1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Matthew H. Haberkorn, Esq., State Bar No. 15 HABERKORN & ASSOCIATES 336 Bon Air Center, Suite 337 Greenbrae, CA 94904 Tel: 650-268-8378 Fax: 650-332-1528 E-mail: matthewhaberkorn@mac.com Attorney for Plaintiffs ROCCO RAMOS, by an RAMOS; MONICA RAMOS, Individually, an IN THE SUPERIOR COURT O	07/15/2024 at 01:16:41 PM By: Abdul Kargbo, Deputy Clerk nd through his Guardian ad Litem, MONICA	
9	IN AND FOR THE C	OUNTY OF ALAMEDA	
10			
11	DOCCO DAMOS has as 1 through 1'	CASE NO ACTION AND	
12	ROCCO RAMOS, by and through his Guardian ad Litem, MONICA RAMOS;	CASE NO.: 240V083414	
13	MONICA RAMOS, Individually; and RICHARD RAMOS, Individually,	COMPLAINT FOR PERSONAL INJURY – MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE	
14	Plaintiffs,		
15	vs.	 Wrongful Life Wrongful Birth 	
16	ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.;	3. Intentional Tort – Medical Battery –	
17	ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.; ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, a Medical	Conditional Consent 4. Fraud – Intentional Misrepresentation	
18 19	Corporation; POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.; CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP; RAELYSSA MUAAVA, an Individual;	 Breach of Fiduciary Duty Negligence Per Se Unjust Enrichment 	
20	KALIAH MENDOZA, an Individual;	7. Oljust Ellifennent	
21	DELLANIRA MOLINA, an Individual; THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF		
22	CALIFORNIA ("THE REGENTS"); and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,		
23	Defendants.		
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	COMPLAINT FOR PERSONAL INJURY – MEDICAL MALPRACTICE		

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FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(Medical Malpractice – Wrongful Life – Baby ROCCO)

THE PARTIES

1. Plaintiff ROCCO RAMOS (hereinafter "Baby ROCCO"), by and through his Guardian ad Litem, MONICA RAMOS, is a minor, born on October 6, 2023, for whom a guardian or conservator of the estate or guardian ad litem has been appointed, and he is a resident of the County of Santa Clara. See, Exhibit A, Baby ROCCO on day two of life after delivery in Los Gatos and transfer to Lucille Packard Children's Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Stanford.

2. Plaintiffs MONICA RAMOS (hereinafter "MONICA"), Individually, and RICHARD RAMOS (hereinafter "RICHARD"), Individually, are natural persons, a married couple, and the biological parents of their son, Baby ROCCO. MONICA and RICHARD are residents of the County of Santa Clara.

3. The true names and capacities of the Defendants, DOES 1 through 50, whether individual, corporate, associate or otherwise, are unknown to Plaintiffs at the time of filing this Complaint and Plaintiffs, therefore, sue said Defendants by such fictitious names and will ask leave of court to amend this Complaint to show their true names or capacities when the same have been ascertained. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and therefore allege, that each of the DOE Defendants is, in some manner, responsible for the events and happenings herein set forth and proximately caused injury and damages to the Plaintiffs as herein alleged.

4. At all times herein mentioned, each of the Defendants was the agent and employee of each of the remaining Defendants and was at all times herein mentioned acting within the scope of said agency and employment.

5. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendant, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. and DOES 1 through 5 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D."), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is a board certified obstetrician and gynecologist duly licensed to practice medicine in the State of California and doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in

the County of Santa Clara. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. is licensed by the State of California's Medical Board (license number A 65598) and is a "health care provider" pursuant to 2 California statutory law and as a HIPAA-covered entity bearing NPI number 1467463190. 3

6. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendant, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and DOES 6 through 10 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC."), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is a corporation, incorporated in the State of California, bearing entity number 4760284 and doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara. ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. is a "health care provider" pursuant to California statutory law and as a HIPAA-covered entity bearing NPI number 1104593904.

7. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendant, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, a Medical Corporation and DOES 11 through 15 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER"), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is a corporation, incorporated in the State of California, bearing entity number 2978753 and doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara. ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER is a "health care provider" pursuant to California statutory law and as a HIPAA-covered entity bearing NPI number 1124263926.

8. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendant, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and DOES 16 through 20 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "POLLARD" WELLNESS, INC."), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is a corporation, incorporated in the State of California, bearing entity number 3191240 and doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara.

9. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendants, CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP and DOES 21 through 25 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP"), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is a registered nurse practitioner duly residing at 476 E. Campbell Avenue, Campbell, California 95008, in the County of Santa Clara, and doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los

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Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara. CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP is licensed by the State of California's Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) bearing license number 2 20185. CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP "health care provider" pursuant to California statutory law and as a HIPAA-covered entity bearing NPI number 1306154976. 4

10. Based upon information and belief, at all times alleged herein, CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP was an employee of one or more of the other Defendants including, but not limited to, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or THE REGENTS, and she acted, at least in part, within the course and scope of her employment.

Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendant, 11. RAELYSSA MUAAVA, an Individual, and DOES 26 through 30 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "RAELYSSA MUAAVA"), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is an individual doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara.

12. Based upon information and belief, at all times alleged herein, RAELYSSA MUAAVA was an employee of one or more of the other Defendants including, but not limited to, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or THE REGENTS, and she acted, at least in part, within the course and scope of her employment.

13. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendants, KALIAH MENDOZA, an Individual, and DOES 31 through 35 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "KALIAH MENDOZA"), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is an individual doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara.

14. Based upon information and belief, at all times alleged herein, KALIAH MENDOZA was an employee of one or more of the other Defendants including, but not limited to, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE

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PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or THE REGENTS, and she acted, at least in part, within the course and scope of her employment.

15. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendants, DELLANIRA MOLINA, an Individual, and DOES 36 through 40 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "DELLANIRA MOLINA"), inclusive, at all times relevant hereto was and is an individual doing business at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, in the County of Santa Clara.

16. Based upon information and belief, at all times alleged herein, DELLANIRA MOLINA was an employee of one or more of the other Defendants including, but not limited to, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or THE REGENTS, and she acted, at least in part, within the course and scope of her employment.

17. Plaintiffs are informed and believe, and hereby allege, that Defendant, THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ("THE REGENTS") and DOES 41 through 50 (hereinafter collectively referred to as "THE REGENTS"), is and was at all times alleged herein, a public entity doing business at 1111 Franklin Street, 8th Floor, Oakland, California 94607-5200, in the County of Alameda.

18. Based upon information and belief, at all times alleged herein, one or more of THE REGENTS' subsumed entities, is a "health care provider" pursuant to California statutory law and as a HIPAA-covered entity. California *Government Code* § 905.6 exempts THE REGENTS from claim-filing provisions of the Tort Claims Act.

19. THE REGENTS disseminated to the public at large – as late as January 12, 2023
- the following concerning California *Code of Civil Procedure* § 416.50:

University of California campuses and medical centers are **subsumed entities of The Regents and not independent legal entities**; therefore, service of process on campuses, medical centers, their officials, or other campus or medical center entities is not proper service on [THE REGENTS]. (C.C.P. §416.50) Consequently, when designating parties in a complaint in a civil action arising from a dispute involving [THE REGENTS] or any of its subsumed campuses or medical centers, [THE REGENTS] is the proper party to name as defendant. It is

1 2	not necessary to name as a defendant the involved campus or medical center in addition to [THE REGENTS] [emphasis added]."	
3	California Code of Civil Procedure § 416.50 states:	
4	(a) A summons may be served on a public entity by delivering a copy of the	
5	summons and of the complaint to the clerk, secretary, president, presiding officer, or other head of its governing body.	
6 7	(b) As used in this section, "public entity" includes the Regents of the University of California	
8	20. THE REGENTS issued University of California Policy on Affiliations with	
9	Certain Health Care Organizations on November 30, 2023, with an effective date of December 1,	
10	2023, that states, in pertinent part, as follows:	
11	The University of California is a public trust established by the California	
12	Constitution whose mission is 'to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long-term societal benefits through transmitting advanced knowledge,	
13	discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active working repository of organized knowledge. That obligation, more specifically, includes undergraduate	
14 15	education, graduate and professional education, research, and other kinds of public service, which are shaped and bounded by the central pervasive mission of discovering and advancing knowledge.'	
16	To advance this public mission, the University's health centers, clinics, and health	
17	professional schools regularly enter into Affiliations with public and private health care organizations to improve quality and access for members of the University	
18 19	community and the people of the State of California, particularly those in medically underserved communities, and to support the University's education and research mission.	
20	The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for engagement with such	
21	Affiliates that protect and advance the University's public mission and values, including its commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability, and	
22	to ensure such Affiliations do not compromise the University's commitment to evidence-based care for all patients.	
23	21. Based upon information and belief, the following entities are business	
24	organizations, forms unknown, and are subsumed entities and affiliates of Defendant THE	
25	REGENTS: UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians (UBCP) and UCSF Benioff Children's	
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27	Physicians Foundation. Said entities are, and were, at all times alleged herein, doing business at	
28	6425 Christie Avenue, Suite 220, Emeryville, California 94608, in the County of Alameda.	
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22. Based upon information and belief, UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians (UBCP) and UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians Foundation are deemed to be "health care providers" pursuant to California statutory law and are each HIPAA-covered entities bearing NPI numbers enumerated by Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of the overall provisions of the HIPAA Administration Simplification Act.

23. Based upon information and belief, the following entity is a business organization, form unknown, and a subsumed entity and affiliate of THE REGENTS: UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco. UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco does business at 1975 4th Street, San Francisco, California 94158, in the County of San Francisco, and said entity is deemed to be a "health care provider" pursuant to California statutory law and a HIPAA-covered entity bearing an unknown NPI number enumerated by Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of the overall provisions of the HIPAA Administration Simplification Act.

24. Based upon information and belief, the following entity is a business organization, form unknown, and a subsumed entity and affiliate of THE REGENTS: UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland. UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland does business at 747 52nd Street, Oakland, California 94609, in the County of Alameda, and said entity is deemed to be a "health care provider" pursuant to California statutory law and a HIPAA-covered entity bearing an unknown NPI number enumerated by Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as part of the overall provisions of the HIPAA Administration Simplification Act.

