

Newsline

Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, Inc.



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Initiatives Target Safe, Effective Opioid Prescribing for Pain Management

Faced with evidence of continued undertreatment of pain and increasing abuse of prescription drugs, state medical boards are initiating and collaborating on comprehensive pain management initiatives. The goal is to provide clear guidelines for physicians to appropriately treat patients' pain while minimizing the opportunity for prescription drug diversion and abuse.

"We know prescription drug abusers don't differentiate by the type of license a prescriber holds so we are working to ensure there is a uniform level of awareness and scrutiny from every prescriber."

— Kevin Bohnenblust, Executive Director, Wyoming Board of Medicine

Proposing a policy for all prescribers in Wyoming

The Wyoming Board of Medicine is working with other state licensing boards – including Nursing, Dental Examiners, Pharmacy, Podiatry, Optometry and Veterinary Medicine – to develop and adopt a uniform policy for the use of controlled substances in the treatment of pain.

"We know that prescription drug abusers don't differentiate by the type of license a prescriber holds so we are

policy to make it applicable to all prescribers of controlled substances. The draft policy was then made available to executives from each licensing board with the request it be presented to their board for consideration.

To date, the Wyoming Board of Medicine and the Board of Pharmacy have adopted the policy. According to Bohnenblust, the uniform standard will serve as a foundational policy to be followed by

the distribution of model pain contracts and training materials, as well as a number of public relations activities.

Licensing boards in Wyoming have a history of collaboration. Last year, the U.S. attorney in Wyoming initiated an informal working group that includes representatives from licensing boards, law enforcement and other medical regulatory groups to meet monthly to address prescription drug abuse.

"The feeling among the working group is we need to tackle this problem now rather than wait and react to a high-profile negative event," said Bohnenblust. "A reactive process can lead to bad policy."

For more information on efforts in Wyoming, contact Kevin Bohnenblust at kbohne@state.wy.us.

Changing the paradigm in Michigan

In late 2008, the Michigan Bureau of Health Professions created a full-time pain management position to coordinate with stakeholders statewide on a three-year strategic plan. This action is the result of a 2006 Cancer Consortium

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FSMB Announces 2009 Annual Award Winners

The Federation of State Medical Boards announced the following recipients of its annual awards recognizing outstanding service to the field of medical regulation. The recipients will receive their awards during the FSMB Annual Meeting in Arlington, Va., April 30 - May 2, 2009.

Distinguished Service Award

Nancy Achin Audesse is being honored for her many exceptional contributions to the field of medical regulation and the FSMB. As president of the new FSMB Foundation, Ms. Audesse has worked diligently to position the



organization as a vital resource for state medical boards. Under her leadership, the Foundation is promoting stronger and more effective medical licensure and regulation through a wide array of research and educational activities. Ms. Audesse recently retired after a decade of distinguished service as Executive Director of the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine. Throughout her tenure with the board, Ms. Audesse pursued initiatives that improved the quality of health care both in the state of Massachusetts and nationally.

Ms. Audesse is a passionate advocate for patient safety, fueled in part by her personal experience as a four-time cancer survivor. She was elected as a state senator in 1990 and served until 1993, when a recurrence of cancer forced her to decline to run for re-election. Her advocacy provided the framework for the Massachusetts board's Patient Care Assessment Division to become a national model for how state boards can work collaboratively with hospitals. Ms. Audesse also pioneered the development of the Massachusetts Physician Profiles Program, an effort to provide patients with more information about their health

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working to ensure there is a uniform level of awareness and scrutiny from every prescriber," said Kevin Bohnenblust, executive director of the Wyoming Board of Medicine.

The board used the FSMB model policy on pain management as a starting point, but used the term "prescriber" rather than "physician" in their draft

Physician Data Center Provides Up-To-Date Information on Disciplinary Actions

The FSMB Physician Data Center is a service the FSMB provides to help member boards monitor formal disciplinary actions reported on physicians licensed or applying for licensure in their states.

