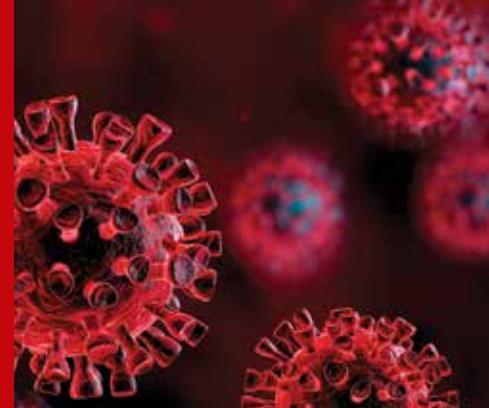


CHALLENGE & CHANGE

ADAPTING WITH INNOVATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2021



CHALLENGE

AND

CHANGE

FEDERATION OF STATE MEDICAL BOARDS

To protect the public from the unprofessional, improper, unlawful or incompetent practice of medicine, each of the states and territories making up the United States of America defines the practice of medicine within their borders and delegates the authority to enforce the law to a regulatory board.

The FSMB represents the 70 medical and osteopathic boards — commonly referred to as state medical boards — within the United States, including its territories and the District of Columbia.

It assists these boards as they go about their mandate of protecting the public's health, safety and welfare through proper licensing and disciplining of physicians and, in some jurisdictions, other health care professionals.



DURING AN EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT YEAR, the nation was challenged on multiple levels by COVID-19: Hundreds of thousands of Americans lost their lives, the economy was devastated, schools closed, and fear and uncertainty cast a cloud over our daily lives.

Along with the **challenges** of this remarkable time came **changes** — as organizations like the FSMB found new ways to work in the midst of a pandemic. In this annual report, we reflect on a momentous and trying year, during which the FSMB remained committed to its goals and made strong progress in achieving them.

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CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

“... highlights in this report demonstrate the resiliency of the state medical board community—which has truly risen to meet the challenges of the pandemic.”

TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

THE YEARS 2020 AND 2021 WILL BE REMEMBERED as two of the most momentous in the history of the FSMB, with the COVID-19 pandemic placing extraordinary demands on the state medical board community.

The devastating impact of the pandemic was compounded by social upheaval — ranging from the death of George Floyd in May 2020 and its aftermath of racial unrest to the contentious 2020 Presidential election and the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Through it all, the nation's medical regulators responded with remarkable agility, swiftly adjusting their protocols and policies to ensure the availability of health care providers in areas hard-hit by the pandemic and sharing vital data and resources in innovative new ways to assist public health efforts.

And they helped move forward a new national dialogue about systemic racism and inequity in health care — which became strikingly clear in the disproportionate hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19 among African-Americans, Latin-Americans and Native Americans.

The challenges of the past year have been many — but in rising to meet them, the state medical board community has brought forth a wave of innovation and adaptive change that we believe bodes well for the future.

Thus, we have chosen **“Challenge and Change”** as the theme for this year's annual report.

In the pages that follow, you will learn about new FSMB programs and approaches that have emerged during the pandemic — and that have been designed for sustainability as the nation begins to pivot from COVID-19. There is little question that as the pandemic recedes, it will leave in its wake dramatically changed workplaces and organizational practices. We are confident that the programmatic steps we are taking today will help us transition successfully, ensuring that we are strong and well-prepared in the post-pandemic era that lies ahead.

This year, in addition to information from the FSMB's five operational centers, our report includes a new section, titled “Physician Licensing and Discipline.” In it, we provide the latest statistics from our Physician Data Center — offering a valuable snapshot of trends in the U.S. physician workforce.

In the other sections of the report, you will learn about our progress on a variety of initiatives during 2020-2021:

Advocacy: The FSMB played an integral role in helping state medical boards coalesce their efforts against the pandemic, including hosting historic virtual meetings of the boards in May and September 2020. In a fluid environment, the FSMB served as the regulatory community's liaison to federal and state agencies and other key stakeholder organizations. Meanwhile, our efforts to advance the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact resulted in strong growth and the addition of several new states. We vigorously continued to address priorities such as telemedicine, physician wellness and burnout, physician sexual misconduct and antitrust reform; and introduced new measures to strengthen the advocacy efforts of state regulators, including our new online FSMB Policy Clearinghouse. *Please see page 4.*

Education and Policy: With the pandemic shutting down face-to-face gatherings across the nation, the FSMB developed a virtual platform for the Annual Meeting and launched a new Virtual Education Program webinar series that proved so successful it will be extended into the future. Recognizing the need for national leadership in raising awareness of health care disparities, we launched a Task Force on Health Equity and Medical Regulation — which later transitioned to become a formal FSMB workgroup. We also issued a national public statement on health equity and hosted a major symposium on the topic. The FSMB House of Delegates adopted a new Strategic Plan, and the work of several other FSMB workgroups continued to address key policy issues during the year. *Please see page 8.*

Data, Research and Assessment: The FSMB's Physician Data Center (PDC) played an essential role as a resource for the nation during the upheavals of the pandemic. A particularly important achievement for the FSMB was winning a federal grant supporting Provider Bridge, a new online platform we created and named that helps connect volunteer health care providers with health care entities during the pandemic and other emergencies. We also announced with our partner, NBME, historic changes to the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE); provided pandemic-related research for partners in health care; and continued to make improvements to the Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS) and other FSMB products and services. *Please see page 12.*

Communications: In the face of misinformation and uncertainty about public health measures during the pandemic, the FSMB and its partner organizations issued public statements and guidance on issues ranging from the use of masks to physician prescribing practices. Our media team worked closely with major news outlets and kept the regulatory community well-informed of pandemic developments via its network of social media channels and publications, including the *Journal of Medical Regulation* and *FSMB eNews*. *Please see page 16.*

FSMB Foundation: Working nimbly, the FSMB Foundation made \$100,000 available in grant-funding in 2020 to help organizations develop sustainable models of preparedness and recovery for future pandemics and national emergencies. The Foundation also distributed grants during the year aimed at other topics of interest to medical regulators — including opioid use disorder and telehealth — and it launched efforts to review and update its operational and administrative functions. *Please see page 18.*

Despite the tribulations of the last year, the highlights in this report demonstrate the resiliency of the state medical board community — which has truly risen to meet the challenges of the pandemic. Our member boards have responded decisively and effectively during these trying months, with actions and policies that sought to ensure the safety of the public.

At the heart of these collective efforts is an interconnected team of state-board leaders and staff, FSMB elected leaders and employees, and valued colleagues from partner organizations — who have stepped forward admirably to meet the urgent needs and demands they faced during the pandemic. To them, we express our deepest gratitude and thanks for a job well done.

Much work remains as the nation grapples with COVID-19 and many other issues, but the successes of the last year give us confidence that the medical regulatory community is well-positioned and well-prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.



Cheryl L. Walker-McGill, MD, MBA
2020-2021 Chair, Board of Directors



Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP, MACOI
President and CEO

CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

A New Way to Connect: Annual Capitol Hill Day Thrives Online

During more than a decade of service to state medical boards, the FSMB's Washington, D.C., advocacy team has achieved strong results by utilizing a time-honored tool: frequent face-to-face meetings with legislators and policy makers to build relationships and advance ideas. A prime example is the FSMB's "Day on Capitol Hill," an annual event in which Federation leaders visit dozens of Congressional offices to discuss issues. But when the spread of COVID-19 forced office closures throughout Washington, D.C. in early 2020, cutting off in-person meetings, a different approach was needed. The answer: a "virtual advocacy" strategy that included the FSMB's first-ever **Virtual Day on Capitol Hill**, held September 30, 2020. Utilizing phone calls and Zoom-style meetings for fully virtual interactions with Members of Congress and their legislative aides and other assistants, the FSMB raised awareness on a variety of topics of importance to state medical boards, including understanding telehealth usage during the pandemic and supporting clinician wellness. In total, FSMB leaders met with more than 35 Congressional offices — including a virtual call with **U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy, MD**, of Louisiana that focused on COVID-19 and other FSMB priorities. Some elements of the new virtual advocacy model have proven extremely useful and will be continued by the FSMB team as a part of its ongoing work.



U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy, MD, of Louisiana, was among those on Capitol Hill who participated in the FSMB's 2020 Virtual Capitol Hill Day, utilizing Zoom-style meeting technology.

“**The State Medical Board of Ohio** engaged with FSMB to conduct a comprehensive audit of the Board's handling of sexual misconduct investigations. While initially planned to be done with on-site visits, the FSMB advocacy team managed to create an effective, insightful, helpful consultation — all accomplished virtually, with high-quality results.”

— **Stephanie Loucka, JD**, Executive Director, State Medical Board of Ohio

ADVOCACY

The FSMB was actively engaged at both the state and federal level during an extraordinary year, serving as the voice of the medical regulatory community while offering resources to help the nation address the COVID-19 pandemic.