25. THE REGENTS' subsumed entities and affiliates – UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians Foundation (UBCP) and UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians (UBCP) – are considered by THE REGENTS as a multispecialty physician foundation, and part and parcel of an associated clinically integrated network whose "**primary goal is to foster physician collaboration to deliver the most advanced maternal** and pediatric care **throughout Northern California and beyond** [emphasis added]." THE REGENTS disseminates to the public at large the following:

We are committed to valuing diversity and contributing to an inclusive working environment. We have Pediatric and Adolescent Care, After Hours Care,

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Ophthalmology, OB-GYN and Maternal-Fetal Medicine clinics located throughout the San Francisco Bay area [emphasis added]. Additionally, THE REGENTS disseminates to the public at large the following: UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians (UBCP) is a multispecialty physician foundation, and an associated clinically integrated network. Collaboratively operated by UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital San Francisco, UBCP links physicians in worldrenowned medical systems to provide patients with integrated care that results in better health outcomes at lower costs [emphasis added]. All participating physicians become part of a clinically integrated health network focused on exceptional quality and coordinated care with benefits such as access to after-hours clinic advice and the UBCP Clinical Council. Both options [Affiliate Participation Model not included herein intentionally] offer these distinct ways for physicians to take part in the network: Partner Model Designed for physicians looking for financial integration with UBCP, leveraging its size and scale in contracting and other MSO services, while maintaining ownership and control of all other aspects of their practices. Clinically integrated • EHR subsidy • Pediatric After-Hours advice services Ability to retain management Access to UBCP payor contracts • Revenue Management Services Provided by UBCP • Participation in Leadership Council Committees 26. In addition to the foregoing, THE REGENTS disseminates to the public at large the following: The collaboration between UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals and UCSF Medical Center aligns primary care pediatricians, pediatric subspecialists and maternal-fetal medicine specialists to broaden the continuum of care, sparking innovation and continuous improvement while also providing an unprecedented depth and breadth of specialty expertise to children and families across northern California [emphasis added]. As a member of UBCP, you'll be part of a clinically integrated network. 8

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Your practice will be identified as part of UCSF Health, a trusted brand with high credibility in the region, the country and the world [emphasis added].

UCSF Medical Center consistently places in the top 10 of US hospitals in its annual ranking.

27. THE REGENTS disseminates to the public at large that its Partner Participation Model is designed for physicians looking for financial integration with UBCP, leveraging THE REGENTS' size and scale in contracting and other MSO services, while the partners maintain ownership and control of all other aspects of their practices. California's Department of Managed Health Care defines MSO's (Management Services Organizations) as business organizations that provide the necessary administrative infrastructure, scale and technology for risk bearing organizations to function successfully in their relationships with contracted payers and regulators.

28. Plaintiffs allege that at all times referenced herein, THE REGENTS disseminated to the public at large that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER are – and were – partners of UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians Foundation (UBCP), UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians (UBCP) and THE REGENTS. Simultaneous with THE REGENTS' foregoing representation to the public at large, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, individually and/or collectively, held and continue to hold, themselves out as a "Partner of" UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians" (UBCP) and therefore, THE REGENTS – as evidenced by signage outside the offices for these healthcare providers. *See*, Exhibit B, photos from the office of ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP located at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032, incorporated by reference herein.

29. Based upon information and belief, there exists a written agreement between the parties, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER on the one hand, and UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians Foundation (UBCP), UCSF Benioff Children's Physicians (UBCP) – THE REGENTS on the other hand. The above-named parties intended to form a partnership pursuant to the "Partner

Model" identified herein above, and the essential elements of a partnership – sharing profits, losses, and control – are evidenced by the Partner Model which THE REGENTS "designed for physicians looking for financial integration with UBCP."

30. Based upon information and belief, and at all relevant times alleged herein, THE REGENTS has had the right to control the activities of its agents including, but not limited to, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER. Said right to control is a significant test of an agency relationship.

31. Plaintiffs allege that at all times referenced herein, while THE REGENTS has the right to control the activities of its agents – including ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER – said right of control need not have been exercised and THE REGENTS need not to have actually supervised the work of its agents. The existence of the principal's (THE REGENTS) right to control the activities of its agents (ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC. and ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER) establishes the agency relationship.

32. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and thereon allege that at all times mentioned herein, each Defendant was the agent, servant, and employee of each of the remaining Defendants and was acting within the course and scope of said agency and employment, with permission and consent. Each Defendant, by and through its officers, directors, or managing agents, authorized, ratified, or otherwise approved the acts of the remaining Defendants and/or said officers, directors, or managing agents who participated in said acts by Defendants, and each of them.

GENERAL ALLEGATIONS

33. Defendants, and each of them, undertook the care and treatment of MONICA and rendered professional services in the diagnosis, care, and treatment of her beginning on March 1, 2023, when she sought prenatal care for an unborn child, through and including the birth of Baby ROCCO on October 6, 2023, and thereafter. Said prenatal care was rendered by board-certified gynecologist and obstetrician ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., her practice groups / corporations ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and POLLARD WELLNESS, INC., CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP and THE REGENTS. Under

COMPLAINT FOR PERSONAL INJURY – MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

1	the supervision of ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., or lack thereof, the physician was		
2	assisted by her individual and/or corporate employees, CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP,		
3	RAELYSSA MUAAVA, KALIAH MENDOZA and DELLANIRA MOLINA.		
4	34. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented the following in		
5	MONICA's chart concerning the birth of Baby ROCCO at El Camino Hospital Los Gatos:		
6	L&D Delivery Note by Doctor Pollard at 10/6/2023 8:17 PM		
7	Date of Delivery: 10/6/2023		
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9	Patient ID: Monica is a 37 y.o. G3P2002 [pregnant with her third child and has two living full-term kids] who presented at 40w2d in labor.		
10	Procedure:		
11	She had a spontaneous vaginal delivery of a live born male infant. The neonate was delivered in OP face position with blood tinged fluid. There was no nuchal		
12	cord. The body delivered easily. The cord was clamped and cut after a delay. The		
13	neonate went to the pediatric staff due to concerns about the face presentation. Club feet and shortened arms were also noted. The placenta was		
14 15	delivered spontaneously intact with three vessel cord seen. Inspection showed second degree laceration. Repair was done in the standard fashion The uterus was		
16	not explored manually [emphasis added].		
17	35. The morning after his birth, Baby ROCCO was transferred to Lucile Packard		
18	Children's Hospital at Stanford ("LPCH"), for a higher level of care was available than was able		
19	to be provided at El Camino Hospital Los Gatos. On admission to LPCH's Neonatal Intensive		
20	Care Unit ("NICU") on October 7, 2023, Baby ROCCO's physicians documented the following:		
21	PREGNANCY SUMMARY:		
22	Prenatal history unremarkable. History of fetal growth restriction. NIPT negative.		
23	No history of alcohol or drug use. No medications taken during pregnancy. Noted		
24	to be in breech position and turned to face presentation before delivery. Delivered by NSVD; APGARS at 1 and 5 mins were 8 and 9, respectively.		
25	HISTORY OF PRESENT ILLNESS:		
26	Debu Deese is a 1 day ald an 40+2 have via ways with the 1 NOVT to		
27	Baby Rocco is a 1-day old, ex-40+2 born via uncomplicated NSVT to an experienced mother, transferred for evaluation of multiple congenital anomalies .		
28	Prenatal course and genetic testing prior to delivery were unremarkable. Following delivery, Rocco was breathing normally with a normal HR. He was noted to have several congenital abnormalities <u>not noted on prenatal US</u> .		
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	COMPLAINT FOR PERSONAL INJURY – MEDICAL MALPRACTICE		

1 2	Anomalies included high arched palate, low-set ears, prominent occiput, retrognathia, widely-spaced nipples, symbrachydactyly, contractures of bilateral upper extremities, and bilateral cleft feet. Decision was made to transfer to a Level	
3	3 NICU on DOL 1 for genetics evaluation [emphasis added].	
4	36. On discharge from LPCH's NICU on October 13, 2023, physicians documented,	
5	in pertinent part, the following on Baby ROCCO's Discharge Summary: Identification / Chief	
6	Complaint : 40+2 transferred for workup of multiple congenital anomalies c/f arthrogryposis	
7	(all postnatally diagnosed) tx [transfer] from ECH Los Gatos Principal Diagnosis: multiple	
8	congenital anomalies c/f [concerning for] arthrogryposis	
9	37. On May 21, 2024, Baby ROCCO was seen and evaluated at LPCH, and his	
10	medical records document the following:	
11	Progress Notes by Ana Carolina Tesi Rocha, MD at 5/21/2024 1100	
12	NEUROMUSCULAR CLINIC – INITIAL VISIT NOTE	
13	RE: Rocco [redacted for privacy purposes] Ramos	
14	Date of Birth: 10/6/2023	
15		
16	Referring Provider:	
17	Dawn Chandra Duane, MD 730 Welch Rd Ste 206	
18	Child Neurology	
19	Palo Alto, CA 94304	
20	Identification and Reason for Consultation: Rocco [redacted for privacy purposes] Ramos is a 7-month old male who presents	
21	to Child Neurology Clinic at Sunnyvale for an initial consultation at the request of	
22	Dr. Duane. He is accompanied by his mother and paternal grandmother, from whom additional history was obtained. Sources of information for this visit	
23	included review of the medical record and parental report.	
24	Chief complain[t]: Arthrogryposis	
25	History of Present Illness:	
26	Rocco is an adorable 7 months referred to neuromuscular clinic for initial	
27	evaluation of <u>arthrogryposis</u> . In brief, Rocco was born after an uncomplicated pregnancy, full term. Apgar's were 8/9. His mother said the diagnosis was made at	
28	birth as there were no concerns brought up during prenatal care and fetal ultrasounds monitoring. Immediately after birth, he was found to have contractures	
	of multiple joints consistent with arthrogryposis multiplex congenita, along with	
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	COMPLAINT FOR PERSONAL INJURY – MEDICAL MALPRACTICE	

symbrachydactyly, bilateral cleft feet and inability to flex the R knee. His neurological exam was significant for decreased bulk of bilateral UE> LE, arms held abducted and flexed at elbows with flicker movement detected at deltoid bilaterally. R leg fixed in extension, L leg flexed at knee, legs responsive to noxious stimulation and moving antigravity, moving toes spontaneously and patient able to support head and trunk on horizontal suspension. Rest of mental status appropriate for age and normal cranial nerves.