Disciplinary Action Data

The Physician Data Center is a data repository that contains information on nearly all U.S. licensed physicians as well as board disciplinary actions dating back to the early 1960s. The disciplinary actions include:

- Revocations
- Licensure denials
- Reinstatements
- Consent orders
- Administrative actions (fines, warnings, etc.)
- Medicare and/or Medicaid exclusions/reinstatements
- Board actions resulting from criminal convictions
- Federal regulatory actions

Data Sources

The quality of information in the

Physician Data Center is directly dependent on timely submissions by all licensing and disciplinary boards. The FSMB currently collects information on formal actions from:

- All 70 U.S. state medical boards
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Defense
- Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
- International licensing authorities in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand

FSMB Reporting Services

The Physician Data Center enables the FSMB to provide a number of reporting services to member boards, including:

- Daily disciplinary alert reports to boards on physicians licensed in their states
- Annual board action summary reports that list by state all actions reported in a calendar year and are useful in tracking trends in physician discipline within

each state

- Physician Data Center Search results on individual physicians applying for licensure in a state
- Member boards can perform their own queries on specific individuals by logging onto the physician data center with their issued ID and password. Search results are immediately available online. Alternatively, physicians can send their requests to the FSMB and medical boards will receive the results by mail in a week to 10 days.

Back-up Repository

Beyond the reporting benefits, the Physician Data Center also serves state medical boards as a back-up repository both in hard copy and electronic files of their disciplinary action data. In case of emergencies or local system failures, member boards can recreate their files through the FSMB Physician Data Center.

For more information, contact Debbie Reyna, manager of the FSMB Physician Data Center, at dreyna@fsm.org.

North Carolina Medical Board Celebrates 150 Years

The North Carolina Medical Board celebrated its 150th anniversary on April 15. The board commemorated this historic event with a reception at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh in March. The celebration brought together about 200 guests, including current and past board members, legislators, medical society and regulatory board members, public advocacy groups and others.

Several exhibits gave guests a unique look at medicine as it was 150 years ago. Artifacts on display included medical equipment and supplies from the late 1800s to mid-1900s. Costumed history enthusiasts representing a North



Two hundred guests recently gathered to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the North Carolina Medical Board.

Carolina Confederate surgeon and a 19th century apothecary were on hand. The Museum of History also provided the board's guests access to a permanent exhibit that recreates a 1920s-era drugstore.

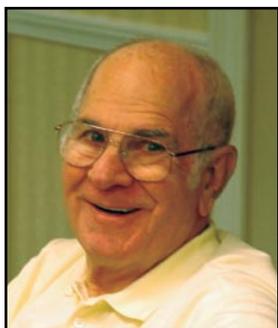
The board displayed original minute books from its first meetings dating back to 1859, and presented a short video highlighting the first board, first female licensee, first African American licensee and major advancements in medicine from 1859

to the present. Finally, the board displayed a historical highway marker that will be installed two blocks from the board's original meeting place, the Old State Capitol in Raleigh.

FSMB Announces 2009 Annual Award Winners – continued from page 1

care providers. The first such program in the nation, Massachusetts' Profiles Program has served as a national model for other states. Ms. Audesse also provided valuable service to the national medical board community through her service on the FSMB's Board of Directors and Special Committee on Scope of Practice.

Leon C. Hamrick, Sr., M.D., is being honored for his nearly 40 years of service



to the medical regulatory community of Alabama. Elected to the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners in 1972, Dr. Hamrick served on the board for a

decade, including a six-year term as chair. In 1981, Dr. Hamrick was appointed to the Medical Licensure Commission of the State of Alabama, beginning a tenure of service that has extended through three decades and continues today. The Commission is responsible for issuing all medical licenses in Alabama, as well as holding administrative hearings and imposing discipline based on complaints filed by the Board of Medical Examiners for improper medical conduct. In addition to serving as a member, Dr. Hamrick chaired the commission from 1981 to 1991.

Dr. Hamrick has been a leader not only in improving the regulation of the medical profession, but also in improving patient care and helping those who need health care the most. For the past 36 years, Dr. Hamrick has served as Chairman of the Lloyd Noland Foundation, a leading provider of services to the elderly and chronically ill. In 2004, Dr. Hamrick was honored by the Alabama Health Care Hall of Fame for his outstanding contributions to health care in the state.

John H. Clark, M.D. Leadership Award

Randy T. Kohl, M.D., recently retired from the Nebraska Board of Medicine and Surgery after a decade of distinguished service. During his tenure with the board, Dr. Kohl provided invaluable leadership on a variety of levels. He served in all of



the board's major leadership positions, including service as Board Secretary, Vice Chair and a three-year term as Board Chair.

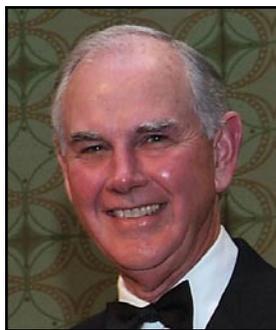
Dr. Kohl also provided outstanding

service through his representation of the board to other stakeholder groups. He often represented the board before the state legislature, providing articulate and thoughtful testimony that helped educate legislators wrestling with difficult public safety policy issues. Dr. Kohl also was a valued member of the board's Physicians Assistant Committee. Dr. Kohl also had made significant contributions to the national medical regulatory community through his service on the FSMB's Reference and Nominating Committees.

