



October 2024 News Blast

North Dakota Board of Medicine

4204 Boulder Ridge Rd Ste 260

Bismarck, ND 58503

(701) 450-4060

[2024 Meeting Schedule](#)

January 31, 2025

May 2, 2025

July 25, 2025

October 24, 2025

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

And just like that, the holidays are upon us! The Board of Medicine met for its regular quarterly meeting on October 25, 2024. Please glance through this issue of the News Blast for more detailed information. The rule changes presented in the last issue have been finalized and will go before the Legislative Administrative Rules Committee for final adoption at their next meeting in December. Many thanks to the members of the Board's Genetic Counselor Committee and the Laws, Rules, and Legislation Committee for their drafting of these rules; and to the Executive Director, Board Counsel, and others for their hours of work. In the years I have served on this Board, the regulatory issues coming forward are ever more complex. North Dakota is fortunate to have an astute Executive Director who has been proactive in modernizing our processes to keep pace with the changes.

The North Dakota Board of Medicine has been gradually changing its structure to better and more efficiently serve its mission of protecting the public and ensuring safe and qualified practitioners are available to serve our state. As part of the restructuring process, the Board has decided to

create a Medical Director position within the office. The purpose of this position is to have a physician assist with the processing of complaints and advising on pertinent information to be gathered for the Investigative Panels of the Board. The Medical Director will also assist with interviews for the purposes of investigations if these are necessary. This individual is not a member of an Investigative Panel and is expected to assist the staff to provide pertinent and timely information to the Board Panels in order to make informed decisions. Our goal is to improve the speed and depth with which investigations can be completed.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Zena Homan has accepted this position. She has been a member of the Board of Medicine since 2022 and is very familiar with the function of our Investigative Panels. She has been a thoughtful Board member, and we appreciate her ability to assist with investigations. She will be resigning her position on the Board to assume this new role.

Finally, as the holidays approach, please take time to take your mental temperature. The holidays can be stressful for patients, family, staff, and medical providers. If you have concerns about your own wellbeing or that of a colleague, please do not hesitate to reach out to the North Dakota Professional Health Program (PHP). This entity exists to keep providers working – getting you the help you need in a confidential and supportive atmosphere. The PHP does not report your questions or concerns to the Board of Medicine unless there is a clear violation of the Medical Practice Act. Their goal is to assist providers who are struggling to connect with resources before there are patient safety issues. Please reach out to them if you have concerns about yourself or a colleague. Your call is confidential.

Happy Holidays to you and yours.

Best Regards, Catherine Houle, MD
Chair, North Dakota Board of Medicine

OCTOBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At the meeting on October 25, 2024, the North Dakota Board of Medicine approved 104 Physician licenses which included 1 license granted after an interview, 25 Physician Assistant licenses, and 9 Genetic Counselor licenses. 18 Letters of Qualification for State of Principal Licensure and 196 non-principal licenses were issued through the Interstate Medical Licensing Compact.

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 65 cases were reviewed, which included 8 summary matter cases and 10 malpractice cases. Of these cases, 2 stipulations for discipline were approved, disciplinary action was authorized in 8 cases, 6 letters of concern were issued, and 6 cases were tabled to obtain additional information; 1 case was re-reviewed with disciplinary action rescinded under certain terms; all other cases were dismissed, or no further action taken.

The Board took disciplinary action against one physician and one physician assistant during the meeting. Discipline against the physician was for an indefinite suspension and a reprimand was issued against a physician assistant. Recent disciplinary cases can be found on the Board's website under Recent Board Orders.

The Board received updates from its respective committees.

- The Laws, Rules, and Legislative (LRL) Committee provided three finalized bills for submission for the 2025 legislative session including (1) allowing Genetic Counselors to order their own tests, (2) require background checks for Genetic Counselor and Naturopathic Doctor applicants seeking licensure, and (3) detailing alternative pathways for Naturopathic Doctors to obtain independent prescribing endorsement. The Board approved the bills to go forward for submission to the legislature.
- The IT Committee updated the Board on a recent Cyber Security Audit and Assessment and worked with the Board's IT providers to address some vulnerabilities in the system.
- The PHP Committee proposed an additional bill for submission for the 2025 legislative session that would allow Board funds to be spent on "former" licensees who would like to continue to be involved in the PHP program. The Board approved the bill to go forward for submission to the legislature.