Brain MRI was done showing ectopic neurohypophysis and mildly thin corpus callosum. Craniofacial anomalies including low-set ears, high arched palate, retrognathia, prominent spheno-occipital synchondrosis also reported. Spine MRI reported normal. Rocco was also seen by genetics and rapid genomic trip was done and resulted negative for any significant pathogenic variant.

Extremities: Arthrogryposis affecting both distal > proximal joints with dimples and lack of development of hands (severe brachydactyly) /nails [missing] and feet bilaterally (talipes equinovarus). Shoulders internally rotated, elbows and knees extended with contractures of the joints respectively.

38. On April 20, 2024, Elizabeth Celeste Ballinger, M.D., a physician at LPCH's Neurology Clinic, wrote a letter addressed to Baby ROCCO and "To Whom It May Concern" wherein she stated, in pertinent part, as follows:

Rocco [redacted for privacy purposes] Ramos is a patient followed by myself in the Stanford Child Neurology Clinic. I have been a part of Rocco's treatment team since birth and am familiar with his medical conditions and medical history. He carries a diagnosis of both arthrogryposis multiplex congenita as well as quadriplegic cerebral palsy, both of which are incurable, non progressive conditions that will nevertheless cause lifelong disability. He and his family should be provided with maximal therapeutic supports.

39. Baby ROCCO was born with a birth defect, and he and his family are forever gravely impacted by this diagnosed condition called arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) as well as quadriplegic cerebral palsy, both of which are incurable, non-progressive conditions that will nevertheless cause lifelong disability and special needs for a lifetime of care. Plaintiffs question why Baby ROCCO was born into this world when modern medicine – 23 years into the 21st Century – has well-educated and well-trained licensed healthcare practitioners and easy accessibility to the necessary medical devices to avoid this life. While deeply sad, but patently true – had MONICA been given <u>any information whatsoever</u> that her unborn son then had any

sort of fetal anomaly as early as May 5, 2023 [18 weeks, 2 days gestational age], or as soon thereafter when given adequate information and advice from a board certified OB/GYN 2 (obstetrician gynecologist) and/or more likely, an MFM (Maternal Fetal Medicine), to make an 3 informed decision [her body, her choice to keep or terminate], she would have elected to have a 4 5 second-trimester surgical abortion for pregnancy termination due to fetal anomalies.

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40. All of MONICA's prenatal ultrasounds were conducted at the offices of Defendants located at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032. Based upon information and belief, the ultrasound equipment at the Defendants' Los Gatos offices was archaic, out-of-service, in need of maintenance and/or just not adequate to provide competent prenatal care in the Bay Area in 2023.

41. Obstetric ultrasonography is an important and common part of obstetric care in the United States. Ultrasound is used to monitor pregnancy and to diagnose and monitor medical conditions that are not related to pregnancy. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists ("ACOG"), the American College of Radiology, the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Society for Maternal–Fetal Medicine, and the Society of Radiologists in Ultrasound (hereinafter collectively referred to jointly as "ACOG") have adopted uniform terminology for the performance of ultrasonography in the second trimester and the third trimester: standard, limited, and specialized.

42. On March 1, 2023, MONICA presented for her first obstetrical visit with Defendants. At this appointment, MONICA was at 8 weeks 5 days gestation. CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP documents in her patient's medical records on file at Defendants' Los Gatos office: "This is not a planned pregnancy but wanted. She is at 9w0d gestation. Her obstetrical history is significant for advanced maternal age. ... Pregnancy history fully reviewed. ... 24 Indication for sonogram: Pregnancy dating/viability Transvaginal ultrasound performed in clinic 25 on 3/1/2023." See, Exhibit C, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital (THE REGENTS) Report of 5/5/2023 Ultrasound from UCSF MyChart. Today, there exist no similar ultrasound reports in UCSF's MyChart for any subsequent ultrasounds performed during MONICA's 28

prenatal care. <u>*Why not?*</u> There are no handwritten notes from the ultrasound technician, however, the digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicates the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP then documents as a charge for this encounter, among other items, **CPT** [Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) codes provide a uniform nomenclature for coding medical procedures and services] **code 76801** which describes an ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation, first trimester (<14 weeks 0 days), transabdominal approach, single or first gestation.

43. Based upon information and belief, the March 1, 2023, transvaginal ultrasound performed by CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP was a standard ultrasound exam according to the uniform terminology of ACOG – standard ultrasound exam that checks the fetus's physical development, screens for major congenital anomalies, and estimates gestational age. There exist only four still images of this ultrasound. RAELYSSA MUAAVA executed a sworn declaration on April 22, 2024, as custodian of records for ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, writing "[u]ltrasound images were printed directly from ultrasound machine & other images were printed from patient's file" when responding to the patient's request for a complete set of medical records including, but not limited to, "any and all digital copies of all antenatal UTZ (ultrasonography) pertaining to Monica Ramos." RAELYSSA MUAAVA, in regard to records unable to be produced, writes in his declaration "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging."

44. Based upon information and belief, given the custodian of record's declaration set forth hereinabove, Defendants' ultrasound equipment in their Los Gatos' office did not have the capacity, at any time during MONCIA's prenatal care, to maintain and store the patient's medical records [real time visualization of imaging from the ultrasounds]. *One must ponder how ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. was able to interpret ultrasound any ACOG identified class of examinations with access to mere stills printed from real time visualization of the imaging.* The failure of a physician to maintain adequate and accurate records relating to the provision of

services to their patients for at least seven years after the last date of service to a patient constitutes unprofessional conduct. *See*, California *Business & Professions Code* §2266.

45. On March 24, 2023, MONICA presented for her second obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. A second ultrasound was done at this appointment, and this time it is documented as an NT ultrasound, or a nuchal scan or nuchal translucency scan/procedure that is a sonographic prenatal screening scan to detect chromosomal abnormalities in a fetus, though altered extracellular matrix composition and limited lymphatic drainage can also be detected. This ultrasound is also identified by ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. as an FT ultrasound conceivably meaning the first trimester of the pregnancy. The physician documents as part of her ultrasound findings "[a]natomy nl [normal]: brain, spine, diaphragm, stomach, bladder, 4 limbs with 2 hands and 2 feet, placenta, heart, 2 orbits, upper and lower jaw." Notes from the ultrasound technician are unsigned, however, the digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. then documents as a charge for this encounter, among other items, CPT code 76801 which describes an ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time image documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation, first trimester (<14 weeks 0 days), transabdominal approach, single or first gestation.

46. Based upon information and belief, the **March 24, 2023**, ultrasound performed by CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP was a standard ultrasound exam according to the uniform terminology of ACOG – standard ultrasound exam that checks the fetus's physical development, screens for major congenital anomalies, and estimates gestational age. There exist only four still images of this ultrasound. RAELYSSA MUAAVA executed a sworn declaration on April 22, 2024, as custodian of records for ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER wherein he writes "[u]ltrasound images were printed directly from ultrasound machine & other images were printed from patient's file" when responding to the patient's request for a complete set of medical records including, but not limited to, any and all digital copies of all antenatal UTZ pertaining to

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MONICA. RAELYSSA MUAAVA, in regard to records unable to be produced, writes in his declaration "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging."

47. On **April 21, 2023**, MONICA presented for her <u>third</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. No ultrasonography was performed.

48. On **May 5, 2023**, MONICA (18 weeks 2 days gestation) presented for her <u>fourth</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. A third ultrasound was done at this appointment, and this time it is documented as an "Ultrasound OB 2nd trimester level two (Clinic Performed)". The physician documents as part of her ultrasound findings:

The following anatomy is visualized and is within normal limits Calvarium, intracranial anatomy, cerebellum, choroid plexus, cisterna magna, right and left lateral ventricle, fetal profile, fetal face, fetal lips and nose, fetal orbits, stomach, diaphragm, right and left kidney bladder, spine, umbilical cord insertion, three-vessel cord, four-chamber view of the heart, right and left ventricular outflow tracts, diaphragm, liver, right arm and hand, left arm and hand, right leg and foot, left leg and foot, genitalia male[.] *b*

The physician further noted the patient was at risk for chromosomal anomalies for maternal age > 34 yo. Notes from the ultrasound technician are unsigned, but whoever the technician is, he/she left a handwritten comment – "arms remained cross[.]". The digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. then documents as a charge for this encounter, among other items, **CPT code 76811**.

49. Based upon information and belief, the **May 5, 2023**, ultrasound performed by CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP was a specialized ultrasound exam according to the uniform terminology of ACOG – specialized ultrasound exam is performed if a problem is suspected based on risk factors or other tests. For example, if there are signs that the fetus is not growing well, the fetus's growth rate can be tracked throughout pregnancy with specialized ultrasound exams. Depending on what the suspected problem might be, specialized techniques may be used, such as Doppler ultrasonography and 3-D ultrasonography. There exist only 19 still images of this

ultrasound. RAELYSSA MUAAVA executed a sworn declaration on April 22, 2024, as
custodian of records for ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER wherein he writes "[u]ltrasound
images were printed directly from ultrasound machine & other images were printed from patient's
file" when responding to the patient's request for a complete set of medical records including, but
not limited to, "any and all digital copies of all antenatal UTZ (ultrasonography) pertaining to
Monica Ramos. ..." RAELYSSA MUAAVA, in regard to records unable to be produced, writes
in his declaration "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging."

50. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. submitted billing for this **May 5, 2023**, specialized ultrasound, to MONICA's health insurance carrier utilizing the **CPT code 76811**. Said specialized ultrasound billing code is more costly (for a legitimate reason) than the standard ultrasound and generates more revenue to ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. and her cohorts – owners or lessors of the medical device/equipment, technicians operating the medical device/equipment, NPs operating (sometimes interpreting examinations) the medical device/equipment and physicians operating or interpreting the examinations of the ultrasound equipment – in Defendants' Los Gatos office. This ultrasound, as well as all others performed during MONICA's prenatal care, was done in the clinic or offices of Defendants located at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032. Based upon information and belief, the ultrasound technician for this specialized ultrasound, and possibly others, was an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male – regardless of the fact that the digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

51. ACOG's *Ultrasound in Pregnancy*, Practice Bulletin No. 175, Dec. 2016 (Reaffirmed 2020), states as follows for the specialized exam:

The components of the specialized examination are more extensive than for a standard ultrasound examination and are determined on a case-by-case basis. Also referred to as a "detailed," "targeted," or "76811" ultrasound examination, the specialized anatomic examination is performed when there is an increased risk of an anomaly based on the history, laboratory abnormalities, or the results of the limited examination or the standard examination. Other specialized examinations include fetal Doppler ultrasonography, biophysical profile, fetal echocardiography, or additional biometric measurements. Specialized examinations are performed by an operator with formal training in this

area. Indications for specialized examinations also include the possibility of fetal 1 growth restriction and multifetal gestation. 2 Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. 52. 3 specifically ordered the 76811 targeted ultrasound be performed, for she later interpreted the study 4 - or not – when rendering prenatal care to MONICA, and she billed an insurance company for 5 said exam. 6 53. The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine issued a December 31, 2012, White 7 Paper on Ultrasound Code 76811 which states as follows, in pertinent part: 8 The CPT 76811 (Ultrasound, pregnant uterus, real time with image 9 documentation, fetal and maternal evaluation plus detailed fetal anatomic examination) is not intended to be the routine scan performed for all 10 pregnancies. Rather, it is intended for a known or suspected fetal anatomic, genetic abnormality (i.e., previous anomalous fetus, abnormal scan this pregnancy, 11 etc.) or increased risk for fetal abnormality (e.g. AMA, diabetic, fetus at risk due to teratogen or genetics, abnormal prenatal screen). Thus, the performance of 12 CPT 76811 is expected to be rare outside of referral practices with special 13 expertise in the identification of, and counseling about, fetal anomalies. 14 It is felt by all organizations involved in the codes development and description that only one medically indicated CPT 76811 per pregnancy, per practice is 15 appropriate. Once this detailed fetal anatomical exam (76811) is done, a second 16 one should not be performed unless there are extenuating circumstances with a new diagnosis. It is appropriate to use CPT 76811 when a patient is seen by 17 another maternal-fetal medicine specialist practice, for example, for a second 18 opinion on a fetal anomaly, or if the patient is referred to a tertiary center in anticipation of delivering an anomalous fetus at a hospital with specialized 19 neonatal capabilities. 20 The 76811 includes all of the components of the 76805, plus a detailed fetal 21 anatomical survey [emphasis added]. 22 54. Plaintiffs allege that had ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. made an 23 informed medical (not financial) decision that MONICA (advanced maternal age > 34 yo 24 and . . .?) needed something other than a standard ultrasound examination on May 5, 2023, the 25 OB/GYN should have either referred MONICA to a maternal fetal medicine (MFM) 26 physician/practice for consultation, or she should have sent her patient to a qualified 27 radiology/ultrasound clinic who performs these exams for OB/GYN's that do not maintain their 28 own in-office machine capable of performing, recording and interpreting (by an MFM) a targeted ultrasound examination. Plaintiffs further allege that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. should have referred MONICA to an MFM. In fact, THE REGENTS' UBCP includes an MFM practice that, according to THE REGENTS, is the "Bay Area's most comprehensive and experienced high-risk obstetric practice." ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. had direct access to UBCP's MFM practice which, coincidentally, also meets the rigorous standards established by the State of California to be designated a Prenatal Diagnosis Center (PDC). Why didn't MONICA have a targeted exam done at or in consultation with her physician's partner, THE REGENTS? Since a reasonably careful obstetrician and gynecologist in the same situation would have referred MONICA to a specialist – an MFM – then ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. was negligent since she did not make such referral.

55. Based on information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. and her Los Gatos office lacked the capability to perform a 76811 targeted ultrasound examination in May 2023, for the office lacked the medical device/equipment and technology to produce adequate results for an OB/GYN's interpretation and consultation with patients – unless the OB/GYN was actually present to view the real time visualization of the ultrasound – **this didn't happen on May 5, 2023**. Plaintiffs allege herein that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. did not (and could not) adequately review the entire ultrasound examination done by her technician but listed sonographer CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. – including static and dynamic imaging from real time visualization of the examination – in accordance with ACOG's Practice Bulletin, the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine and the applicable standard of care. Plaintiffs also allege herein that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. did not, and could not, have adequately, reviewed the targeted 76811 ultrasound examination, for:

> RAELYSSA MUAAVA declares, in regard to records unable to be produced on April 22, 2024, that "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging";

> • The ultrasound was performed by an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male – the technician; and

• The digitally scanned film-like note in MONICA's medical records for this visit and study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

56. Based on information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. – in providing prenatal care on and after May 5, 2023 – could only have relied on the technician's 19 still images from the lengthy 76811 targeted ultrasound and the preliminary findings documented on a handwritten note authored by either the technician [an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male] and/or the sonographer CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. ACOG and the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine, Coding Committee make note that if any of the required fetal or maternal components are non-visualized due to fetal position, late gestational age, maternal habitus, etc., it **must** be clearly noted in the ultrasound report in order to meet the requirements to bill for the service. Nothing else existed for ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. to interpret, and ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. was not in the ultrasound examination room. *How then could ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. interpret the so-called targeted examination and provide sound medical advice to MONICA about the findings or lack thereof? See*, Exhibit D Report of 5/5/2023 Ultrasound from UCSF MyChart and Exhibit F, excerpt from the After Visit Summary handed to MONICA following this appointment.

57. "The second trimester ultrasound is commonly performed between 18- and 22weeks' gestation. Historically the second trimester ultrasound was often the only routine scan offered in a pregnancy and so was expected to provide information about gestational age (correcting menstrual dates if necessary), fetal number and type of multiple pregnancy, placental position and pathology, as well as detecting fetal abnormalities. Many patients now have several ultrasounds in their pregnancy with the first trimester nuchal translucency assessment becoming particularly common. **The second trimester ultrasound** is now less often required for dating or detection of multiple pregnancies but remains very important to detect placental pathology and, despite advances in first trimester anomaly detection, **remains an important ultrasound for the detection of fetal abnormalities**. *In order to maximize detection rates, there is evidence that the ultrasound should be performed by operators with specific training in the detection of fetal*

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abnormalities [emphasis added]." *See,* Bethune M, Alibrahim E, Davies B, Yong E. A pictorial guide for the second trimester ultrasound. Australas J Ultrasound Med. 2013 Aug;16(3):98-113.

The American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS®) 58. administers examinations and awards credentials in areas of ultrasound. Through its mission, ARDMS empowers sonographers to provide exceptional patient care through rigorous assessments and continual learning. It is part of the Inteleos[™] family of Councils that includes the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography® (ARDMS®), the Alliance for Physician Certification and AdvancementTM (APCATM), the Point-of-Care-Ultrasound Certification Academy (PCATM), and the Inteleos Foundation. An RDMS credential is designed to certify competence in the field of diagnostic medical sonography. To obtain the RDMS certification, you must meet the examination prerequisites and pass the physics [sonography Principles & Instrumentation (SPI) examination tests the requisite physical principles and instrumentation knowledge, skills and abilities essential to sonography professionals and students] and a corresponding specialty examination [the Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN) examination tests the requisite obstetrics and gynecology knowledge, skills and abilities essential to sonographer-level professionals] within five years.

59. A search of the ARDMS Directory of Registrants serves as a primary source verification of credentials by the ARDMS. It is the responsibility of an employer to confirm with sufficient identifiers that an individual, whose credentials are being reviewed, is the same person reported in the Directory. The ARDMS Directory of Registrants provides information regarding status in the following categories: Active Registrant: An individual who: (1) has successfully passed the appropriate examination(s), thereby earning a credential with official notification by ARDMS; and (2) is in compliance with continuing competency and/or annual renewal fee requirements.

60. Based upon information and belief, not one of Los Gatos Defendants involved in providing prenatal care to MONICA was an ARDMS credentialed sonographer. As alleged hereinabove, MONICA's first three ultrasound examinations, as documented in her medical

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record, were conducted by CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP and/or an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male technician.

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61. Based upon information and belief, the Defendants' ultrasound equipment used in providing MONICA's prenatal care, more likely than not, was inadequate (and thus below the standard of care for this machine to be used for this 76811 targeted ultrasound examination by a healthcare provider rendering prenatal care) for various reasons including, but not limited to, the inability to record static / dynamic images from real time visualization of the examination for the physician's use in rendering and providing prenatal care to detect fetal abnormalities (multiple congenital anomalies) at or after MONICA's May 5, 2023.

62. Doctors, including primary care doctors as well as specialty doctors [OB/GYN], engage in upcoding when they use codes to reflect more expensive services than the ones they actually provided. For example, doctors may use a code to indicate that they performed a complex procedure, when they only performed a routine one. Another type of upcoding is to bill for a visit that involved more time than it actually did. Many services provided by doctors are billed using Evaluation and Management codes (E&M) that reflect the complexity of the patient visit. A common type of upcoding is using an E&M code for a more complex and time intensive patient visit than was actually provided.

63. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented CPT code 99499 when referencing the prenatal examination she performed – or failed to perform – on and after the 76811 targeted ultrasound performed on May 5, 2023. Health care providers use CPT code 99499 to report evaluation and management (E&M) services for which there is no specific code available. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. further documented the following in relation to this prenatal visit: "PR UNLISTED E/M SERVICE [99499] Significant, Separately Identifiable Evaluation And Management Service By The Same Physician On The Same Day Of The Procedure Or Other Service [25]."

64. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.,
ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE
MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to

MONICA's health insurance provider for the May 5, 2023, 99499 prenatal examination and 76811 targeted ultrasound examination.

65. Based upon information and belief, Defendants' billing for the CPT 99499 unlisted evaluation and management (E&M) service and CPT code 76811 targeted ultrasound examination was and still is evidence of "[u]pcoding" – when a healthcare provider submits codes to Medicare, Medicaid (Medi-Cal), or private insurers for more serious (and more expensive) diagnoses or procedures than the provider actually diagnosed or performed. In other words, submitting bills for higher-paying services than those actually performed. This deliberate misrepresentation boosts reimbursement rates unjustly. Healthcare providers use billing codes to identify the services and procedures that they provide to patients. Each code corresponds to a particular service or diagnosis and reflects the complexity of the work that the healthcare provider did. With over 7,800 CPT codes healthcare providers use, it's not hard to see how complex the system is and the potential for misuse and fraudulent billing practices. Government and private insurers use these codes to determine how much to pay for the services and procedures. When providers upcode medical bills for, they cheat those insurers of company's funds.