A hallmark of Dr. Kohl's life has been serving his fellow man and advancing the public good. To this end, Dr. Kohl has served overseas as a medical missionary.

Meritorious Service Award

Larry D. Dixon is being honored for his exceptional contributions to medical licensure and discipline during the last three decades. Since 1981, he has served as Executive Director of the Alabama



Board of Medical Examiners. During his tenure with the board, he has overseen numerous improvements to enhance board processes and enhance

patient safety in the state. Mr. Dixon's leadership abilities and experience have been invaluable to the national medical regulatory community for many years. He has served four terms on the FSMB Board of Directors, including terms in 1985-86, 1990-91, 1996-97 and 2006-08. Mr. Dixon has been active in Administrators in Medicine since its inception 25 years

ago, serving as the organization's first president from 1984-86. He is a Charter Member of the FSMB Certified State Medical Board Executive program.

Mr. Dixon also served on the steering committee for The National Clearinghouse on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation, a national professional association for licensure agencies, and since 2002 he has served on the Advisory Committee for Alabama's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. During his entire tenure with the medical board, Mr. Dixon has simultaneously served as an effective member and leader in the Alabama Legislature. After serving in the state's House of Representatives from 1978-82, he was elected to the Alabama State Senate. He is currently serving his seventh term in the Senate, where he has chaired the joint Sunset Committee since 1990.



Ray L. Casterline Award for Excellence in Writing

Mark R. Yessian, Ph.D. is being recognized for

his article "State Medical Boards and the Patient Safety Movement: Time to Make a Connection," published in the *Journal of Medical Licensure and Discipline* (Vol. 93, No. 3).

Award for Excellence in Editorial Writing

F. Michael Gloth, III, M.D., F.A.C.P., A.G.S.F. is being recognized for his editorial "State Medical Boards and Regula-



tion in an Electronic Medical Record Environment," published in the *Journal of Medical Licensure and Discipline* (Vol. 93, No. 4). 📧

study of caregivers of deceased patients in Michigan, which revealed that current levels of pain management are essentially unchanged from 15 years ago. That's in spite of numerous steps taken by the state since the mid-1990s to make effective pain management more accessible. These efforts have earned Michigan a top grade from the Alliance of State Pain Initiatives.

"Michigan may be ahead of the curve on pain management but that doesn't mean we've arrived. We want to create a paradigm shift in Michigan in the way patients and physicians think and speak about pain management," said Steve Creamer, manager of Workforce Development Research and Evaluation within the Bureau of Health Professions.

Among the initiatives in the strategic plan are:

- A survey that physicians have the option to complete when renewing their licenses, gauging their pain management knowledge, attitude and practices.
- A statewide phone survey of the public on pain management.
- Public service announcements

scheduled for late 2009 to increase awareness of the costs of unmanaged pain and the public's right to effective pain management.

- Spring 2009 distribution of customized copies of *Responsible Opioid Prescribing* to the 28,000 licensed physicians with Michigan-based practices and 5,300 medical residents in Michigan, with other professions under consideration for possible future distribution including dentists, nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

"We are collecting baseline data this year so that we can monitor changes in the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors related to pain management as we implement our strategic plan," said Creamer.

The goal in Michigan, according to Creamer, is to encourage the public to speak openly about pain and help physicians provide a wide range of safe and effective pain management approaches to all Michigan citizens – including opioid medications.

For more information on pain management initiatives in Michigan, contact Steve Creamer at creamers1@mich.gov.

To learn about FSMB pain management initiatives, contact Kelly Alfred, director of Education, at (817) 868-5160. 

Upcoming Events

April 29, 2009:

Administrators in Medicine Annual Meeting, Arlington, Va.

April 30-May 2, 2009: FSMB 97th Annual Meeting, Arlington, Va.

June 4-5, 2009: Coalition for Physician Enhancement Spring Meeting, Toronto, Canada

July 30-Aug. 1, 2009: FSMB Board of Directors Meeting, Seattle, Wash.

Sept. 24-25, 2009: AIM Eastern and Southern Regional Meeting, Charleston, W.Va.

Oct. 8-9, 2009: AIM Western and Central Regional Meeting, Omaha, Neb.



Please send your questions, comments and article ideas to:

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