



# News Release

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## **Medical Board of California Revokes License of Healdsburg OB/GYN for Sexual Misconduct**

(Sacramento, California) – The Medical Board of California (Board) has revoked the license of a Healdsburg obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) who entered into a sexual relationship with his patient.

The revocation of Dr. Austin Merritt Kooba's license was effective on Feb. 8, 2018. While serving as an OB/GYN for Kaiser Permanente in Santa Rosa, Kooba befriended his patient and subsequently began an intimate relationship with her in direct violation of Business and Professions (B&P) Code sections 726 (sexual misconduct), 729 (sexual exploitation), 2234 (unprofessional conduct), 2234(b)(gross negligence), 2234(c)(repeated negligent acts), and 2234(d)(incompetence).

"The inappropriate relationship between Dr. Kooba and his patient is an egregious violation of the law and especially concerning to the Board," said Kimberly Kirchmeyer, the Board's Executive Director.

The affair between Kooba and his patient, who eventually began working as a nurse at Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa's Labor and Delivery Unit, began in October of 2013 and lasted until June 2014. In February 2014, the nurse learned that she was pregnant and in an attempt to conceal the relationship from his then-wife, Kooba prescribed Misoprostol, a drug that can induce miscarriages, to abort the baby.

After the abortion, the relationship began to deteriorate and the woman reported the affair to her employers and to the Board. During the investigation process, investigators learned that Kooba had backdated the prescription of Misoprostol to conceal the affair from his employers and inappropriately provided the woman with bereavement counseling.

The Board is dedicated to educating consumers on reporting sexual misconduct to the Board. Doctors are also encouraged to notify the Board of any inappropriate relationships that may come to their attention.

For more information about Kooba's license revocation, please visit his licensing details page at <https://search.dca.ca.gov/details/8002/A/71262/c3b801a4a1eef696d8d42ab1f84dc2c2>  
For more general information about the Board, please visit the Board's website at [mbc.ca.gov](http://mbc.ca.gov).

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