66. MONICA, at all times herein referenced and during her prenatal care, was an insured on RICHARD's health insurance policy. Said insurance was provided by Health Net through RICHARD's employer, a governmental entity.

67. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California *Insurance Code*.

68. On May 19, 2023, MONICA presented for her <u>fifth</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. No ultrasonography was performed, but ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented her billing for this visit as CPT code 99499 to report evaluation and management services for which there is no specific code – for a routine prenatal visit.

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69. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for this May 19, 2023, prenatal visit. Said routine prenatal visit was intentionally upcoded with the intent to cheat MONICA's health insurance provider out of its company's funds.

70. On **June 16, 2023**, MONICA presented for her <u>sixth</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. No ultrasonography was performed, but ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented her billing for this visit as CPT code 99499 to report evaluation and management services for which there is no specific code – for a routine prenatal visit.

71. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for this June 16, 2023, prenatal visit. Said routine prenatal visit was intentionally upcoded with the intent to cheat MONICA's health insurance provider out of its company's funds.

72. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California *Insurance Code*.

73. On July 7, 2023, according to ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's medical records produced in response to a signed Authorization for Release of Health and Medical Information Pursuant to HIPAA, an ultrasound was performed on this date, yet there is no other record of a prenatal visit on this date with any of the Defendants. Based upon information and belief, the ultrasound technician for this ultrasound, and possibly others, was an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male – regardless of the fact that the digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

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Other than a one page handwritten and unsigned note from the technician, and nine still images, no records exist of this examination to even know if ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP provided the results of said exam to MONICA in any fashion whatsoever for purposes of providing prenatal care.

74. On **July 20, 2023**, MONICA presented for her <u>seventh</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. No ultrasonography was performed, but ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented her billing for this visit as CPT code 99499 to report evaluation and management services for which there is no specific code – for a routine prenatal visit.

75. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for this July 20, 2023, prenatal visit. Said routine prenatal visit was intentionally up coded with the intent to cheat MONICA's health insurance provider out of its company's funds.

76. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California *Insurance Code*.

77. On August 25, 2023, MONICA (34 weeks 2 days gestation) presented for her eighth obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. A fourth ultrasound was done at this appointment and documented as "Ultrasound OB 2nd trimester level two (Clinic Performed)". The physician documents as part of her ultrasound findings:

The following anatomy is visualized and is within normal limits Calvarium, intracranial anatomy, cerebellum, choroid plexus, cisterna magna, right and left lateral ventricle, fetal profile, fetal face, fetal lips and nose, fetal orbits, stomach, diaphragm, right and left kidney bladder, spine, umbilical cord insertion, threevessel cord, four-chamber view of the heart, right and left ventricular outflow

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tracts, diaphragm, liver, right arm and hand, left arm and hand, right leg and foot, left leg and foot, genitalia male.

The physician further noted the patient was at an advanced maternal age > 35+ third trimester with fetus presenting in a breech position. Notes from the ultrasound technician are unsigned. The digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. then documents as a charge for this encounter, among other items, **CPT code 76816**.

78. Based upon information and belief, the **August 25, 2023**, ultrasound performed by CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP was a specialized ultrasound exam according to the uniform terminology of ACOG – specialized ultrasound exam is performed if a problem is suspected based on risk factors or other tests. For example, if there are signs that the fetus is not growing well, the fetus's growth rate can be tracked throughout pregnancy with specialized ultrasound exams. Depending on what the suspected problem might be, specialized techniques may be used, such as Doppler ultrasonography and 3-D ultrasonography. There exist only five still images of this ultrasound. RAELYSSA MUAAVA executed a sworn declaration on April 22, 2024, as custodian of records for ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER wherein he writes "[u]ltrasound images were printed directly from ultrasound machine & other images were printed from patient's file" when responding to the patient's request for a complete set of medical records including, but not limited to, any and all digital copies of all antenatal UTZ pertaining to MONICA. RAELYSSA MUAAVA, in regard to records unable to be produced, writes in his declaration "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging."

79. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. submitted billing for this August 25, 2023, specialized ultrasound to MONICA's health insurance carrier utilizing the CPT code 76816. Said specialized ultrasound billing code is more costly (for a legitimate reason) than the standard ultrasound and generates more revenue to ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. and her cohorts – owners or lessors of the medical device/equipment, technicians operating the medical device/equipment, NPs operating (sometimes interpreting examinations) the medical device/equipment and physicians operating or interpreting the examinations of the ultrasound equipment – in Defendants' Los Gatos office. This ultrasound, as well as all others performed

during MONICA's prenatal care, was done in the clinic or offices of Defendants located at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032. Based upon information and belief, the ultrasound technician for this specialized ultrasound, and possibly others, was an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male – regardless of the fact that the digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

80. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. ordered that the 76816 ultrasound be performed, for she later interpreted – or not – the study in total when rendering prenatal care to MONCIA, and she billed an insurance company for said exam.

81. 10 In view of ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s billing for the aforementioned 76816 ultrasound examination performed at Defendant's office, the OB/GYN should have reviewed the entire ultrasound examination – including static and dynamic imaging 12 - in accordance with ACOG's Practice Bulletin, and the applicable standard of care. Plaintiffs 13 allege herein that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. did not, and could not, have reviewed 14 the 76816 ultrasound examination, for: 15

- RAELYSSA MUAAVA's declares, in regard to records unable to be produced on • April 22, 2024, that "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging";
- The ultrasound was performed by an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male the • technician: and
- The digitally scanned film-like note in MONICA's medical records for this visit and study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

82. Based on information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. - in providing prenatal care on and after August 25, 2023 – could only have relied on the technician's five still images from the lengthy 76816 ultrasound and the preliminary findings documented on a handwritten note authored by either the technician [an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male] and/or the sonographer CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

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83. Based upon information and belief, the Defendants' ultrasound equipment used in providing all prenatal care, more likely than not, was inadequate (and thus below the standard of care) for various reasons including, but not limited to, the ability to record static / dynamic images for the physician to use in providing prenatal care to detect fetal abnormalities (multiple congenital anomalies) at or after MONICA's August 25, 2023, 76816 ultrasound examination.

84. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for the August 25, 2023, 76816 ultrasound examination.

85. Based upon information and belief, the aforementioned Defendants' billing for the CPT code 76816 examination was and still is evidence of upcoding.

86. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California *Insurance Code*.

87. On September 1, 2023, MONICA (35 weeks 2 days gestation) presented for her <u>ninth</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. No ultrasonography was performed.

88. On September 13, 2023, MONICA (37 weeks gestation) presented for her <u>tenth</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP. No ultrasonography was performed.

89. On September 21, 2023, MONICA (38 weeks gestation) presented for her <u>eleventh</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. No ultrasonography was performed, but ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented her billing for this visit as CPT code 99499 to report evaluation and management (E&M) services for which there is no specific code – for a routine prenatal visit but where the mother's advanced maternal age and the baby's breech position are noted.

90. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for this September 21, 2023, prenatal visit. Said routine prenatal visit was intentionally upcoded with the intent to cheat MONICA's health insurance provider out of its company's funds.

91. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California Insurance Code.

92. On September 22, 2023, MONICA underwent an outpatient procedure at El Camino Hospital – performed by ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. – where an external cephalic version (ECV is a method used to turn a breech baby to a head-down position during pregnancy) was performed and proved to be successful.

93. On September 28, 2023, MONICA (39 weeks 1 day gestation) presented for her twelfth obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. No ultrasonography was performed, but ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. documented her billing for this visit as CPT code 99499 to report evaluation and management (E&M) services for which there is no specific code – for a routine prenatal visit but where the mother's advanced maternal age is noted.

94. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for this September 28, 2023, prenatal visit. Said routine prenatal visit was intentionally upcoded with the intent to cheat MONICA's health insurance provider out of its company's funds.

95. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE 28

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MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California *Insurance Code*.

96. On **October 5, 2023**, the day before Baby ROCCO was born, MONICA (40 weeks 1 day gestation) presented for her <u>thirteenth</u> obstetrical follow up visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. A fifth ultrasound was done at this appointment, and the physician documents as part of her ultrasound findings:

The following anatomy is visualized and is within normal limits Calvarium, intracranial anatomy, cerebellum, choroid plexus, cisterna magna, right and left lateral ventricle, fetal profile, fetal face, fetal lips and nose, fetal orbits, stomach, diaphragm, right and left kidney bladder, spine, umbilical cord insertion, three-vessel cord, four-chamber view of the heart, right and left ventricular outflow tracts, diaphragm, liver, right arm and hand, left arm and hand, right leg and foot, left leg and foot, genitalia male.

97. Just one day before Baby ROCCO was born, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. ordered, had performed, and conceivably read and interpreted – or not – a CPT Code 76815 ultrasound examination (this ultrasound documents fetus number, fetal heart beat, and fetal position) for purposes of providing prenatal care to MONICA. Amniotic fluid volume and placental location were not assessed. Yet, neither ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., her technician [an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male] or the sonographer [CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP] make any reference to the **multitude of congenital anomalies** evident at delivery the next day.

98. Based upon information and belief, the **October 5, 2023**, ultrasound performed by CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP was a specialized ultrasound exam according to the uniform terminology of ACOG – specialized ultrasound exam is performed if a problem is suspected based on risk factors or other tests. For example, if there are signs that the fetus is not growing well, the fetus's growth rate can be tracked throughout pregnancy with specialized ultrasound exams. Depending on what the suspected problem might be, specialized techniques may be used, such as Doppler ultrasonography and 3-D ultrasonography. There exist only 11 still images of this ultrasound. RAELYSSA MUAAVA executed a sworn declaration on April 22, 2024, as custodian of records for ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER wherein he writes "[u]ltrasound images were printed directly from ultrasound machine & other images were printed

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from patient's file" when responding to the patient's request for a complete set of medical records including, but not limited to, any and all digital copies of all antenatal UTZ pertaining to MONICA. RAELYSSA MUAAVA, in regard to records unable to be produced, writes in his declaration "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging."

99. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. submitted billing for this **October 5, 2023**, specialized ultrasound, to MONICA's health insurance carrier utilizing the CPT code 76815. Said specialized ultrasound billing code is more costly (for a legitimate reason) than the standard ultrasound and generates more revenue to ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. and her cohorts – owners or lessors of the medical device/equipment, technicians operating the medical device/equipment, NPs operating (sometimes interpreting examinations) the medical device/equipment and physicians operating or interpreting the examinations of the ultrasound equipment – in Defendants' Los Gatos office. This ultrasound, as well as all others performed during MONICA's prenatal care, was done in the clinic or offices of Defendants located at 700 W. Parr Avenue, Suite 1, Los Gatos, California 95032. Based upon information and belief, the ultrasound technician for this specialized ultrasound, and possibly others, was an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male – regardless of the fact that the digitally scanned film-like note in the medical records for this study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

100. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. ordered that the 76816 ultrasound be performed, for she later interpreted – or not – the study in total when rendering prenatal care to MONCIA, and she billed an insurance company for said exam.

101. In view of ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s billing for the aforementioned 76816 ultrasound examination performed at Defendant's Los Gatos office, the OB/GYN should have reviewed the entire ultrasound examination – including static and dynamic imaging – in accordance with ACOG's Practice Bulletin, and the applicable standard of care. Plaintiffs allege herein that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. did not, and could not, have reviewed the 76816 ultrasound examination, for:

- RAELYSSA MUAAVA's declares, in regard to records unable to be produced on April 22, 2024, that "no static / dynamic images available. We only print still imaging";
- The ultrasound was performed by an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male the technician; and
- The digitally scanned film-like note in MONICA's medical records for this visit and study indicate the sonographer was CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP.

102. Based on information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. – in providing prenatal care on and after October 5, 2023 – could only have relied on the technician's 11 still images from the lengthy 76816 ultrasound and the preliminary findings documented on a handwritten note authored by either the technician [an unidentified, middle aged, Asian male] and/or the sonographer's [CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP].

103. Based upon information and belief, the Los Gatos Defendants' ultrasound equipment used in providing all prenatal care, more likely than not, was inadequate (and thus below the standard of care) for various reasons including, but not limited to, the ability to record static / dynamic images for the physician to use in providing prenatal care to detect fetal abnormalities (multiple congenital anomalies) at or after MONICA's October 5, 2023, 76816 ultrasound examination.

104. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP, individually and/or jointly or in concert together, submitted billing to MONICA's health insurance provider for the October 5, 2023, 76816 ultrasound examination.

105. Based upon information and belief, the aforementioned Defendants' billing for theCPT code 76816 examination was and still is evidence of upcoding.

106. Based upon information and belief, ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and/or CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP violated California's Insurance Frauds Prevention Act ("IFPA"), located under Section 1871.7 of the California *Insurance Code*.

107. On October 10, 2023, four days after Baby ROCCA was born, MONICA 1 presented for her a **post-partum follow up** visit with Defendants wherein she saw ANGELA 2 MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. The physician notes: 3 4 Monica returns 4 days after SVD of son Rocco. Rocco is at Stanford NICU with multiple anomalies, suspected Arthrogryposis. Baby is eating well and breathing 5 normally but has minimal movement of limbs. Genetic tests of baby and parents have been done to evaluate for genetic link. Baby may be able to come home 6 tomorrow. 7 Monica is devastated emotionally but holding herself together for her children. 8 Her Edinburgh depression scale is very high at 15. She is asking the social worker 9 at Stanford for resources for mental support 10 She is concerned about her lack of bleeding. She is having only minimal bleeding. She has some pain at the perineum also. She is bleeding through a pad only several 11 times a day and feels like she should be bleeding more 12 13 Normal postpartum exam. I am not concerned about the superficial separation of 14 the epidermis as the sutures remain intact and there is no evidence of infection. I 15 would not recommend re stitching the skin as it has already started to reepithelialized. Supportive care with sitz baths reviewed 16 No evidence of retained poc. Reassured Monica that the small bleeding amount is 17 fine and that there is not blood needing to leave the uterus 18 Reviewed with Monica that her Depression index is very high. She understands 19 that she is at risk for PTSD and depression. Supportive care reviewed. She will look for a support group and counselor through her insurance and social worker 20 21 108. MONICA's October 10, 2023, post-partum follow up visit with ANGELA 22 MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. was gratuitously provided [no charge] as documented in the 23 medical records. 24 109. The American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine (AIUM) advocates the 25 responsible use of diagnostic ultrasound. The AIUM recommends that appropriately trained and 26 credentialed medical professionals who have received specialized training in fetal imaging 27 perform all fetal ultrasound examinations. 28

110. On the dates and times aforesaid – as alleged herein and concerning the prenatal care at issue in this matter – ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., in accordance with ACOG (and others as alleged hereinabove) and the applicable standard of care, must have reviewed all the ultrasound examinations in providing prenatal care to MONICA including, but not limited to, studying the images, interpreting the findings, and making appropriate recommendations. It is beyond the scope of a sonographer's practice to interpret ultrasound studies.

111. Based upon information and belief, a physician who improperly bills for a diagnostic procedure not performed can face serious consequences such as criminal charges, disciplinary actions, and potential liability in a medical malpractice action. These consequences underscore the importance of adhering to ethical billing practices and maintaining the integrity of medical documentation. Plaintiffs' allegations set forth hereinabove concerning Defendants who submitted false insurance claims using CPT codes for services not provided is at the heart of whether Defendants breached the applicable standard of care – that physicians exercise a reasonable degree of skill, knowledge, and care ordinarily possessed and exercised by members of the medical profession under similar circumstances. Billing for a procedure not performed (ultrasounds performed by unknown technician / NP and not properly studying, interpreting and making recommendations) could be seen as a breach of this standard, potentially leading to liability if it results in harm to the patient (or their unborn child).

112. In a health care setting, *res ipsa loquitur* consists of three elements: (1) the accident or injury must be of a kind which ordinarily does not occur in the absence of someone's negligence; (2) it must be caused by an agency or instrumentality within the "exclusive" control of the defendant or group of defendants; and (3) the accident or injury must not have been due to any voluntary action or contribution on the part of the plaintiff. The three conditions or elements of *res ipsa loquitur* must concur to make the doctrine applicable. Public policy favors usage of the doctrine in health care cases. The latter principle comes from the fact of defendants' special responsibilities to their patients and patients near complete, if not slavish, dependence on the defendants who provided them services. Enforcement of such a policy, moreover, does little violence to defendants' rights, in light of the trust relationship they occupy, imposing on them the duty to explain how the injury occurred or at least to justify its occurrence on bases other than on their faulty delivery of care or treatment.

The application of *res ipsa loquitur* classically has followed some untoward medical event under circumstances. Such circumstances, therefore, fairly cast the burden of explanation on those who, as wakeful professionals having the helpless victim in their control, knew or should know what had taken place.

2 Cal. Med. Malprac. L. & Prac. § 13:21 (2017 ed.)

113. In medical malpractice, it's "common knowledge in some settings suffices, without expert testimony, to satisfy a reasonable mind that diagnosis or care went awry. . .. If the alleged negligence relates to matters or conduct which fall reasonably within the ken of the average layperson, the jury may determine the liability of the person charged without the aid of experts. See, 2 Cal. Med. Malprac. L. & Prac. § 13:21 (2017 ed.)

114. Plaintiffs' harm – Baby ROCCO being born with congenital anomalies and concerns for arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) – ordinarily would not have occurred unless someone was negligent. Plaintiffs' harm occurred while MONICA (and her unborn fetus) was (were) under the prenatal care and control of Defendants. MONICA's and her unborn son's voluntary actions did not cause or contribute to the event[s] that harmed Plaintiffs. In other words, the evidentiary rule of *res ipsa loquitur* applies here regarding both the wrongful life <u>and</u> wrongful birth causes of action set forth herein above and below:

(a) the accident or injury must be of a kind which ordinarily does not occur in the absence of someone's negligence – a baby is not ordinarily born into this world, 23 years into the 21st Century, with congenital anomalies and concerns for arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC);

(b) it must be caused by an agency or instrumentality within the "exclusive" control of the defendant or group of defendants – **Defendants provided all prenatal care to MONICA** including use of their own in-office ultrasound equipment for all ultrasound examinations performed during MONICA's prenatal care from March 1, 2023, through and including October 5, 2023; and

(c) the accident or injury must not have been due to any voluntary action or contribution on the part of the plaintiff – the missed diagnosis of one or more congenital anomalies from at least May 5, 2023, was the result of ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s **breach of her duty to refer** MONICA to a specialist (MFM), **improper administration and use of the**

ultrasound (by the unidentified technician and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP), improperstudying and interpretation of the ultrasound (by ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.)for she, individually, was responsible for interpreting each and every ultrasound performed inDefendants' office. Plaintiffs allege herein that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. wasunable to interpret any ultrasonography studies wherein she was not present during the actualultrasound examination, for RAELYSSA MUAAVA has already declared that "no static /dynamic images [are] available. We only print still imaging[.]" Given the missed diagnosis (anycongenital anomalies and/or concerns for AMC), ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. wasoperating in the dark and completely unable to make appropriate recommendations to her patient.It is beyond the scope of a sonographer's practice to interpret ultrasound studies.

115. In addition to the evidentiary rule of *res ipsa loquitor* which acts as a presumption affecting the burden of producing evidence, Plaintiffs allege herein that the rule as to shifting the burden of proof, as in *Haft v. Lone Palm Hotel*, 3 Cal.3d 756 (1970), applies to the case at hand where we are presented with **non-negligent plaintiffs** where there is a substantial probability that a defendant's negligence was a cause of an accident, and **when defendant's negligence makes it impossible, as a practical matter**, for the plaintiff to prove causation conclusively. *Smith v. Americania Motor Lodge*, 39 Cal.App.3d 1, 5 (1974).

116. Defendants should have had the ability to maintain and store MONICA's medical record – in its entirety and including – all ultrasound examinations, including real time visualization of the fetus, and not just a few still printed images taken during the multiple examinations that consisted of real time visualization of the fetus at various points in time during the developing stages of life. Defendants have nothing other than what is referenced hereinabove.