The Board also reviewed the FSMB's proposed Guidance on Alternative Pathways to Licensure of International Medical Graduates and Physicians. The Board will be submitting comments on the guidance.

Finally, the Board reviewed and approved a new contract with the North Dakota Professional Health Program. The Board looks forward to further collaboration with the vital services provided by the PHP.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT CORNER

Dear North Dakota Physician Assistants,

The North Dakota Board of Medicine is set to adopt the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Code of Ethics into its administrative rules, a move that will align the state's ethical standards for physician assistants (PAs) with national guidelines. This decision is part of an ongoing effort to enhance healthcare quality in the state by ensuring PAs adhere to a consistent and high ethical standard.

The AAPA Code of Ethics outlines key principles and responsibilities for PAs, covering patient care, professional relationships, and personal conduct. By integrating these guidelines, the Board aims to maintain public trust and ensure safe, effective care.

The adoption process involves reviewing the code to ensure it fits the state's healthcare regulations. Once integrated, the code will become mandatory for PAs in North Dakota, likely including provisions for education, training, and addressing violations.

This move is expected to strengthen the professional identity of PAs, promote a culture of ethical practice, and contribute to better patient outcomes. As the healthcare landscape evolves, the integration of national ethical standards into state regulations represents a proactive approach to upholding the highest standards of care. PAs in North Dakota are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the AAPA Code of Ethics in preparation for its adoption, which can be found on the Board's website under [Additional Links and Resources](#).

Grant Lannoye, PA
ND Board of Medicine

NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR CORNER

Dear Naturopathic Doctors –

As many of you are aware, Naturopathic Doctors licensed in North Dakota may apply for an endorsement to prescribe legend drugs and testosterone pursuant to the formulary adopted in North Dakota Administrative Code section 50-06-02-08. The Board office has been working with the Board of Pharmacy on getting the DEA registration updated so that those who have such authority can properly apply for their DEA registration in order to prescribe the authorized testosterone. We are hoping to have this worked out in the coming months.

I am pleased to report that the Board will be moving forward with updating the law under North Dakota Century Code section 43-58-08.1 to allow for additional pathways to obtain independent prescribing endorsements. Previously, this would have required passage of the NPLEX pharmacology examination – an exam that is not offered in the state and only twice a year. Now, in addition to the examination, additional pathways will be available such as completion of 12 months at an accredited residency program or three years' experience of prescribing medications in another jurisdiction without

discipline. This will be presented as a bill before the 2025 Legislature. We will provide an update on this as it progresses through session.

Finally, please be aware that rules are being brought forth that officially adopts the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics will be used to determine whether a physician has been practicing in an ethical manner for disciplinary proceedings. I urge you to familiarize yourself with the Code of Ethics, which can be found on the Board's website under [Additional Links and Resources](#).

Wishing you and yours a very merry holiday season. Sincerely,

Lezlie Scott, ND

Naturopathic Doctor representative on the North Dakota Board of Medicine

A LETTER FROM THE NDPHP

It seems that as kids, we all loved the holiday season. It meant presents, breaks from school, building snowmen, and spending time with our families. As we age and advance in our careers, there doesn't seem to be as much excitement around the holidays. As medical providers, we now have to deal with call schedules and working short-staffed. As parents, we have to figure out childcare when there's no school and now we're in charge of buying those presents that our kids are so excited to unwrap. There seems to be unending pressures that spike around the holiday season. For many of us, there is also a sense of profound loss and grief as we set the table at Thanksgiving and Christmas and realize how many of our family members are no longer going to join us for the holiday meal. Those special holiday traditions that we grew up with and helped shape our childhoods will never be experienced in the same way again.

