in sexual contact with a complementary and alternative health care client.
6. Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (f) prohibits a complementary and alternative health care practitioner from conduct likely to harm the public or demonstrating a willful or careless disregard for the health, welfare, or safety of a complementary and alternative health care client.
7. Minnesota Statutes, section 13.39, states disciplinary actions are public data.

## FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Sandra Harder (hereinafter "Practitioner") owns and operates Renew You Therapy (hereinafter "Establishment") in Thief River Falls, Minnesota. Practitioner offers Myofascial release (hereinafter "MFR") therapy and Brandon Raynor massage technique at the Establishment.
2. Located on the informed consent form, Practitioner describes "MFR" as "an effective hands-on technique that applies sustained pressure into myofascial restrictions to alleviate pain and dysfunction...Sustained pressure is applied into an area for a minimum of 90-120 seconds, but may be sustained for longer than 15 minutes if needed. MFR is not a form of massage. Massage therapy utilizes constant stroking movement over the superficial layer of the body and is often accompanied by the use of oil and lotion. To effectively sustain pressure during MFR for any length of time, oils and lotions are not used by the therapists and should not be present on the patient at the time of treatment."
3. On August 4, 2016, MDH received information alleging practitioner was engaging in sexual contact with a client. A police report was also filed with local law enforcement.
4. On October 26, 2016, a Notice of Investigation letter was mailed to Practitioner.
5. On November 21, 2016, MDH received a response from Practitioner.
6. In the response, Practitioner admitted to having sexual contact with Client and stated, "The sexual contact did not occur during any session wherein I was providing treatment, although said sexual contact did occur at my facility."
7. Practitioner stated there were no other patients with whom she had sexual contact with besides Client.
8. Practitioner described her relationship with Client as an " " and that the Client "provided me numerous gifts, including jewelry, clothing, and trinkets."
9. On December 19, 2016, MDH sent Practitioner a follow-up letter and asked Practitioner questions about the information she revealed in her previous response to MDH.
10. On January 6, 2017, MDH received a response from Practitioner.
11. Regarding the gifts in which Client gave her, Practitioner stated she met Client on April 3, 2012 at a class on essential oils. They discovered mutual acquaintances and Client schedule an appointment with Practitioner for MFR.
12. On March 7, 2017, MDH sent Practitioner a follow-up and asked Practitioner if she ever referred Client to professional health services after the initial appointment when he

revealed past traumas. MDH asked Practitioner to explain why she continued providing OCAP services to Client even after the client had disclosed emotional feelings for her.

13. On March 17, 2017, MDH received a written response from Practitioner.
14. In the response, Practitioner stated she provided Client with contact information to two different mental health providers. Practitioner also stated she deeply regretted having an affair with Client.

### **CONCLUSION**

1. Practitioner violated Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (c), as she failed to report herself to MDH for violating Chapter 146A.
2. Practitioner violated Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (d), when she engaged in sexual contact with a complementary and alternative health care client. Practitioner had a professional obligation to cease providing services to Client once he revealed emotional feelings for her and gave her gifts in addition to paying Practitioner for professional services. Instead, Practitioner continued to provide complementary and alternative health care services for Client, while at the same time accepting gifts and engaging in a sexual relationship at her place of business.
3. Practitioner violated Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (f) when she engaged in conduct demonstrating a careless disregard for Client's health and welfare by engaging in a sexual relationship with Client after her client disclosed personal issues, and while providing professional services. Practitioner's lack of professional boundaries is a violation of her responsibility to provide services in a manner that is safe and ethical.
4. Practitioner violated Minnesota Statutes, section 146A.08, subdivision 1 (w) when she failed to provide her client with a recommendation that the client see a health care provider who is licensed or registered by a health-related licensing board when there was a reasonable likelihood that person needed to be seen by a licensed or registered health care provider.

### **DETERMINATION**

1. Practitioner's right to practice in unlicensed complementary and alternative health care services in Minnesota, including but not limited to bodywork, massage and massage therapy, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 146A is suspended for three years from the effective date of this Determination.
2. If Practitioner wishes to be reinstated to practice unlicensed complementary and alternative health care practices, including bodywork, massage and massage therapy, in Minnesota, she must petition MDH for reinstatement. As part of the petition for reinstatement, Practitioner must submit to an evaluation by a licensed health therapist,

pre-approved by MDH, to assess Practitioner's safety to practice unlicensed complementary and alternative health care practices, specifically assessing boundaries.

3. Practitioner will be responsible for the scheduling and cost of evaluation; however, the results will be sent directly to MDH. Practitioner consents to permit the evaluator to provide any record or information obtained during the evaluation to MDH for purposes of compliance with this Determination. Practitioner shall execute and provide any health record or other waivers necessary for submission of reports referenced in Determination to enable MDH to obtain the information related to this matter and authorize the testimony of those contact by MDH in any proceeding relating to this matter.
4. The evaluator will submit a report directly to MDH, with a copy to the Practitioner. The evaluator's report shall contain the following information and meet the following requirements:
  - a. Verification that the evaluator has received a copy of the Determination;
  - b. Evaluation date(s);
  - c. Evaluation methods and instruments employed;
  - d. A review and discussion of each boundary violation that occurred;
  - e. The evaluator's opinion as to whether Practitioner requires additional training in boundary concepts and/or whether supervision of Practitioner's practice is warranted; and
  - f. Any other information the evaluator believes is relevant and important.
5. Practitioner may be evaluated within three months of the end of the three-year suspension. Practitioner must have been evaluated within six months of the date she petitions for reinstatement.
6. Practitioner shall cooperate fully during the process of MDH's enforcement and monitoring of compliance with this Determination and shall respond to MDH's correspondence within the time provided by law or by deadline of MDH staff.