Taking Action Against a Fast-Moving National Pandemic

The FSMB joined other health care stakeholders during 2020-2021 in a coordinated effort to address the pandemic, collaborating and sharing resources across sectors. Much of the FSMB's focus was aimed at ensuring a stable physician workforce while ensuring patients remained protected in the midst of overburdened hospitals and care centers.

Advocacy staff in Washington, D.C., played a key role in helping coordinate efforts with federal and state policymakers and various health care organizations:

Monitoring Emergency Measures: With all states and the District of Columbia using emergency measures to address pandemic-related workforce shortages, the FSMB provided information and guidance to ensure safety and consistency — including close consultation and advice for the **White House Coronavirus Task Force, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** and others as they shaped policies and emergency legislation. Advocacy staff worked intensively with state and federal officials to ensure that temporary waivers on licensing requirements for health providers — which took hold across the United States — were developed and administered safely.

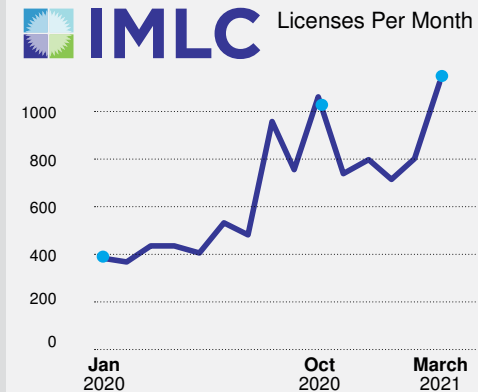
Mobilizing Resources: To help state medical boards and the public stay informed on emergency regulatory changes, the FSMB launched an extensive **COVID-19 resources website**, which included state-by-state regulatory information and was updated frequently. Since its launch, the website has been viewed more than 85,000 times and has been frequently cited in media reports and linked to by federal and state agencies and medical organizations. The FSMB advocacy team was instrumental in acquiring \$2.5 million in federal funding for **"ProviderBridge.org,"** a new website that facilitates the deployment of volunteer physicians across state lines, and it worked closely with FSMB information technology staff to develop and launch the site (see more on page 12 of this report).

Public Messaging: FSMB press releases and public statements on actions and developments related to medical regulation during the COVID-19 pandemic — including reminders to physicians of duties related to safe-prescribing and mask-wearing — helped quell misinformation and promote best practices at the height of the pandemic.

Advancing Legislation: The FSMB endorsed federal legislation aimed at supporting physician mental health in the wake of COVID-19, along with bills that would provide for studies of the impact of telehealth on health care delivery and access during the pandemic.

IMLC: Multi-State Licensure Option Continues Steady Expansion

The **Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC)** continued its steady expansion in 2020-2021, adding new participants to a membership roster that now includes 33 states, Guam and the District of Columbia. Legislation to adopt the IMLC is pending in four states, and several additional states have expressed interest in becoming participating IMLC members.



Use of the IMLC for physician licensure has dramatically increased during the COVID-19 crisis.

Since leading efforts to develop and launch the IMLC in 2015 to streamline licensure for physicians who want to practice in multiple states, the FSMB has remained a strong advocate, supporting state legislative efforts by submitting written and oral testimony, assisting boards with testimony and coordinating technical and legal assistance.

More than 20,000 physician licenses have now been

issued using the IMLC licensure process — which is helping improve access to health care in rural and underserved areas and has facilitated the growth of telehealth as a care option. Other IMLC developments in 2020-2021 include:

COVID-19 Licensure Spike: Expedited physician licensing — especially multi-state licensing — has become particularly important during the pandemic as states struggle to ensure adequate physician workforces to cover COVID-patient surges. Data shows that use of the IMLC for licensing by physicians increased substantially during the pandemic, with the number of licenses issued through the Compact more than doubling between March 2020 and February 2021.

Compact Model for Physician Assistants (PAs): Utilizing a \$1.25 million grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the FSMB is working with the **Council of State Governments**, the **American Academy of Physician Assistants**, and the **National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants** to develop a licensure compact for PAs. Plans are under way for model legislation to be circulated for comment to member boards and other stakeholders in 2021.

STATE MEDICAL BOARD SUPPORT

Building Stronger and More Effective State Medical Boards

Providing direct support for the needs of state medical boards is the FSMB's highest strategic priority — and the FSMB's advocacy team worked on many fronts to help boards succeed in 2020-2021. Among them:

Tracking Legislation and Policy: The FSMB worked directly with many member boards in 2020-2021 to help them achieve their individual legislative and policy priorities, frequently responding to research requests, providing testimony and white papers for legislative hearings and distributing policy documents for legislators and policymakers. The FSMB also tracked relevant legislation and regulations in state legislatures across the United States, as well as the U.S. Congress, providing regular updates to medical regulators via its **FSMB Advocacy Network News** publication. In 2020, the FSMB monitored more than 3,000 legislative bills nationwide.

The FSMB Clearinghouse: The advocacy team led efforts to develop and launch a new online resource for state boards in 2020: the **FSMB Policy Clearinghouse**, which provides easily accessible content intended to help boards be more effective in developing policy. The Clearinghouse, the brainchild of FSMB Chair **Cheryl Walker-McGill, MD, MBA**, offers a wide range of downloadable policy documents and background resources, and it allows state boards to upload information they want to share with the regulatory community. Plans are now under way to expand the Clearinghouse, located at FSMB.org, in order to facilitate other channels of communication and information-sharing between state boards.

Issues Advocacy: A core element of FSMB advocacy is serving as the voice of the regulatory community on issues of importance. In addition to representing boards in matters related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the FSMB spoke out on antitrust damage liability, VA health-system reform, telemedicine, physician wellness, medical marijuana and many other topics impacting medical regulation. The advocacy team worked directly with medical regulators in **Florida, Minnesota, Ohio** and **Texas** to mobilize support and advance legislative initiatives aimed at key issues in their states during 2020-2021 lawmaking sessions.

FSMB Reviews Help Boards Improve Effectiveness

The FSMB works directly with state medical boards when requested to review their operational practices and policies and provide recommendations that encourage best practices and help improve effectiveness. In 2020-2021, two FSMB Review Teams provided comprehensive reviews for the **State Medical Board of Ohio** and the **Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners** — providing each with detailed reports and recommendations.

Endorsing Federal Legislation: Major Bills Advance with FSMB Support

The FSMB formally endorsed and advocated for several major pieces of legislation in 2020-2021, including:

- *Evaluating Disparities and Outcomes of Telehealth During the COVID-19 Emergency Act of 2020 (EDOT Act)* and *KEEP Telehealth Options Act* (studying telehealth usage during the pandemic).
- *Coronavirus Health Care Worker Wellness Act* (creating grants for health-provider wellness).
- *Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act* (creating grants for health-provider wellness).
- *Occupational Licensing Board Antitrust Damages Relief Act of 2020* (providing antitrust damages relief to state boards).

Antitrust Reform Efforts Include New U.S. Supreme Court Petition

Advancing antitrust damage-liability reform has been an advocacy priority for the FSMB since the Supreme Court's 2015 *North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners v. FTC* decision.

This year, the FSMB joined attorneys general from nearly two dozen states informally supporting a petition to the U.S. Supreme Court from the **Louisiana Real Estate Appraisers Board** that challenges an antitrust ruling against the Board by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

The FSMB's amicus brief argues that prolonged antitrust litigation stifles the ability of regulatory boards to function in the public interest.

The FSMB also worked closely with Congressional leaders and other regulatory organizations last year to introduce the **Occupational Licensing Board Antitrust Damages Relief Act of 2020** in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The FSMB continues to monitor antitrust suits, policy changes and other new developments on an ongoing basis.



Advancing Physician Wellness: During the COVID-19 pandemic, the negative impact of stress on physicians has become an increasingly serious issue — amplified by the suicide of Lorna Breen, MD, in April 2020. The FSMB continued its strong advocacy in support of physician wellness protections over the last year.



Public Health Advocacy: FSMB Tackles Major Issues

While confronting COVID-19 in 2020-2021, state medical boards continued to face a variety of other challenging national public health issues as well. The FSMB provided leadership on several major fronts:



Opioid Abuse: For nearly two decades, the FSMB has put a strong emphasis on curbing the opioid epidemic, including developing educational resources and guidelines for prescribers. Most recently, it has played a strong leadership role as a formal member of the **National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) Action Collaborative on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic**. On November 23, 2020, the FSMB joined NAM to co-host a historic virtual meeting of U.S. health professions licensing boards — the first time that leaders of the nation's regulatory boards of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work and psychology were assembled under NAM's auspices to discuss the epidemic. Participants shared best practices and heard presentations by FSMB Chair **Cheryl Walker-McGill, MD, MBA**, and FSMB President and CEO **Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP**.