Grief is hard. It is a process, and we all go through it differently. There is no right or wrong way to process grief. There is no textbook to read that is going to make it all manageable and understandable. It can be unpredictable and daunting at times. It can take us to dark places and can be a predecessor to significant depression and anxiety, even thought disturbances. During this holiday season, if you or someone you love is struggling with grief, be patient. Take time to talk about the person or people that you are missing and the traditions that may have passed with them. Don't be afraid to start new traditions. Families grow and evolve, and our traditions should do the same. If your grief and loss start to take you to a dark place, please reach out for help. As medical providers, we experience the same emotions as everyone else. We are susceptible to the same depression and anxiety and even thought disturbances as everyone else. We are human, but not super-human. The North Dakota Professional Health Program is a resource for all medical providers in North Dakota. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the [NDPHP](#) with any questions or concerns about your mental health or the mental health of your colleagues. We are here to help!

Sincerely,

Missy Henke, MD

NDPHP Medical Director

NDBOM LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBER

As Dr. Homan assumes her role as the new Medical Director for the North Dakota Board of Medicine, she will be stepping down as a Board member. Therefore, the Board is seeking a qualified individual to serve on the Board. The individual must be a physician with an active North Dakota license and have practiced in the state for at least five years. The Board encourages those with specialty areas, such as obstetrics and gynecology, to apply, along with those serving in rural areas of the state.

The term of office for each member of the Board is four years and a Board member may serve no more than two successive terms.

Members should expect to devote time to the Board in order to be a proactive member. The Board holds quarterly meetings in January, May, July, and October. Two meetings are virtual and two are in person. Members serve on an Investigatory Panel which meet the Thursday before the Board meeting and usually lasts 2-3 hours. Due to the high volume of cases reviewed by the Panels, members should expect 8-10 hours to devote to preparing for the Panel meetings. Board meetings are held the following Friday morning and usually last about 4 hours. Members can expect 4-6 hours of preparation for regular Board meetings. Members are also asked to serve on one standing committee of the Board – which meet between 2-5 times a year, normally for an hour. If you have inquiries or requests for additional information, please contact the Board's Executive Director, Sandra DePountis, sdepountis@ndbom.org.

To apply for appointment, please fill out the application on the Governor's website:

<https://apps.nd.gov/gov/boards/Application/PersonalInfo>

NDBOM UTILIZES VERIDOC FOR ALL LICENSE VERIFICATIONS

The North Dakota Board of Medicine is pleased to now offer all licensure verifications – including physicians, physician assistants, genetic counselors, and naturopaths – through [VeriDoc](#). Licensees may login to VeriDoc and request a verification of their North Dakota licensure directly – without now needing to submit a request and send money to the NDBOM. For more information, please visit the Board website for [Request Licensure Verification](#).

REMINDER: NDBOM Launches New Website

The NDBOM is pleased to announce the unveiling of its new website at www.ndbom.org. We hope you find the website's updated features and content helpful. A reminder – if you have not yet done so – please visit the site to “register.” Throughout the website – including under Practitioners on the Home Page – or in the Quick Links on the bottom of the page – is [“Current Licensees and Applicants – Register for Dashboard.”](#) This link will provide you with detailed instructions on registering which include entering your current core credentials and then creating a username and password. This will take you to your own, unique dashboard. In this dashboard are numerous resources at your fingertips depending on your license which include – updating contact information, printing licenses, seeing the status of your application and license, etc. This is also the portal that you will use to renew your license at the appropriate time. After you register, you can access your portal by logging into the [Licensee Dashboard](#) found throughout the website.

If you have any questions or issues, please do not hesitate to contact us through the [Contact Us](#) form located at the bottom right corner of the website.

