

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR NURSING

IN RE:

Flora Johnson Gill
87 Woodward Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06854

1983-0715-011-018

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

The Board of Examiners for Nursing was presented by the Department of Health Services with a Notice of Hearing and Statement of Charges dated April 18, 1984.

The Statement of Charges alleged violations of certain provisions of Chapter 378, Connecticut General Statutes. The Notice of Hearing provided that the hearing would take place on May 15, 1984 in the State Armory, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Each member of the Board of Examiners for Nursing involved in this decision attests that he/she has reviewed the record, and that this decision is based entirely on the record.

FACT

1. Flora Johnson Gill, respondent, was at all pertinent times licensed to practice nursing as a practical nurse in Connecticut, with registration number R-20223.

2. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, Section 4-182(c), the respondent was provided a full opportunity prior to the institution of agency action to show compliance with all the terms for the retention of his/her license.

3. The respondent: a) On or about April 27, 1983 while employed as a nurse at Overlook Manor, a skilled nursing facility in Norwalk, Connecticut applied a 2 x 4 gauze to the mouth of her patient Kathryn Schmidt by taping the gauze at ends of mouth; b) Kathryn Schmidt had sufficient motor skills to remove a gauze taped to her mouth.

4. The activities referenced in paragraph three (3) were uncovered by Division of Medical Quality Assurance Investigator, Sophie Woodka, Department of Health Services while conducting an investigation during July and August, 1983.

DISCUSSION

5. The First Count alleges that the respondent violated provisions of Section 20-99(b) by failing to conform to the accepted standards of nursing practice on or about April 27, 1983 while employed as a nurse at Overlook Manor, a skilled nursing facility in Norwalk, Connecticut, applied 2 x 4 gauze to the mouth of her patient Kathryn Schmidt.

The investigator's report indicated that witnesses had stated Kathryn Schmidt's hands had been tied as well as a gauze applied to her mouth. Although the respondent denied restraining the patient's hands, it would seem the patient described by the respondent would not have allowed the dressing to stay on her mouth if her hands had been free to remove it.

In pertinent part, Section 20-99(b) forbids: ...illegal conduct, incom-

petence or negligence in carrying out usual nursing functions. Standards of nursing practice indicate restraining a patient's hands and applying a 2 x 4 gauze to her mouth to control noisy behavior is unacceptable nursing practice. The respondent, a licensed practical nurse, did not advise her supervisor regarding the nursing care problem or action initiated. Both improper procedure and unacceptable nursing practice were evident. It is impossible to determine the possible emotional/mental trauma experienced by the patient.

The inescapable conclusion to draw from the facts found by the Board is that the respondent has violated Section 20-99(b) as specified in the First Count.

ORDER

6. It is the unanimous decision of the Board of Examiners for Nursing that:

- a. The license of the respondent be suspended for a minimum effective period of six (6) months.
- b. At the end of the six (6) months suspension specified in (a) the respondent may apply for reinstatement.

7. The respondent, Flora Johnson Gill, is hereby directed to surrender her license and current registration to the Board of Examiners for Nursing at 150 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106 upon receipt of this document.

8. The Board of Examiners for Nursing herewith advises the Depart-

ment of Health Services of the State of Connecticut of this decision and directs that the registration license of Flora Johnson Gill be suspended in accordance herewith.

- Dated at *N. Hartford*, Connecticut, this ~~22~~nd day of *August*, 1984

BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR NURSING

BY: *Bette Jane M. Murphy, R.N.*
Bette Jane M. Murphy, R.N., Chairman