Physician Wellness and Burnout: The FSMB actively supported bipartisan efforts in Congress to address the impact of COVID-19 on physician wellness through the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act and the Coronavirus Health Care Worker Wellness Act of 2020, and continued to play an important role as a member of NAM's **Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience**. The FSMB's leadership over the last two years in encouraging state medical boards to lower stigma for physicians who seek treatment for health conditions has yielded results as the nation's medical boards continue to take action and consider steps they can take to proactively support the mental health and well-being of their physician populations.

Physician Sexual Misconduct: The FSMB House of Delegates adopted a landmark formal policy on sexual misconduct on May 1, 2020, including 38 recommendations for action to help state boards more effectively address this issue.

Following its adoption, the policy was widely distributed and received positive attention and media coverage. To raise awareness, the policy was highlighted during **"Physician Sexual Misconduct: New Policies and Approaches,"** a special FSMB public webinar in September 2020 that drew 330 participants.



COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Connecting in New Ways with Peer Organizations Brought Synergy and Impact in 2020-2021

The FSMB's success is largely a result of strong and productive relationships with stakeholder organizations across the spectrum of health care. During the last year it worked closely with longstanding partners to address COVID-19 issues and much more. Examples include:

International Regulatory Community: The FSMB increased its efforts — particularly in light of the pandemic — to support organizations and activities that strengthen information exchange and collaborative relationships globally. It plays a pivotal role as the Secretariat and founding member of the **International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA)**, which now represents 48 countries and includes nine FSMB member boards and many U.S. health organizations. The FSMB also participates actively with the International Academy for CPD Accreditation and International Society for Quality in Health Care. In early 2021, FSMB President and CEO **Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP**, served as host of "Physician Health and Wellness," an IAMRA webinar that brought together global regulators to discuss the impact of physician stress and burnout in the wake of COVID-19. Dr. Chaudhry also serves as IAMRA Secretary.



Coalition for Physician Accountability: The FSMB worked in new ways as a member of the **Coalition for Physician Accountability (CPA)** over the last year. FSMB Chair **Cheryl Walker-McGill, MD, MBA**, chaired one of four workgroups of the CPA in April 2020 that developed guidance for health care organizations to help ensure that quality and safety standards are maintained when health care workers are deployed during the pandemic. This information, titled "Maintaining Quality and Safety Standards Amid COVID-19 Pandemic," was distributed publicly by the FSMB in May 2020.

Tri-Regulator Collaborative: The FSMB worked with its partners at the **National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP)** and the **National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN)** — who with the FSMB form the Tri-Regulator Collaborative — to communicate key messages to health care professionals and the public about proper pandemic-related prescribing and other issues of patient safety. Planning is currently underway for the fifth Tri-Regulator Symposium, to be held in 2022.

CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

2020 Virtual Education Program: Online Webinars Provide Template for Future

With the COVID-19 pandemic rapidly accelerating in early 2020, and shut-downs beginning to take hold nationwide, the FSMB faced a difficult decision: What to do about its 108th Annual Meeting, scheduled for late April in San Diego — and then only weeks away? Like many other organizations, the FSMB prudently cancelled its in-person meeting and began developing a plan to salvage educational content and make it available to stakeholders virtually. The result: the **2020 Virtual Education Program**, a six-month series of online lectures and panel discussions featuring health experts and policy leaders that retained many components of the Annual Meeting —



including live speaker-Q&A sessions and Continuing Medical Education (CME) credit. The FSMB contracted with a vendor to quickly create a user-friendly registration platform, then launched the first of six free webinars — open to the public — on July 14, 2020. Speakers covered topics ranging from telemedicine trends and addressing implicit bias in medicine to physician sexual misconduct and how state medical boards can achieve regulatory excellence. Attendance figures for the webinars were comparable to traditional face-to-face Annual Meeting sessions and attendees gave the series high ratings in post-event surveys. Using the Virtual Education Program as a template, the FSMB is now developing new virtual educational offerings for the future.



The six-part Virtual Education Program kicked off in July 2020 with a presentation by John Whyte, MD, of WebMD.



“FSMB webinars provide a very effective educational platform. They helped our board bring an important, under-the-radar issue (education about the needs of patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities) to the attention of the state medical board community.”

— Louis Papa, MD, Vice Chair, New York State Board for Medicine

EDUCATION

In a continuously changing health care environment, medical regulators and health care professionals must be well-informed and aware of emerging trends. The FSMB provided a wide range of educational tools and resources in 2020-2021 to keep its stakeholders ahead of the curve and on top of developments.

FSMB's Continuing Medical Education Program Re-Accredited, with New Offerings and Partners Added

Meeting the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 required nimble adaptation by the FSMB's Continuing Medical Education (CME) program, which worked with its education partners to transition mostly live activities into completely virtual events on short notice. Working closely with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the FSMB successfully navigated the challenge, accrediting a total of 30 activities in 2020 — including 16 live courses via the internet and 14 online, enduring activities for a total of 41 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*.

Among the changes that it implemented, the CME team launched a new CME learning-management system that efficiently organized virtual educational content and offered learners a streamlined way to earn, track and generate CME certificates at no charge. As a result of its strong CME efforts, the FSMB received full re-accreditation status with ACCME in March 2021, extending its accreditation into 2025.

Added to the FSMB's list of CME partners in 2020 were the **Washington Medical Commission** and the **Kentucky Medical Association**, whose educational programs for health professionals were partly underwritten with generous funding from the FSMB Foundation.

Since becoming an accredited CME provider in 2016, the FSMB has educated more than 14,000 physician and non-physician learners.

Michael Osterholm: National Public Health Expert Provides Timely COVID-19 Advice

At the height of the surging pandemic, the FSMB's education team organized a special online event with renowned epidemiologist **Michael Osterholm, PhD, MPH** — a frequent national media commentator and member of President Biden's COVID-19 Advisory Board. Dr. Osterholm offered insights for medical regulators, including his perspective on the U.S. response to the pandemic and what is likely in store for the rest of 2021.



TACKLING HEALTH INEQUITY AND DISPARITIES IN CARE

FSMB Symposium Addresses a Growing National Issue

The nation experienced serious social and racial upheaval over the last year, accelerated by the death of George Floyd in May 2020. Recognizing that racism is a barrier to health equity, the FSMB launched new efforts to raise awareness of these issues within the medical regulatory community, including hosting a major online symposium on January 26, 2021.



During the three-hour CME-accredited event, titled "Health Equity and Medical Regulation: How Disparities are Impacting U.S. Health Care Quality and Delivery — and Why It Matters," guest speakers addressed the impact of racism and implicit bias on health disparities and how change is needed to eliminate barriers that prevent access to quality care for at-risk communities.

The online symposium included presentations by keynote speakers **Marc Morial, JD**, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League, and **Mark McClellan, MD, PhD**, Director of the Duke-Robert J. Margolis Center for Health Policy, along with a panel-discussion moderated by FSMB President and CEO **Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP**, that featured leaders in health equity. Panelists included **Diana Currie, MD**, of the Washington Medical Commission; **Aletha Maybank, MD, MPH**, of the American Medical Association; and **Leonard Weather Jr., MD, RPh**, of the National Medical Association. FSMB Chair **Cheryl Walker-McGill, MD, MBA**, played an instrumental role in organizing the event, which she presided over as host. More than 230 participants joined in the symposium, which included live Q&A interactions with speakers and panelists.

The FSMB also hosted an online webinar in December 2020, titled "Ensuring Fairness in Medical Regulation: Can Implicit Bias Be Overcome?" and it has launched a new 14-person **Workgroup on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Medical Regulation**, to be chaired by **Jeffrey Carter, MD**. The new Workgroup will help state medical boards address health inequity and systemic racism in medical regulation.

FSMB ANNUAL MEETING

Despite Pandemic, House of Delegates Convenes

Despite having to cancel the in-person educational activities of its 108th Annual Meeting, originally scheduled for San Diego in 2020, the FSMB's critical governance functions continued — including the first-ever virtual meeting of its House of Delegates (HOD) on May 2, 2020.

Delegates from states and territories throughout the nation gathered via a secure, interactive online platform to conduct business, including casting votes on FSMB policy resolutions and electing new FSMB officers and board members.

Following the successful HOD meeting, the FSMB Education Committee convened to begin laying the groundwork for an all-online Annual Meeting for 2021 — with plans to combine a virtual HOD session with an array of interactive virtual-education sessions and online networking for medical regulators.



Spotlight Poster Hall Moves Online

The Spotlight Poster Hall, a joint venture launched in 2019 by the FSMB and **Administrators in Medicine (AIM)**, was offered virtually in 2020, providing an online venue for posters and

educational resources highlighting research and policy initiatives of state medical boards and other organizations. Eleven downloadable posters were featured.