NEWS

NDBOM Joins IAMRA

The North Dakota Board of Medicine is pleased to have joined the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA). IAMRA purpose is to promote effective medical regulation worldwide by supporting best practice, innovation, collaboration, and knowledge sharing in the interest of public safety and in support of the medical profession. In the rapidly changing environment in which the world of physicians is getting smaller – in that we are now working on a global level to verify credentials and recruit qualified physicians all over the world – it is organizations like IAMRA who facilitate conversations on these important topics and provide relevant data to make sound decisions. For more information, please visit their [website](#) or [eNews Blasts](#).



JOIN PROVIDER BRIDGE TO SUPPORT EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The incidence of emergencies and disasters has increased steadily in the U.S. since the 1980's. In 2023, the United States experienced 25 disasters, including a deadly wildfire in Maui and Hurricane Idalia in Florida. By registering for Provider Bridge, you will join thousands of qualified medical providers who are ready to provide care and contribute to the effective emergency management of these disasters.

Provider Bridge Supports States' Emergency Preparedness and Response

Provider Bridge is a free-to-use technology platform that maintains a comprehensive registry of health professionals that can be accessed expeditiously to prepare for and respond to local, regional, or national emergencies or public health crises.

Joining the Provider Bridge platform allows you to create and own a time-stamped, digital report ("passport") that includes your name, provider type, professional school and graduation date, NPI, state license number(s), specialty or area of practice, and DEA registration(s), as well as any disciplinary history. Each license is verified via data sharing with the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), and the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

Provider Bridge also allows entities, including state medical and nursing boards, hospitals, health care institutions, public health offices, and emergency management entities to search for verified medical professionals who are willing to assist in an emergency or deploy to a disaster site or provide telehealth services. Additionally, entities can verify the credentials of state-based registrants as well as those professionals in other states.

Currently, Provider Bridge includes physicians, PAs, and nurses and is positioned to expand to include other medical professionals, such as mental health providers (psychologists, counselors, social workers), respiratory therapists, EMS providers, and others.

Register Now!

Provider Bridge supports expeditious emergency response most effectively by having a large number of medical professionals registered in the platform. Registration is free and takes only a few minutes at the following link:

<https://provider.providerbridge.org/>.

What to Expect After Registering for Provider Bridge

Once you have registered for Provider Bridge, there are no additional steps you need to take. You can generate a certified pdf of your passport to present at an emergency site. Health care entities can add registrants to their provider list, pull Provider Bridge passports, and contact providers (unless a licensee chooses to opt out of allowing entities to find their profile). In the event of a national or state emergency, an entity can reach out to providers to determine if they are available and willing to provide health care services.

For more information, go to <https://www.providerbridge.org/> or contact:

Anne K. Lawler, JD, RN
Provider Bridge Program Officer
(208) 331-2341
alawler@fsmb.org

AMA – Code of Ethics

The American Medical Association recently launched a new website – making it easier to find guidance on medical ethics. To view the website, visit <https://code-medical-ethics.ama-assn.org/>. Note that each professions Code of Ethics is posted on the Board’s website under Links and Resources.

Scam Calls Targeting Licensees

The Board is aware of numerous scam calls to licensees posing as law enforcement officers, agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), or Board staff. The scammers attempt a myriad of tactics in an attempt to extort money from licensees. For example, scammers, posing as law enforcement will attempt to say there is a warrant for your arrest. Scammers posing as DEA agents or Board staff attempt to say that your license or authority to prescribe controlled substances is suspended. The scammers then provide an “Agreement” that if a bond of \$25,000.00 is paid, the license would be reinstated.

The scammers’ phone number may show up as the Board’s number (701) 450-4060, or, if posing as law enforcement, they may impersonate actual law enforcement officers using their real names.

Please note, law enforcement officers, DEA agents, and Board staff will never contact licensees by telephone to demand money or any other form of payment. If you receive one of these calls, refuse the demand for payment, and hang up. If the caller insists that they speak with you, tell them you will call them back directly. Do not call back a different number provided by the scammers, instead, call the Board office directly at (701) 450-4060.

If the caller is stating they are from the DEA, consider reporting the threat using the [DEA’s Extortion Scam Online Reporting form](#).

