

# NORTH DAKOTA BOARD OF MEDICINE

August 2021 News Blast

## North Dakota Board of Medicine

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Bismarck, ND 58503

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### 2021 Meeting Schedule

February 19, 2021

May 21, 2021

August 20, 2021

November 19, 2021

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

At the recent North Dakota Board of Medicine meeting, held August 20, I was honored to assume the role of Chair. I thank the members of the Board, as well as the physicians and citizens of North Dakota for entrusting me with this important role. I will do my best to fulfill the Board's primary responsibilities of protecting the public, licensure verification, and support of all physicians, medical students, physician assistants, and genetic counselors, who practice in the great state North Dakota. For those who do not know me, I am a practicing surgical oncologist in Fargo and have cared for many patients throughout the state since my wife and I have made North Dakota our home in 2003.

In keeping with the Board's important role of support for its licensees, at the recent meeting the Board ratified approval the ongoing contract with the ND Professional Health Program (PHP). This contract confirms the Board's continued support of this important program which the Board was instrumental in starting and has served as the primary funding source since its inception approximately 8 years ago. The Board feels a strong responsibility to provide this much needed support mechanism for licensees with substance dependency and mental health issues while maintaining its

responsibility to protect the citizens of North Dakota. For those who are not aware, the PHP is an independent program that provides many types of services for health professionals with personal or professional substance abuse or mental health needs. Entry into the PHP can be voluntary, or Board ordered. Voluntary entry into the PHP is completely confidential and not revealed to the Board unless there is a concern for the safety of the public. In closing, I would urge all physicians, physician assistants, medical students, and genetic counselors to become familiar with the PHP, as in today's stressful healthcare environment one never knows when their services may be needed. This service is available and here for you.

Sincerely, Robert P. Sticca, MD, FACS

## AUGUST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At the August 20, 2021, meeting, the North Dakota Board of Medicine approved 135 Physician licenses – 4 of which were administrative licenses and 1 special license, 48 Resident licenses, 27 Physician Assistant licenses, and 20 Genetic Counselor licenses. 13 Letters of Qualifications for State of Principal Licensure and 99 non-principal licenses were issued through the Interstate Medical Licensing Compact. The Board interviewed two applicants for licensure. The Board received reports from Investigative Panel A and Investigative Panel B regarding the number of complaints reviewed and acted upon. The combined reports showed that a total of 43 cases were reviewed: 6 confidential Letters of Concern were issued; 6 cases were held over for further review; 7 Stipulations resolving formal action were approved; all other cases were dismissed, or no further action taken.

The Board approved 7 Orders of formal disciplinary action at the meeting. The Orders included requiring PHP participation for alcohol related incidents, required CME training for reported suspension of privileges, a revocation of a license for federal fraud charges, an indefinite suspension of a license for charges of promoting prostitution, and a restriction on an expired license requiring a new application for approval if licensure is sought in the future due to a medical disability and DUI conviction. The Orders can all be found on the Board's website.

The Board ratified approval of the contract with the North Dakota Professional Health Program (NDPHP). The Board also received information and training from NDPHP's Medical Director regarding the scope of services provided by the NDPHP, including substance and alcohol use and behavioral health concerns.

The Board reviewed and approved updates to its Operations Manual including when referrals are made to the NDPHP, when a competency evaluation is required of a physician or physician assistant, when practicing without a license requires review by an Investigatory Panel, and a record retention policy for incomplete applications.

The Board discussed a policy on its involvement in filling vacancies for Board positions. The application and selection process are all done through the Governor's office and the Board discussed the information it would provide to the Governor to aid in the selection, such as specialty areas that would be beneficial to the Board, and practice areas that are underrepresented so that the Board has a well-rounded membership from all over North Dakota.

The Board will be reviewing its policy on standing committees at the next meeting, along with receiving updates on contracting for a database/software system for the office.

Finally, the Board began an initial discussion on whether to move North Dakota to a two-year license. According to the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), approximately 46 boards in the nation implement a two-year license, 16 have a one-year, and 5 have a three-year license. Benefits were discussed such as only having to renew every other year, along with potential concerns of whether that is too long of a period for licensees to remember to renew, how this would affect CME audits, and whether licensees would mandatorily report incidents between renewal periods. The Board tabled this discussion but also wanted to reach out to the licensees in the state to get your thoughts and input. If you would like to provide feedback to the Board on your preference, please follow this link to fill out a one question, anonymous survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M7S2N7S>.

## NEWS

### Update Contact Information

The Board office is again encouraging licensees to keep your contact information up to date to ensure receipt of correspondence from the Board. All licensees and applicants are responsible for providing accurate and current addresses, emails, and other contact information. Failure to keep this information up to date results in the inability to receive official notices or requests, including pending actions and complaints, which can lead to default or adverse action against a licensee or application. To change your address and other contact information, visit the Board's website: [www.ndbom.org](http://www.ndbom.org) – and under the Quicklinks at the bottom of the homepage – access “Change of Address.”

### Thank You

We wish to provide our continued support and thanks to all practitioners for your tireless work and expertise in treating patients with COVID-19 and combating this virus. We hear from many of you of the burnout you are feeling, as a new variant hits North Dakota. As reiterated by our Chair, remember that the NDPHP is a wonderful resource to aid in dealing with this emotional and trying time. Voluntarily reaching out to the NDPHP is not reported to the Board so please utilize this resource if you are in need: [North Dakota Professional Health Program \(ndphp.org\)](http://NorthDakotaProfessionalHealthProgram(ndphp.org))

## **INFORMATIONAL LINKS:**

### **CDC's Clinical Pocket Guide to Tapering Opioids:**

[https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/clinical\\_pocket\\_guide\\_tapering-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/clinical_pocket_guide_tapering-a.pdf)

### **Interstate Medical Licensing Compact:**

<https://www.imlcc.org>

### **FBI Informaiton on Wire Fraud Scheme against Health Care providers:**

<https://files.constantcontact.com/4487d704801/038c165a-5863-4b69-8630-b461754c7cc7.pdf>

### **FSMB Stem Cell Workgroup Report:**

<https://www.fsmb.org/siteassets/advocacy/policies/fsmb-stem-cell-workgroup-report.pdf>

### **ND DHS updates to Child Abuse and Neglect hotline and reporting:**

<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/cps/>