FSMB Leaders Elected: During the 2020 FSMB House of Delegates meeting, **Cheryl L. Walker-McGill, MD, MBA** (left), was sworn in as the 99th Chair of the FSMB Board of Directors. **Kenneth B. Simons, MD** (right), was elected to serve as Chair-elect.

New Educational Resources Rolled Out

During 2020-2021, the FSMB introduced two new educational resources for the public and state medical boards:

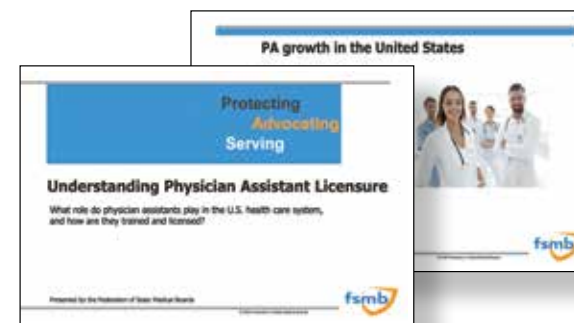
U.S. Medical Regulatory Trends and Actions ONLINE:

Previously offered in print form as a multi-page report, "U.S. Medical Regulatory Trends and Actions" has been updated, streamlined and moved online, with new features that make it easier to use. Comparative data about the structure and policies of state medical boards is arranged in easy-to-search categories, and a new section titled "Guide to Medical Regulation in the United States" offers comprehensive background information for the public on all aspects of medical regulation. The new online report is easily accessible on the FSMB's Advocacy webpage at FSMB.org.



Understanding Physician Assistant Licensure: The latest educational module in the FSMB's "Understanding Medical Regulation in the United States" series features a close-up look at how physician assistants (PAs) are trained, licensed and regulated.

Developed by the **BEST (Board Education, Service and Training) Workgroup**, chaired by **Thomas Mansfield, JD**, the new module includes a narrated video and downloadable transcript. It is the third in the series, which is part of the FSMB's effort to create new resources for state medical board members as they fulfill the roles and responsibilities associated with their board service. The fourth module in the series, "Understanding Discipline," is now in development and will be published in 2021.



Individuals elected to begin terms as Board members starting in 2020 were:

- **Jeffrey D. Carter, MD** (re-elected)
- **Melanie C. de Leon, JD, MPA**
- **Katie L. Templeton, JD**
- **Barbara E. Walker, DO**

Policy Development

FSMB Teams Advance Efforts on Priority Issues

Much of the FSMB's policy development is carried out each year by workgroups, committees and other teams made up of state medical board leaders and FSMB stakeholders. Efforts over the last year included:



Workgroup on Emergency Preparedness and Response: Led by 2020-2021 FSMB Chair **Cheryl Walker-McGill, MD, MBA**, this Workgroup played an essential role during the year, holding more than 15 virtual meetings and helping facilitate communications among state medical boards during the pandemic. The Workgroup was charged with collecting and evaluating the pandemic-related experiences and needs of the boards and external stakeholder organizations and developing recommendations to help them address future public health emergencies. The report was adopted by the FSMB House of Delegates (HOD) at its 2021 meeting.

Workgroup on Physician Impairment: Launched in 2019 and chaired by **Danny M. Takanishi, Jr., MD**, the Workgroup has been responsible for revising and expanding the existing FSMB Policy on Physician Impairment, which addresses issues that impede the safe practice of medicine — from substance abuse to disruptive behavior. The Workgroup's recommendations for improvements to the policy were adopted by the HOD in 2021.

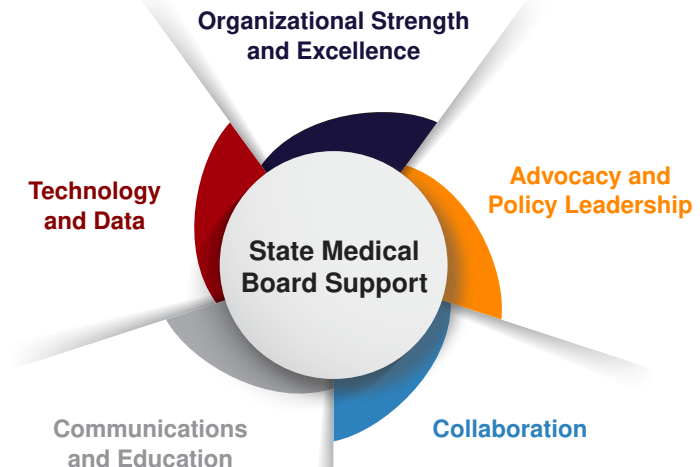
Workgroup to Study Risk and Support Factors Affecting Physician Performance: Chaired by **Mohammed Arsiwala, MD**, this Workgroup has been examining a wide range of drivers impacting physician performance, including practice settings, professional culture, demographics and other factors. The Workgroup's informational report on its work to date, with preliminary suggestions for furthering FSMB support of member board resources and practices aimed at physician performance issues, was presented to the HOD at its 2021 meeting.

Task Force on Artificial Intelligence (AI): This new Task Force, under the leadership of **Sarvam TerKonda, MD**, has begun to examine the growing influence of AI in telemedicine — including the need for new regulatory responses as AI changes care-delivery models.

The Ethics and Professionalism Committee: Chaired by **Jeffrey D. Carter, MD**, the Committee has played an important role during the pandemic, including developing guidance on physicians' use of face masks that was the basis for a national statement issued by the FSMB, urging face-mask use as the pandemic began to spiral upward in the fall of 2020. The Committee also drafted new guidance on physician treatment of self, family members and close personal relations.



FSMB ADOPTS UPDATED STRATEGIC PLAN



The FSMB's updated strategic plan identifies "State Medical Board Support" as its highest strategic imperative, with five additional areas of focus shaping its activities.

New Plan Puts Strong Emphasis on Delivering Member Value and Enhancing Technology and Communications

Led by then 2019-2020 FSMB Chair-elect **Cheryl Walker-McGill, MD, MBA**, during 2019-2020, the FSMB's **Special Committee on Strategic Planning** created a new strategic plan for the FSMB that was adopted by the FSMB House of Delegates in May 2020.

The new plan puts a strong emphasis on providing valuable services and products for state medical boards, positioning this goal at the top of the FSMB's list of strategic imperatives. The updated plan, which will guide the FSMB for the next several years, also features new language underscoring the importance of emerging technology and enhanced communications in fulfilling the FSMB's mission and objectives.

The full text of the FSMB's updated strategic goals can be viewed at the end of this report.

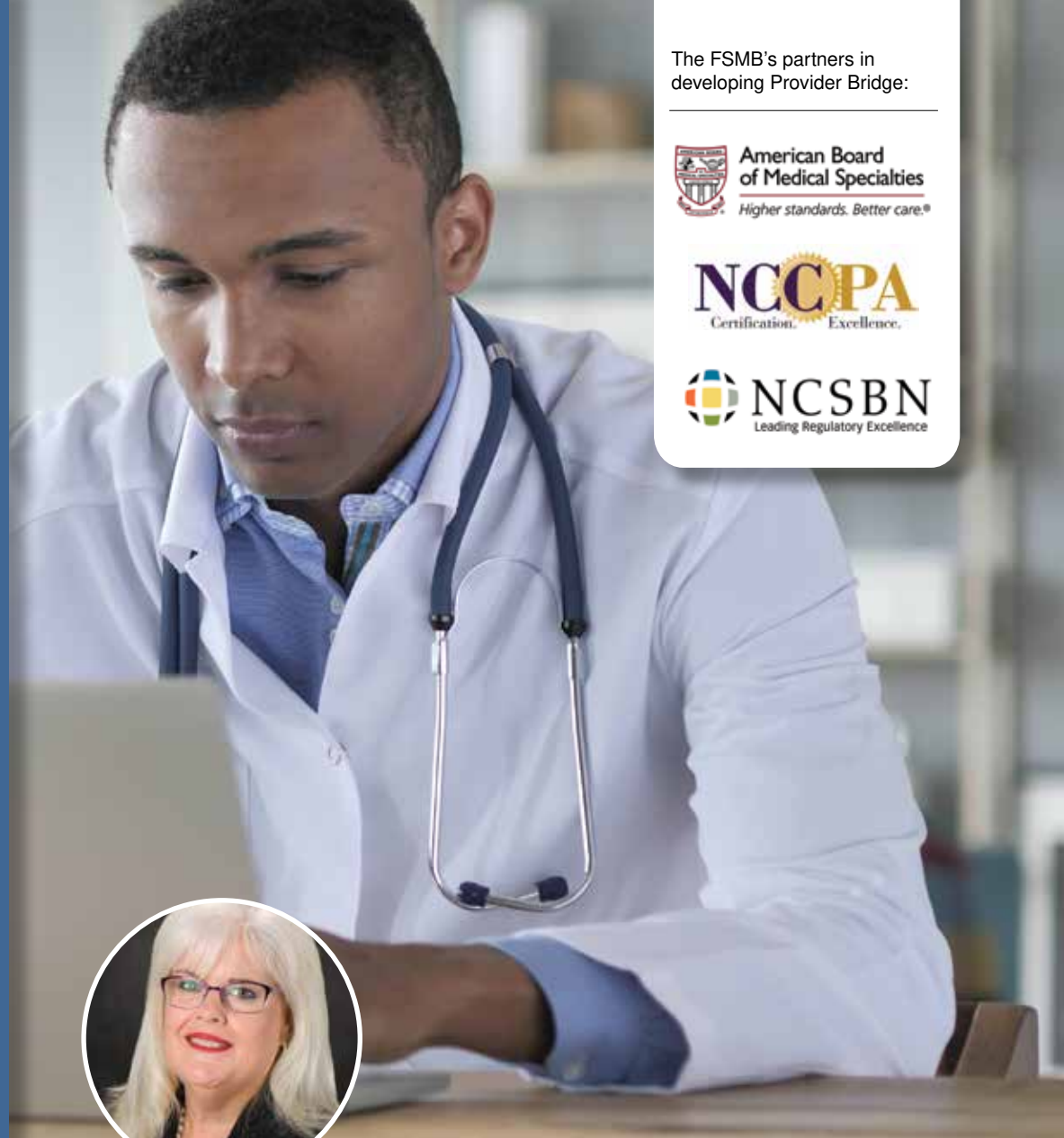
CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