If the phone number of the caller appears to be the Board’s number, you may submit an online complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) using the [FCC’s Consumer Complaint form](#).

NEW: FSMB SCAM: The FSMB wishes to alert practitioners that there is a new scam targeting licensees around the countries by individuals posing as FSMB staff alleging issues with physician licenses and/or discipline and requiring a call back to resolve the issues. The scammer asks personal questions of the physicians to obtain additional information. For

more information and to view the alert – visit the [FSMB.org](https://www.fsmb.org) homepage. Note that the FSMB will never contact physicians directly pertaining to issues regarding their license or any disciplinary actions.

Refer a Child to with Make-A-Wish® North Dakota

At Make-A-Wish North Dakota, we create life changing wishes for children ages 2 ½ to 18 years old who have a critical illness that puts their life in jeopardy. Medical professionals are one of our main referral sources to connect children with their wish come true. If you know a child with a critical illness, we invite you to refer them today by visiting [md.wish.org](https://www.md.wish.org). In addition to our referral form, you will also find our medical guidance sheets regarding eligibility within sub-specialty departments. Thank you!

DEA Removes Waiver Requirement to Prescribe Buprenorphine

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 was signed by Congress on December 29, 2022, removing the federal requirement for practitioners to submit a Notice of Intent (have a waiver) to prescribe medications, such as buprenorphine, for the treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD). Instead, all prescriptions for buprenorphine only require a standard DEA registration number. The Act also introduced new training requirements for all prescribers which will go into effect June 21, 2023. Additional information on these requirements will soon be available from the DEA. For more information, please visit [SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](https://www.samhsa.gov).

CDC: Updated Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids for Pain

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released updated and expanded recommendations for clinicians providing pain care for adult outpatients with short and long-term pain – replacing the guidelines released in 2016. The recommendations are intended to help clinicians work with their patients to ensure the safest and most effective pain care is provided by improving communication and empowering patients to make informed decisions. The Guidelines address determining whether to initiate opioids for pain, selecting opioids and determining opioid dosages, deciding duration of initial opioid prescription and conducting follow-ups, and assessing risk and addressing potential harms of opioid use. The updated guidelines are found on the CDC website: [CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain](https://www.cdc.gov/clinicalpractice/guidelines/pain/).

Medicaid requires PDMP Checks

A new federal law went into effect on October 1, 2021, which requires all health care providers to check the PDMP for a Medicaid enrollee's prescription drug history before prescribing controlled substances to the enrollee. If you have any questions regarding the new requirements or regulations, please contact Brendan Joyce at the North Dakota Department of Human Services (bjoyce@nd.gov).

NDBOM Collaboration with ACCME

Physicians can now have CME providers report CME credit for North Dakota licensees directly to the ACCME Program and Activity Reporting System (PARS). All that is required of physicians is to request your CME provider to report your attendance. A report is then submitted to the Board certifying attendance. This will streamline CME audits, allowing physicians to utilize the ACCME database instead of self-reporting individual CME during an audit. Physicians may also create their own account at the ACCME's CME Passport: <https://www.cmepassport.org> which will allow you to find available CME, track what CME credits have been reported by providers, and generate a transcript of your credit that can be sent directly to the Board. To learn more, please access the ACCME website at <https://www.accme.org/state-medical->

[licensing-boards-collaboration](#). For more information on the CME Passport, please access: <https://accme.org/about-cmepassport>.

INFORMATIONAL LINKS:

CDC's Clinical Practice Guidelines for Prescribing Opioids 2022:

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p1103-Prescribing-Opioids.html>

Interstate Medical Licensing Compact:

<https://www.imlcc.org>

FBI Information on Wire Fraud Scheme against Health Care providers:

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



North Dakota is the proud recipient of the WellBeing First Champion for the second year in a row by ALL IN; WellBeing First- verifying that the Board of Medicine's applications are free from intrusive and stigmatizing language around mental health care and treatment so practitioners can seek needed care without fear of losing their license.