117. Plaintiffs allege, based on information and belief, that Defendants never had the ability to record the real time visualization of the fetus, for their medical device (ultrasound machine) was archaic, out-of-service, in need of maintenance and/or just not adequate to provide competent prenatal care to the Bay Area in modern times.

118. In the alternative to the foregoing allegation, Plaintiffs allege, based upon
information and belief, that Defendants, individually and/or in concert, destroyed the evidence

(real time visualization in the form of video, static and/or dynamic imaging) immediately after Baby ROCCO was born on October 6, 2023. When ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D. 2 delivered the baby –like others in the room – she was shocked by the baby delivered right before 3 her eyes. Unlike Defendants, Plaintiffs have videos that tell the story! In view of the foregoing, 4 5 Plaintiffs assert that the burden of proof has now shifted to Defendants for their own negligence makes it impossible – or not – as a practical matter, for Plaintiffs to prove causation conclusively. See, Exhibit F, April 17, 2024, communication from RAELYSSA MUAAVA to MONICA concerning the absence of video of ultrasounds.

119. On the dates and times aforesaid herein this entire Complaint, the Defendants, and each of them, failed to exercise the proper degree of knowledge and skill and so negligently, carelessly, recklessly, wantonly, and unlawfully treated, provided care, monitoring, examination, and other professional services in that, among other things, they failed to adequately and properly diagnose and treat MONICA from at least May 5, 2023 - if not before - through and including her son's birth on October 6, 2023, and later.

120. Baby ROCCO claims that Defendants were negligent because they failed to inform MONICA of the risk that her unborn child would be born with any congenital or fetal anomaly let alone multiple congenital abnormalities. Defendants' negligent or wrongful acts or omissions prevented ROCCO's mother from terminating her pregnancy, resulting in the birth of ROCCO with severe disabilities and defects. But for Defendants' negligence, ROCCO would not have been born to experience the pain and suffering attributable to the disabilities.

121. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP negligently failed to refer to a specialist as alleged hereinabove and negligently failed to diagnose any fetal anomaly including, but not limited to, multiple congenital abnormalities and arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC), during the May 5, 2023, targeted ultrasound examination or at any other ultrasound examination thereafter.

122. Baby ROCCO was born with a disability – arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) and quadriplegic cerebral palsy.

123. Had MONICA received <u>any information whatsoever</u> that her unborn son had any sort of fetal anomaly as early as May 5, 2023 [18 weeks, 2 days gestational age], or as soon thereafter when given adequate information and advice from a board-certified OB/GYN (obstetrician gynecologist) and/or an MFM, to make an informed decision, she would not have carried her unborn son to term.

124. Defendants' negligence was a substantial factor in causing MONICA and RICHARD to have to pay extraordinary expenses necessary to treat and care for ROCCO's birth defects and disabilities.

125. As a direct and proximate result of the negligence, carelessness, recklessness, wantonness, and unlawfulness of Defendants, and each of them, and the resulting incident, as aforesaid, and based upon information and belief, Baby ROCCO, was born with severe disfigurement and disability to his person, all to Baby ROCCO's damage in a sum within the jurisdiction of this Court and to be shown according to proof.

126. By reason of the foregoing, Baby ROCCO has been required to employ the services of hospitals, physicians, surgeons, nurses and other professional services, and Baby ROCCO has been compelled to incur extraordinary expenses (medical care and training) necessary to care for and treat his arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) and quadriplegic cerebral palsy. Baby ROCCO is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that further services of said nature will be required by Baby ROCCO in an amount to be shown according to proof.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

(Medical Malpractice – Wrongful Birth – MONICA and RICHARD)

127. MONICA and RICHARD reallege and incorporate by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 126 hereinabove as if again set forth in full.

128. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP negligently failed to refer to a specialist as alleged hereinabove and negligently failed to diagnose any fetal anomaly including, but not limited to, multiple congenital

abnormalities and arthrogryposis multiplex congenita, during the May 5, 2023, targeted ultrasound examination as well as ultrasound examinations thereafter.

129. Baby ROCCO was born with a disability – arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) and quadriplegic cerebral palsy.

130. Had MONICA received <u>any information whatsoever</u> that her unborn son had any sort of fetal anomaly as early as May 5, 2023 [18 weeks, 2 days gestational age], or as soon thereafter when given adequate information and advice from a board-certified OB/GYN (obstetrician gynecologist) and/or an MFM, to make an informed decision, she would not have carried her unborn son to term.

131. Defendants' negligence was a substantial factor in causing MONICA and RICHARD to have to pay extraordinary expenses to care for Baby ROCCO.

132. As a direct and proximate result of the negligence, carelessness, recklessness, wantonness, and unlawfulness of Defendants, and each of them, and the resulting incident, as aforesaid, and based upon information and belief, Baby ROCCO, was born with severe disfigurement and disability to his person, all to MONICA's and RICHARD's damage in a sum within the jurisdiction of this Court and to be shown according to proof.

133. By reason of the foregoing, MONICA and RICHARD have been required to employ the services of hospitals, physicians, surgeons, nurses and other professional services, and they has been compelled to incur extraordinary expenses (medical care and training) necessary to care for and treat Baby ROCCO's arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) and quadriplegic cerebral palsy. MONICA and RICHARD are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that further services of said nature will be required by Baby ROCCO in an amount to be shown according to proof.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Intentional Tort – Medical Battery – Conditional Consent – MONICA)

134. MONICA realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 133 hereinabove as if again set forth in full.

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135. MONICA consented to a medical procedure (continued prenatal care including labor and delivery), but only on the condition that her CPT code 76811 targeted and specialized ultrasound examination performed on May 5, 2023, did not reveal any known or suspected fetal anomaly, anatomic anomaly, genetic abnormality or increased risk for fetal abnormality and/or other things that would cause an OB/GYN to order such an ultrasound examination without referral to a specialist – MFM. *See*, Exhibit D Report of 5/5/2023 Ultrasound from UCSF MyChart and Exhibit F, excerpt from the After Visit Summary handed to MONICA following this appointment.

136. Defendants proceeded to provide MONICA with prenatal care and without the foregoing condition having occurred.

137. Defendants intended to perform the procedure – continued prenatal care including
 labor and delivery – with knowledge that the condition had not occurred.

138. MONICA was harmed as set forth hereinabove.

139. Defendants' conduct was a substantial factor in causing MONICA's harm as set forth hereinabove.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Fraud – Intentional Misrepresentation – MONICA)

140. MONICA realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 139 hereinabove as if again set forth in full.

141. MONICA alleges that ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP made a false representation to MONICA that harmed her.

142. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP represented to MONICA that a fact was true – that her CPT code 76811 targeted and specialized ultrasound examination performed on May 5, 2023, revealed anatomy that was "visualized and within normal limits Calvarium, intracranial anatomy, cerebellum, choroid plexus, cisterna magna, right and left lateral ventricle, fetal profile, fetal face, fetal lips and nose, fetal orbits, stomach, diaphragm, right and left kidney, bladder, spine, umbilical cord insertion, threevessel cord, four-chamber view of the heart, right and left ventricular outflow tracts, diaphragm, liver, right arm and hand, left arm and hand, right leg and foot, left leg and foot, genitalia male[.]"

143. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP's representation was false.

144. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP made the representations recklessly and without regard for the truth of the matter.

145. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP intended that MONICA rely on their representation.

146. MONICA reasonably relied on ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP's representation.

147. MONICA was harmed.

148. MONICA's reliance on ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP's representation was a substantial factor in causing her harm.

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Breach of Fiduciary Duty – MONICA)

149. MONICA realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 148 hereinabove as if again set forth in full.

150. A physician, registered nurse practitioner and the physician's practice groups owe what is known as a fiduciary duty to their patients. A fiduciary duty imposes on physicians, registered nurse practitioners and physician practice groups, as licensed healthcare providers, a duty to act with the utmost good faith in the best interests of their patient.

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151. MONICA alleges that she was harmed by ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP's breach of the fiduciary duty to use reasonable care.

152. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP were MONICA's prenatal healthcare providers.

153. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP acted on MONICA's behalf for purposes of providing prenatal care.

154. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP failed to act as reasonably careful licensed healthcare providers would have acted under the same or similar circumstances.

155. MONICA was harmed.

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156. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP's conduct was a substantial factor in causing MONICA's harm.

SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Negligence Per Se – Plaintiffs)

157. Plaintiffs reallege and incorporate by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 156 hereinabove as if again set forth in full.

158. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.,
ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. and CHRISTINE MARIE
KULLE, NP violated California's IFPA at California *Insurance Code* §1871.7, California *Health*& *Safety Code* §§123100 and 123110 and based on information and belief, other state and federal
laws.

159. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's, POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s and CHRISTINE MARIE KULLE, NP's statutory violations were substantial factors in bringing about the Plaintiffs' harm.

SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Unjust Enrichment – Plaintiffs)

160. Plaintiffs reallege and incorporate by reference the allegations in paragraphs 1 through 159 hereinabove as if again set forth in full.

161. ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D., ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC., ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER and POLLARD WELLNESS, INC. were unjustly enriched by their misappropriation of MONICA's HIPAA protected private healthcare information.

162. By ANGELA MICHELLE POLLARD, M.D.'s, ANGELA M. POLLARD MD INC.'s, ABOVE PARR WOMEN'S CENTER's and POLLARD WELLNESS, INC.'s misappropriation, they received a benefit that they otherwise would not have achieved.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs pray for judgment against the Defendants, and each of them as follows:

A. General damages in the sum according to proof including those damages each Plaintiff has suffered, or will suffer, with respect to their individual causes of action that might be subject California *Civil Code* § 3333.2.

B. General damages in the sum according to proof including damages MONICA has suffered, or will suffer, with respect to her causes of action <u>not</u> subject to California *Civil Code* § 3333.2.