Provider Bridge: Born of a Pandemic, Built for the Future

As hospitalizations began to rapidly spike during the COVID-19 pandemic, state health officials became increasingly worried about the capacity of their physician workforces to handle the growing demand for care. Critically needed were resources to help facilitate the movement of volunteer health care

providers to jurisdictions in need — primarily underserved and rural areas. In response, the FSMB began to conceptualize an online platform that could be used to help expedite the deployment of volunteer health care professionals during the pandemic — or any future national public health

emergency. With \$2.5 million in funding from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the FSMB began working closely with several partner organizations to create a prototype and begin construction of the platform. On a fast-track development schedule, the complex technology project culminated in January 2021 with “**Provider Bridge**,” a robust new website that helps connect volunteer health care providers with health care entities during emergencies. The platform includes a directory of state and federal COVID-19 resources, with a dedicated customer service hub to help clinicians navigate state emergency licensure waivers and other modifications. Those who register receive an official digital document verifying critical data about their professional backgrounds. As the pandemic subsides, Provider Bridge, which can be accessed at www.providerbridge.org, now provides an enduring resource for future national emergencies.



The FSMB's partners in developing Provider Bridge:



“**The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center** began a strategic initiative to expand our virtual care platform that entailed coordinating licensure data for more than 1,000 physicians. FSMB staff helped us by facilitating conversations with state medical boards that made our work much more efficient. Their assistance has been welcome — we have a true partner with the FSMB.”

Evelyn E. Starr-High, CPCS, CPMSM, BSHA, Director, Medical Staff and Credentialing Services, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

DATA, RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

In the midst of a national pandemic, the FSMB's data, research and assessment services proved essential — helping to ensure health care system stability.

A Momentous Year for USMLE

Among the serious challenges facing the health care system during the pandemic was ensuring that the nation's thousands of medical students were able to continue on the pathway toward becoming fully licensed physicians in the face of myriad COVID-19 disruptions. Critical to that process is the **United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE)**, which the FSMB administers with its partner, the **NBME**. The USMLE experienced a year of momentous change in 2020-2021.



Scoring Changes: In February 2020, based on findings from a multi-year national dialogue with stakeholder organizations in health care, the USMLE announced major policy changes, including lowering the maximum number of attempts on a USMLE Step or Component from six to four and changing Step 1 score reporting from numeric scoring to a solely pass/fail outcome.

Step 2 CS Discontinued: With pandemic disruptions becoming pronounced in March 2020, the USMLE suspended administration of the Step 2 CS (Clinical Skills) exam as a precaution, announcing in May that it would reinstate a new version of the exam later. However, in January 2021, after reviewing current and anticipated progress with the exam and in consideration of the rapidly evolving landscapes of medical education, practice and technology, the FSMB and the NBME announced another major decision: to discontinue Step 2 CS altogether.

These historical changes were made after extended consultation with diverse stakeholders in the USMLE process, and are expected to yield new opportunities for USMLE improvement. The FSMB and NBME will now collaborate with state medical boards, the medical education community and other groups to develop new enhancements to the USMLE's various assessment components — including clinical skills.

State Boards Help Shape the USMLE

The USMLE continues to draw upon the expertise and insight of the medical licensing community for enhancements. In 2020, 25 individuals from 18 state medical boards participated in a USMLE committee, panel, workgroup or other activity.

KEEPING CONNECTED WITH THE USMLE COMMUNITY

Social Media Metrics Show Increased Engagement

In recent years, the FSMB has increased its use of social media and other tools to communicate more effectively with the USMLE community. With disruptions to USMLE administrations during the pandemic, the FSMB's communications team redoubled its efforts to share critical news updates with examinees via social media. The volume of social media activity increased dramatically — and the USMLE program received praise for its commitment to connection and transparency during a time of significant change.



Twitter impressions (displays of content) increased more than tenfold to 6 million, from 440,000 in 2019. Followers increased by more than 350%, from approximately 4,000 in 2019 to more than 18,000.



Facebook engagements, including likes and other metrics, grew by nearly 75%, totaling 158,500.

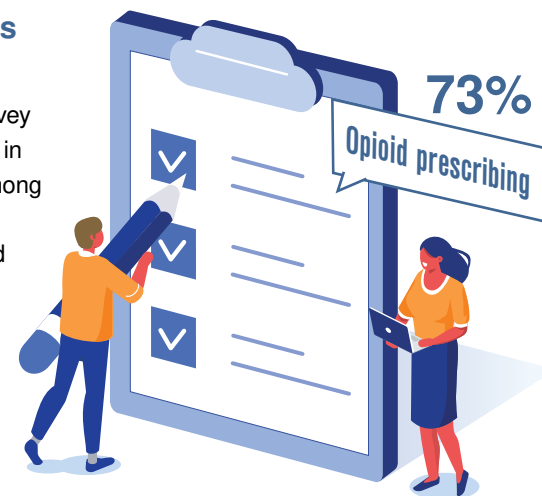
Link-clicks, messages and other social media metrics were also up substantially during the year.

Sixth Annual Survey of Boards Ranks Topics of Interest

The FSMB conducted its sixth annual survey of state medical board executive directors in 2020, with 83% of boards responding. Among the questions, boards were asked to rank what (besides COVID-19) they considered the most important topics facing the regulatory community.

Their ranked responses, by percentage, included:

- Opioid Prescribing (73%)
- Physician Sexual Misconduct (59%)
- Physician Wellness and Burnout (58%)
- Telemedicine (56%)
- Physician Impairment (53%)



FEDERATION CREDENTIALS VERIFICATION SERVICE

FCVS Delivers Results Remotely During Pandemic

The FSMB's Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS) faced the daunting task of transitioning its large, office-based workforce to work-from-home status in 2020-2021, but adapted quickly — thanks to mobile technology, Zoom meetings and the introduction of remote-team-building resources, such as its new “**FCVS Heartbeat**” newsletter for employees, launched in April 2020.

FCVS — which provides physicians and physician assistants with permanent storage of their primary-source verified credentials — delivered nearly 65,000 profiles in 2020, an 18% increase over 2019. State medical boards continued to benefit from FCVS innovations during the pandemic, including progress on several initiatives:

National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) Reports: The FSMB's efforts to provide medical regulators better access to the NPDB advanced in 2020-2021, with 22 state medical boards now using its streamlined process for NPDB data acquisition.

Closed Residency Program: The FSMB provides a vital service by storing training records for residency programs that no longer exist — an important source of data for ensuring physician competency and patient safety. Stored information for 55 programs and more than 200 medical specialties is now being digitized for greater efficiency in fulfilling credential verifications. Four additional closed programs were added in 2020.

Physician Assistants: Arkansas and Louisiana became the latest states to accept FCVS processes for PAs, for a total of 42 states that now require or accept FCVS.



Operational Improvements: The use of the Live Chat feature for customers increased by more than 300% in 2020, speeding up administrative processes and adding to customer satisfaction. A new tool — **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)** — was implemented, automating rote tasks and doubling productivity for some processes.

