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FSMB Survey Identifies Telemedicine as Most Important Regulatory Topic for State Medical Boards in 2016

Opioid prescribing, Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), physician reentry into practice also listed among important regulatory topics

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 15, 2016) – Today, the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) announced that telemedicine is currently the most important medical regulatory topic to state medical boards. The announcement comes after analyzing results from the Federation’s 2016 State Medical Board Survey. This year’s survey, completed by 57 of the 70 state medical and osteopathic boards in the United States and its territories, identifies a number of important issue areas and topics impacting the work of boards as they carry out their mission to protect the public.

“The world of medical licensure and regulation is rapidly evolving, and it’s important that we have our finger on the pulse of what’s driving that change,” said FSMB President and CEO Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP. “Increasing our awareness of which topics our member boards are most focused on enables us to become a more effective partner in providing them with the tools and resources they need to accomplish their mission.”

The survey found that the top five most important medical regulatory topics to state medical boards in 2016 were:

- 1.) Telemedicine
- 2.) Resources related to opioid prescribing
- 3.) The Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC)
- 4.) Physician reentry into practice
- 5.) Medical marijuana

Each of the 57 participating medical boards was asked to choose five of the most important topics from a list of 15, including an “other” option. 75% of boards chose telemedicine as one of the most important topics to their board, making it the topic impacting the largest number of boards. 70% chose resources related to opioid prescribing, 47% chose the [Interstate Medical Licensure Compact \(IMLC\)](#), 44% chose physician reentry into practice, and 42% chose medical marijuana. Other notable topics were physician burnout (30%) and continuing medical education (CME) and compliance (21%).

One of the leading goals of the FSMB is to support its member boards through policy analysis and development on key issues impacting medical regulation. The FSMB periodically convenes representatives of state medical boards, together with experts in specific subject areas, to study and develop recommendations on issues pertinent to medical regulation. The Federation currently has official model [guidelines and policies](#) for all five of the medical regulatory topics that boards deemed most important in 2016:

- **Telemedicine:** [“Model Policy for the Appropriate Use of Telemedicine Technologies in the Practice of Medicine”](#)
- **Opioid prescribing:** [Model Policy on the Use of Opioid Analgesics in the Treatment of Chronic Pain](#)
(FSMB’s guidelines are being revised to reflect recent trends in opioid prescribing. The FSMB House of Delegates will vote on final passage of the revised guidelines in April 2017.)
- **Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC):** [Model Legislation](#)
- **Physician reentry:** [Report of the Special Committee on Reentry to Practice](#)
- **Medical marijuana:** [Model Guidelines for the Recommendation of Marijuana in Patient Care](#)

About the Federation of State Medical Boards

The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) is a national non-profit organization representing all medical boards within the United States and its territories that license and discipline allopathic and osteopathic physicians and, in some jurisdictions, other health care professionals. The FSMB serves as the voice for state medical boards, supporting them through education, assessment, research and advocacy while providing services and initiatives that promote patient safety, quality health care and regulatory best practices. To learn more about FSMB, visit www.fsmb.org. You can also follow FSMB on Twitter ([@theFSMB](#)).

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