C. Economic damages, including but not limited to sums incurred and to be incurred for services of hospitals, physicians, surgeons, nurses and other professional services, and extraordinary expenses (medical care and training) necessary to care for Baby ROCCO and his arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) and quadriplegic cerebral palsy. MONICA and

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1	RICHARD are informed and believe, and thereon allege, that further services of said nature will
2	be required for Baby ROCCO in an amount to be proven at trial.
3	D. All other general/noneconomic and special/economic damages to which Plaintiffs are
4	entitled in sums according to proof.
5	E. For interest provided by law including, but not limited to, California <i>Civil Code</i> Sec.
6	3291.
7	F. Costs of suit and for such other and further relief as the Court deems proper.
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9	Dated: July 15, 2024HABERKORN & ASSOCIATES
10	
11	MILLO
12	Matthew H. Haberkorn, Esq.
13	Attorney for Plaintiffs ROCCO RAMOS, by and through his Guardian ad Litem, MONICA
14	RAMOS; MONICA RAMOS, Individually, and RICHARD RAMOS, Individually
15	RICHARD RAWOS, Individually
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	45 COMPLAINT FOR PERSONAL INJURY – MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

EXHIBIT A





EXHIBIT B

700 W. Parr Directory

First Floor **El Camino Health** Rahimi Dental Group Mauro Ruffy, MD Mamal R. Rahimi, DDS Paul Huang, MD Second Floor Sheila Savur, MD Medi Weightloss Clinics Yazeed Gussous, MD Angela Pollard, MD Saigeetha Sundaramurthy, MD Betty Peters, NP Sophie Bliss, PA Angela Pollard, MD Silicon Valley ENT & Sinus Cer Christine Kulle NP Philip T. Ho, MD, FACS El Camino Health - ASPIRE B William Hamilton Chiropractic, Inc. Family and Cosmetic Dentistry B Steven Guekguezian, DDS Mindy Acupuncture Applied Orthotics and Prosthetics Michael Dodd, Co, BOCPO Araceli Batuhan, C Ped, Certified Orthotic Fitter E Jeffrey T. Holmes, MD, JD, MBA Premier Physicians Management, Co, LLC





EXHIBIT C

Name: Monica Ramos | DOB: 3/18/1986 | MRN: 85793985 | PCP: Name Unknown Provider | Legal Name: Monica Ramos

US OB TRANSVAGINAL

Results

UCSF Medical Center

UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital

MRN: 85793985 Patient Name: Ramos, Monica Date of Birth: 3/18/1986 Requesting Physician: Christine Marie Kulle Accession Number: 10022957084 Exam Date:

Angela Pollard MD

408-343-8539

Exam(s):US OB TRANSVAGINAL (CLINIC PERFORMED)Exam Status:Final

Initial OB ultrasound performed by Christine Kulle NP-C, CNM

Single intrauterine pregnancy at 8w5d CRL-2.10 cm FHR present-171 bpm FM-present YS present EDD 10/06/2023 IMPRESSION: Indication for sonogram: Pregnancy dating/viability Transvaginal ultrasound performed in clinic on 3/1/2023

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Intrauterine pregnancy noted: 8w5d week fetus with cardiac
motion. Fundal location. Yolk sac present. [Fetal dating by
Hadlock criteria.]
Cervix: Normal
Adnexa: no abnormalities noted. No free fluid
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Impression: Viable, singleton IUP visualized with size consistent with dates by LMP.

EXHIBIT D

Name: Monica Ramos | DOB: 3/18/1986 | MRN: 85793985 | PCP: Name Unknown Provider | Legal Name: Monica Ramos

A Note to Patients: Symptoms are concisely summarized to inform treatment recommendations. For reasons of privacy and brevity, this note does not attempt to capture all experiences that were discussed.

Progress Notes

Angela Pollard at 5/5/2023 2:30 PM

18w2d here for ultrasound No complaints

OB ULTRASOUND 5/5/23 see report and photos

SIUP, breech PRESENTATION PLACENTA grade 1, anterior no previa Adequate amniotic fluid level Active FM and tone FHR 155 bpm

EFW 238 g c/w 18w2d and EDC 10/4/23 50%ile

No adnexal or uterine masses Cervical length4.2 cm

The following anatomy is visualized and is within normal limits Calvarium, intracranial anatomy, cerebellum, choroid plexus, cisterna magna, right and left lateral ventricle, fetal profile, fetal face, fetal lips and nose, fetal orbits, stomach, diaphragm, right and left kidney, bladder, spine, umbilical cord insertion, three-vessel cord, four-chamber view of the heart, right and left ventricular outflow tracts, diaphragm, liver, right arm and hand, left arm and hand, right leg and foot, left leg and foot, genitalia male

1. AMA (advanced maternal age) multigravida 35+, second trimester

ester two (Clinic Performed)

2. Suspected fetal anomaly not found

Ultrasound OB 2nd trimester level two (Clinic Performed)

Ultrasound OB 2nd trimester level

3. 18 weeks gestation of pregnancy

Patient is at risk for chromosomal anomalies for maternal age > 34 yo. We reviewed at length the various modalities for detecting aneuploidy. Techniques discussed include amniocentesis, chorionic villi sampling, Cell free DNA/NIPT noninvasive prenatal

testing, level 2 ultrasound, NT nuchal translucency scan, and the California Screening Test for birth defects (both 1st and 2nd TM screens). Benefits and limitations were discussed at length. Obstetrix referrals for additional evaluation was also reviewed. We will offer fetal monitoring with NST at 32 weeks.

Advanced maternal age is an independent risk factor for stillbirth, even after accounting for maternal medical history (ie HTN, DM, obesity). The relative risk of stillbirth is increased with increasing maternal age. Stillbirth risk is most notable after about 37 weeks of gestation, and the risk also increases sharply at 40 weeks of gestation, which suggests that older women are "postterm" sooner.

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EXHIBIT E

MyCt	
enu 🗊 Vis	its 🗹 Messages 실 Test Results 🔕 Medications
Appointment De	tails
AMB Complete AVS	Notes
Some of this informatio	n might have changed since your visit. This is what your chart included on the day of your visi

AFTER VISIT SUMMARY

Monica Ramos DoB: 3/18/1986

5/5/2028 2:30 PM Q Angela Pollard MD 408-343-8539

Instructions

Read the attached information ¢,

Fetal Ultrasound: Second-Trimester (English)

Return in about 4 weeks (around 6/2/2023).

Today's Visit

You were seen on Friday May 5, 2023. The following issues were addressed: AMA (advanced maternal age) multigravida 35+, second trimester

- Suspected fetal anomaly not found
- 18 weeks gestation of pregnancy

What's Next

MAY 19 2023	PRENATAL with Angela Michelle Pollard, MD Friday May 19 3:00 PM
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PRENATAL with Angela Michelle Pollard, MD Friday June 16 3:30 PM JUN

16 2023

PRENATAL with Angela Michelle Pollard, MD JUL 14 Friday July 14 3:00 PM

2023

Angela Pollard MD 700 W PARR AVE STE I Los Gatos CA 95032-1416 408-343-8539

Angela Pollard MD 700 W PARR AVE STE I Los Gatos CA 95032-1416 408-343-8539

Angela Pollard MD 700 W PARR AVE STE I Los Gatos CA 95032-1416 408-343-8539

Facts About Your Prenatal Visit (All Dating Information Is Approximate) How Far Along Am I? Due Date

10/4/2023

18 weeks 2 days

Pregnancy Weight Gain 13 lb (5.9 kg)

OB Vitals

Your Vital Signs

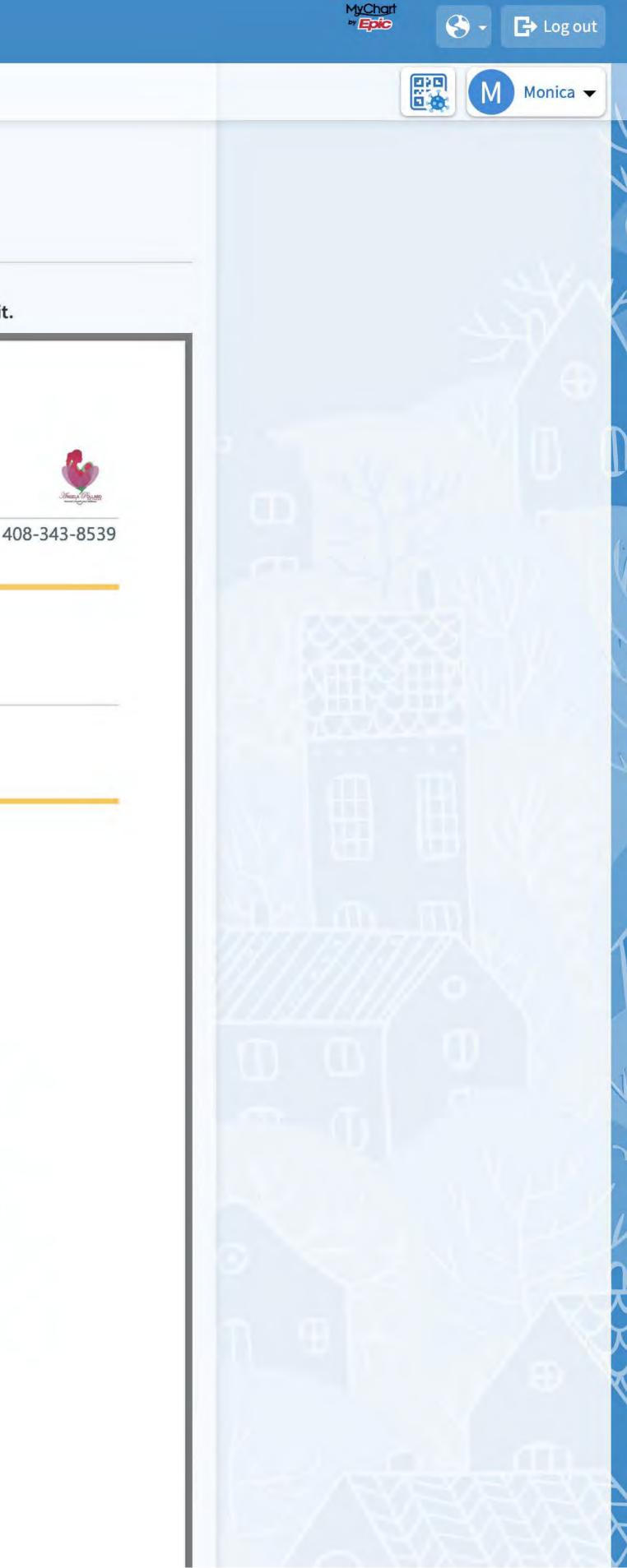


EXHIBIT F