Uniform Application Grows Again in 2020-2021

One of the tools the FSMB has developed to promote license portability is the Uniform Application (UA), which streamlines state medical board licensure processes for physicians and physician assistants. A total of 28 state medical boards have adopted the UA — with Alabama and Maryland joining in 2020-2021 — and six state boards now utilize it for physician assistant licensure. More than 19,000 UA applications were processed in 2020 — a 10.5% increase over 2019.

FSMB research efforts
helped states gauge
physician workforce needs.



Zoom Connections:

The use of Zoom and other technology enabled FCVS staff to remotely process nearly 65,000 files in 2020-2021.

BACE Project: Seeking Disciplinary Category Consistency

The FSMB advanced its efforts to bring more consistency to the system for categorizing disciplinary actions taken against health practitioners by regulatory boards in 2020-2021 — broadening its work to include other health care partners.

The **Basis Code Consortium**, made up of national organizations representing state boards of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work and psychology, is now working together to align classification of disciplinary actions across diverse health professions. Eight organizations are participating in the effort, including the FSMB's partners in the **Tri-Regulator Collaborative**: the **National Council of State Boards of Nursing** and the **National Association of Boards of Pharmacy**.

The new consortium builds upon the work of the FSMB's **BACE (Board Action and Content Evaluation) Workgroup**, currently chaired by **Melanie de Leon, JD, MPA**, which delivered a report in 2020 that found wide variations in the way state medical boards report disciplinary matters. The Workgroup responded by developing an additional process for coding actions that allows for more detailed gathering of information and better alignment of terminology, as well as providing a template that could bring disciplinary consistency across a wider swath of health care regulation.

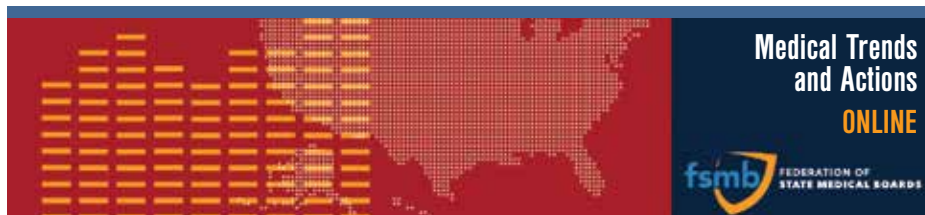


FSMB Researchers Led Diverse Projects in 2020-2021, Including Pandemic-Related Data Collection

The FSMB's Research and Data Integration team provided key data and survey services to state medical boards, health care organizations and other FSMB departments during a busy pandemic year — including gathering essential physician licensure data to help planning efforts as the nation grappled with physician workforce needs and capacity.

Practitioner-Record Vetting: The FSMB helped state agencies vet more than 12,000 volunteer practitioners mobilized to treat patients in COVID-19 hotspots, ensuring that volunteers were properly licensed in the United States and had not been sanctioned by a state medical board.

Survey Research During Pandemic: The research team conducted surveys that gathered new data on a variety of pandemic-related issues — including a query of state medical boards on physician complaints and telemedicine to measure quality of care during the pandemic and a Gallup survey of FSMB employees that measured staff engagement, diversity and COVID-19 response. It also administered the latest in the FSMB's annual surveys of state medical board executives — which the FSMB relies heavily upon as it develops services and advocacy on behalf of its members.



Medical Trends and Actions ONLINE: FSMB research staff played a central role in the effort to reconfigure the FSMB's biennial "U.S. Medical Regulatory Trends and Actions" report — which will now be updated yearly and offered online. The team developed an online survey that will help boards more conveniently update their data regularly for the report. In the first year of data collection, 80% of state boards responded.

Publishing: FSMB researchers continued to advance knowledge about medical regulation by contributing to articles published in peer-reviewed medical and policy journals, including *JAMA Surgery*, the *Journal of Medical Regulation* and *Anesthesia and Analgesia*.

JAMA Surgery



ANESTHESIA
& ANALGESIA



PHYSICIAN DATA CENTER

FSMB Data Provides a National Resource

The FSMB has put a strong emphasis over the last decade in bolstering its data and information-processing capabilities, which are foundational to its mission and vision. Significant investments in world-class technology and staff resources have yielded better products and services, which have been increasingly utilized by various governmental and health-sector organizations.

Powering the FSMB's data efforts is the **Physician Data Center (PDC)**, a central repository of license and discipline information for more than 1 million physicians and physician assistants in the United States. As one of the largest and most comprehensive health-provider databases in the United States, the PDC has been invaluable during the pandemic, providing crucial background information about health care providers to states and health systems as they scrambled to bolster their medical workforces in response to COVID-19 surges. State medical boards queried the PDC nearly 140,000 times in 2020, an increase of more than 18% over 2019. Total queries numbered more than 440,000 — also a double-digit increase in volume. Other highlights include:

DocInfo.org: Use of the FSMB's free online physician-search service for consumers — which provides information about physician credentials, educational background and disciplinary history — was up significantly in 2020 over 2019. More than 270,000 individuals used the service, an increase of 37%, logging a total of 678,000 sessions, an increase of 42%.



Disciplinary Alert Service (DAS): To prevent disciplined physicians with multiple licenses from resuming practice undetected in new locations, the FSMB distributed more than 15,000 disciplinary alerts to state medical boards in 2020.

Practitioner Direct: The FSMB added a new service in 2020-2021, making it possible for physicians to directly submit their PDC and NPDB profiles electronically to state medical boards — eliminating manual forwarding processes.

CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

Redesign of Core Publications Kept News Accessible During the Pandemic

As the pandemic continued to spread in early to mid-2020, many workplaces shut their doors and millions of Americans began working from home. Like other organizations, the FSMB and its member boards quickly recognized that electronic communications would have to play a critical role in helping to maintain the flow of information to stakeholder audiences.

During the pandemic year, two of those publications —

FSMB eNews and **FSMB Advocacy Network News** — were redesigned,

offering more reader-friendly layout and new, targeted content aimed at providing greater value for members and staff of state medical boards. More than 5,000 individuals subscribe to one or both of these

e-publications, making them essential channels for the coverage of breaking FSMB news as well as long-term regulatory trends. **FSMB eNews** was given a new layout, with a stronger emphasis on state medical board news and daily news clips; and new, recurring categories of coverage were introduced, including “FSMB Advocacy,” “Access Resources” and “Physician Data Center.” Importantly, the e-newsletter now includes a regularly updated “COVID-19 Info” section and periodic pandemic news updates from FSMB CEO and President Humayun Chaudhry, DO, MACP. **FSMB Advocacy Network News** was also redesigned, including significant expansion of content in order to better cover fast-moving pandemic-related state and federal legislative and rule-making developments. Both publications are now better positioned to serve the needs of the FSMB community, going forward.



FSMB eNews and **FSMB Advocacy Network News** were both redesigned in 2020-2021

“**Communication issues** are the number-one reason we receive complaints from patients about the care they receive from their physicians. The inclusion of an article in *JMR* about our state’s guidelines for physicians on informed consent and empathetic communication, and our participation in an FSMB webinar on this topic, were both very beneficial to our efforts at raising awareness.”

— **Maroulla Gleaton, MD**, Chair, Maine Board of Licensure in Medicine

COMMUNICATIONS

Raising public awareness of the vital role state medical boards play — while building strong channels to help state medical boards communicate more effectively with each other — are key goals of the FSMB's Communications team.

Another Banner Year for *Journal of Medical Regulation*

The *Journal of Medical Regulation* (JMR), the FSMB's peer-reviewed, quarterly publication, continued its strategic-growth plan in 2020-2021, with the volume of submitted manuscripts up substantially and page-count per issue on the increase. Submissions from international authors increased as well, with promotional efforts continuing to raise JMR's profile as a forum for scholarly research.

More than 90 percent of readers surveyed in 2020 rated JMR as either "good" or "excellent" in both quality of content and topics covered for their relevance to the work of state medical boards.



With readers increasingly interested in receiving information electronically, JMR launched a redesigned website in 2020, aimed at improving content accessibility for readers. It also transitioned manuscript management to Scholastica, a web-based software platform for academic journals that streamlines the peer review process.

Media Engagement: Reporters' COVID-19 Inquiries Keep FSMB Communications Staff Busy

In a year in which much of the national news reporting covered the impacts of COVID-19 on health care delivery, the FSMB was called upon frequently by major news outlets for background and commentary. Using its news-distribution platform, the FSMB sent news releases to a network of thousands of media outlets on pandemic-related topics ranging from physician-licensing portability to the use of facemasks by medical personnel.

The FSMB's joint public statement, "The Inappropriate Prescribing of Medications to Treat COVID-19," issued with the **National Association of Boards of Pharmacy** and the **National Council of State Boards of Nursing**, provided important guidance at a time when there was much confusion about COVID-19 medical treatments.

The FSMB engaged with major media in 2020-2021, ranging from *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* to CNN, ABC, NPR and many others.

The
New York
Times



Electronic Media: FSMB Resources Expanding to Meet Needs

FSMB surveys demonstrate a growing interest among members and staff of state medical boards in receiving communications electronically — with a strong interest in the use of mobile technology for news retrieval. Accordingly, during 2020-2021, the FSMB expanded its strategic use of electronic communications tools:

Social Media: Twitter remains the preferred mode of communicating breaking news, and the FSMB increased its Twitter posts in 2020-2021, while adding new followers — which now total nearly 5,000. FSMB staff supplemented these efforts with frequent individual tweeting on topics of importance to medical regulation and postings to Facebook.

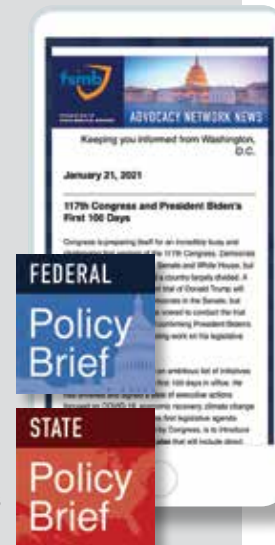
Podcasts: The FSMB's new JMR Podcast series, launched in 2019, covered new ground over the last year with podcasts on physician wellness and burnout, prescribing of controlled substances and the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).

Roundtable Webinars: Communications staff played an integral role in raising awareness and participation in the FSMB's popular Roundtable Webinar series, which will observe its 20th anniversary in 2022. During the pandemic, the

series — which offers state medical boards an opportunity to interact virtually with leaders in health care and medical regulation — has been a critical resource for information sharing.

Among the topics covered over the last year were updates on recent changes to the USMLE and COMLEX-USA examinations and the impact of COVID-19 on physician well-being and patient safety.

Video: FSMB Communications staff increased its use of video in 2020-2021, including national distribution of a new video promoting the new ProviderBridge.org physician-resource website, as well as videos to raise visibility of the FSMB's Annual Meeting and the FSMB Foundation.



CHALLENGE

AND

CHANGE

Preparing for Next Time: New Grants Address Realities of a Post-Pandemic World

Beyond creating severe disruption to the world's economies and societies, the COVID-19 pandemic has driven home an uncomfortable reality: Our health care systems are increasingly vulnerable to large-scale disasters and emergencies, and we are likely to face similar pandemics in the future. Recognizing the need for preparedness, the FSMB Foundation launched a new grant-initiative in 2020-2021 aimed at helping medical regulatory and health care systems be better positioned to respond in future disaster situations. The Foundation's "COVID-19 State Response Grants" provided a total of \$100,000 in funding for four organizations to help them develop sustainable models and best practices for preparedness and recovery that could be adopted by others in the health care system, including medical regulators. Grants of \$25,000 each were provided to the **Associated Medical Schools of New York**, the **Center for Connected Health Policy** and **Public Health Institute**, **HonorHealth Foundation** and the

Ohio Physicians Health Program. The organizations' efforts will include models to help address emergency-related physician workforce shortages, to reduce disparities and ensure health equity in delivering care during disasters, to better understand pandemic impacts on physicians and other health care professionals and to develop more effective use of telehealth to better serve low-income patients. The grants are among the largest ever distributed by the FSMB Foundation.

**HONORHEALTH™**

“ **The Center for Connected Health Policy (CCHP)** was the fortunate recipient of funding from the FSMB Foundation to study the impact of audio-only telehealth in delivering health care services during COVID-19 and in the future. The Foundation's foresight in providing this funding will make it possible for CCHP to deliver much-needed research to assist state and federal lawmakers as they make telehealth policy decisions. ”

— **Mei Kwong, JD**, Executive Director, Center for Connected Health Policy

FSMB FOUNDATION

As the FSMB's philanthropic arm, the FSMB Foundation plays an important role: supporting forward-looking research and education activities designed to strengthen the state medical boards of tomorrow. During the last year, the Foundation made strong progress in achieving its goals.

New Grants Take Aim at State Health Care Issues

The FSMB Foundation distributed two new grants in 2020 designed to help individual states address diverse health care issues through Continuing Medical Education (CME) for health professionals — ranging from substance abuse disorder to physician burnout.

Kentucky Medical Association: A \$10,000 grant to the Kentucky Medical Association supported CME training on the proper prescribing, identification, referral, and treatment of substance abuse disorder.

Washington Medical Commission: A \$10,000 grant to the Washington Medical Commission supported CME training on opioid-prescribing best practices, telehealth utilization in pain care, gaps in health care among LGBTQ+ patients and patient/provider communication.

FSMB Foundation Financial Support Helps IMLC Grow



FSMB Foundation financial grants have helped the IMLC expand across the United States.

The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact continued to grow in 2020-2021, helped along by past financial support from the FSMB Foundation. In recent years, the Foundation has prioritized support for the Compact, providing nearly \$50,000 in grants to help both states interested in participating and those that have already joined.

The grants offered much-needed financial support during the critical early phases of IMLC implementation by states. The Compact now includes 33 states, the District of Columbia and Guam — and is helping streamline physician licensing in the United States.

Looking Inward During the Pandemic

The FSMB Foundation launched an initiative to significantly update and standardize its grant-application forms and procedures in 2020-2021. It also formed two new committees to perform comprehensive review of its formal bylaws and investment policy. The recommendations for change will be completed in 2021.

PULITZER-PRIZE WINNING AUTHOR MEGAN TWOHEY HEADLINES 2020 FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

The Foundation's annual fundraising event, held August 5, 2020, featured *New York Times* reporter and author **Megan Twohey**, whose coverage of the Harvey Weinstein case earned a Pulitzer Prize and helped advance the #MeToo movement. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was moved to a virtual platform for the first time.



Ms. Twohey discussed sexual misconduct in the workplace and the book she co-wrote titled, "She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement." Following her presentation, she was interviewed by FSMB President and CEO **Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP**, and the viewing audience was able to submit questions via the internet.

Since their inception in 2013, annual FSMB Foundation funding events have raised thousands of dollars to support Foundation activities. Thanks to the generous support of FSMB member boards, other organizations and the public, the FSMB Foundation has now provided more than \$545,000 in grant funding since the Foundation's reconfiguration and relaunch in 2010.

FSMB FOUNDATION 2020-2021 STRATEGIC GOALS

Sustainability: Strengthen the Foundation's long-term viability and effectiveness by implementing funding and programmatic activities that are sustainable.

Collaboration and Partnership: Develop collaborative relationships and partnerships with external organizations that enhance the Foundation's impact and broaden its reach.

Organizational Effectiveness: Implement governance and administrative structures that are fiscally responsible, transparent and adaptable.

Research: Fund and support original and existing **research** initiatives that improve the safety of patients and the quality of health care through effective medical regulation.

Education: Fund and support original and existing **education** initiatives that improve the safety of patients and the quality of health care through effective medical regulation.

CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

Physician Licensing and Discipline

Every other year, the FSMB publishes its “Census of Licensed Physicians in the United States” — the most comprehensive database of U.S. physician demographic information available. The FSMB has published six biennial censuses since the first census in 2010. Census information is gleaned from U.S. state medical board data and other sources, then is compiled in the FSMB’s Physician Data Center (PDC). The FSMB continues to add to this data in the years that fall between each formal census.

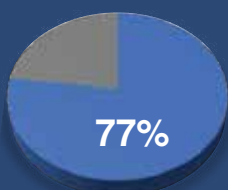
Using this data, the FSMB is able to provide important information about trends in physician licensure. The FSMB’s latest PDC data indicates that the number of licensed physicians in the United States is growing but it is also aging. Other physician-data highlights from the last year are included here.



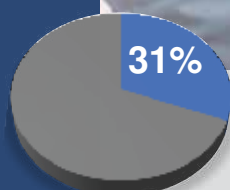
2020 LICENSED PHYSICIANS: AT A GLANCE



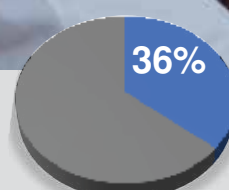
9 in 10 have **MD degrees**, 10% have **DO degrees**



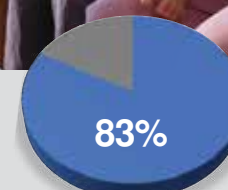
More than 3 in 4 are **U.S. or Canadian medical graduates**



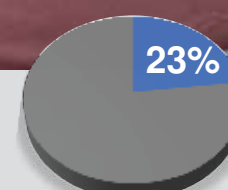
Physicians are aging: 31% are **60 or older**



Nearly 4 in 10 are **female**: this number continues to increase



8 out of 10 are **specialty certified**



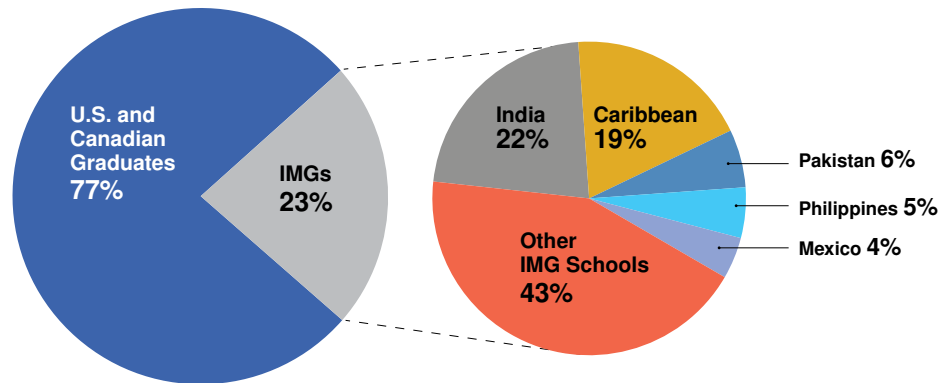
Nearly 1 in 4 are **licensed to practice in multiple states**

U.S. PHYSICIAN LICENSURE

In 2020, the number of licensed physicians in the United States and the District of Columbia passed the one million mark.

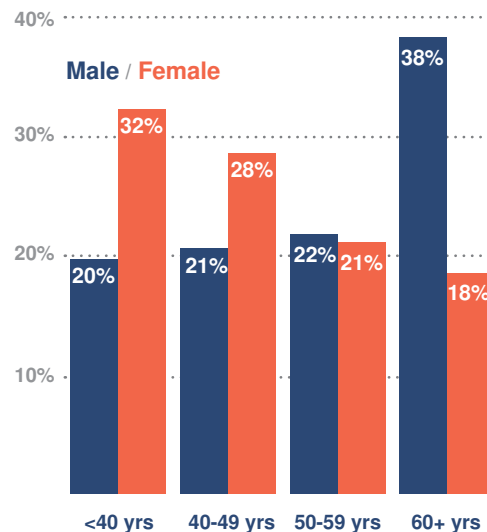
U.S. Licensed Physicians by Medical Training

- 90% are allopathic physicians (MDs); 10% are osteopathic physicians (DOs)
- 77% are U.S. and Canadian Graduates (USMGs) and 23% are international graduates (IMGs)
 - The largest numbers of licensed IMGs graduated from schools in India (22%), the Caribbean (19%), Pakistan (6%), the Philippines (5%) and Mexico (4%)
 - 65% of licensed Caribbean medical school graduates are U.S. citizens



U.S. Licensed Physicians by Sex and Age

- By age category:*
 - 24% are less than 40 years old
 - 23% are 40 to 49 years old
 - 21% are 50 to 59 years old
 - 31% are 60 years old and older
- 63% are men and 36% are women*
- 32% of female physicians are younger than age 40 and 18% are age 60 years and older
- 20% of male physicians are younger than age 40 and 38% are age 60 and older
- 83% are specialty certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties or American Osteopathic Association
- 23% hold two or more active licenses



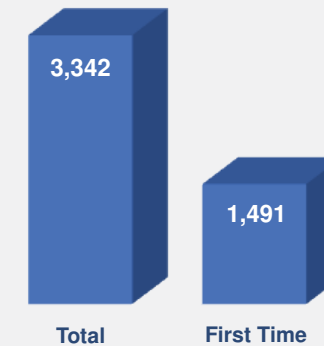
U.S. PHYSICIAN DISCIPLINE

One of the important roles of state medical boards is the responsibility for disciplining physicians who engage in unprofessional, improper or incompetent medical practice. The FSMB has collected and shared information about state medical board disciplinary actions since its founding in 1912, maintaining a comprehensive repository of national disciplinary data.

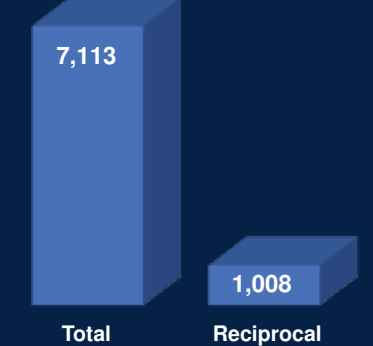
Key disciplinary statistics from 2020 include:

- 3,342 physicians received 7,113 disciplinary actions by state medical boards in the United States
- 14% of all board actions taken by state medical boards were reciprocal (actions based on originating boards)
- 1,491 physicians were disciplined for the first time by state medical boards
- The largest disciplinary action categories by state medical boards were reprimands and administrative actions.

Physicians Disciplined by State Medical Boards in 2020



Actions Taken by State Medical Boards in 2020



* Note: Percentages do not add up to 100%, due to rounding error and/or data were unknown because they were either not collected by state medical boards or not made available to the FSMB.

The Federation of State Medical Boards: Partners in Protecting the Public

Alabama Board of Medical Examiners	Maine Board of Osteopathic Licensure	Puerto Rico Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline
Medical Licensure Commission of Alabama	Maryland Board of Physicians*	Rhode Island Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline*
Alaska State Medical Board	Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine*	South Carolina Board of Medical Examiners*
Arizona Medical Board	Michigan Board of Medicine*	South Dakota Board of Medical and Osteopathic Examiners
Arizona Board of Osteopathic Examiners in Medicine and Surgery	Michigan Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery	Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners
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** The New Mexico Medical Board and the New Mexico Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners merged to become one board on June 18, 2021.

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represents a community of dedicated public servants, spread throughout the United States. Their commitment to protecting the public and ensuring the highest standards of medical quality is the key to the successful operation of the nation's medical regulatory system. In the following pages, we acknowledge the work of the many individuals who make up our boards, committees, workgroups, advisory councils and task forces. We thank them for their important contributions.

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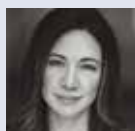


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Each year, published articles by FSMB staff and board members contribute to the national dialogue on health policy issues. A sampling from 2020-2021 includes:

JP Kopp, B Ibáñez, AT Jones, X Pei, A Young, K Arnhart, AG Rizzo, J Buyske. "Association Between American Board of Surgery Initial Certification and Risk of Receiving Severe Disciplinary Actions Against Medical Licenses," *JAMA Surgery*, Vol. 155, No. 5: e200093, 2020.

Y Zhou, H Sun, T Wang, AE Harman, MT Keegan, A Macario, MM Minhaj, HJ Chaudhry, A Young, DO Warner. "Demographic Trends From 2005 to 2015 Among Physicians with Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education-Accredited Anesthesiology Training and Active Medical Licenses," *Anesthesia and Analgesia*, Vol. 132, No. 5: 1457-1464, 2021.

FE Cain, K Arnhart, A Young, DA Johnson. "Characteristics and Outcomes of Individuals Engaging in USMLE Irregular Behavior, 2006-2015," *Journal of Medical Regulation*, Vol. 106, No. 4: 8-16, 2020.

PA King, HJ Chaudhry, ML Staz. "State Medical Board Recommendations for Stronger Approaches to Sexual Misconduct by Physicians," *JAMA*, 2021;325(16):1609-1610.

DA Johnson. "The North Carolina Medical Licensing Examination, 1886-1925: Analysis of Performance by Examinees from Historical Black Medical Colleges," *North Carolina Historical Review*, spring 2021, 202-232.

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The Federation of State Medical Boards represents the 70 state medical and osteopathic regulatory boards — commonly referred to as state medical boards — within the United States, its territories and the District of Columbia. It supports its member boards as they fulfill their mandate of protecting the public's health, safety and welfare through the proper licensing, disciplining, and regulation of physicians and, in most jurisdictions, other health care professionals.

VISION

The FSMB supports state medical boards as they protect the public and promote quality health care, partnering and innovating with them to shape the future of medical regulation.

MISSION

The FSMB serves as a national voice for state medical boards, supporting them through education, assessment, data, research and advocacy while providing services and initiatives that promote patient safety, quality health care and regulatory best practices.

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State Medical Board Support: Serve state medical boards by promoting best practices and providing policies, advocacy, and other resources that add to their effectiveness.

Advocacy and Policy Leadership: Strengthen the impact of state medical regulation in a dynamic, interconnected health care environment.

Collaboration: Build participation and engagement among state medical boards and expand collaborative relationships with state, national and international organizations and government entities.

Communications and Education: Raise public awareness of the vital role of state medical boards while providing educational tools and resources that enhance the quality and effectiveness of medical regulation.

Technology and Data: Provide leadership in the use of emerging health care technology that impacts medical regulation, and expand the FSMB's data integration and research capabilities to share valuable information with stakeholders.

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