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Symposium to Address Key Issues in the Growth and Expansion of Telemedicine

WASHINGTON, D.C. – National health care experts and policy makers will gather March 10 at a major symposium hosted by the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) to discuss telemedicine’s future and its impact on health care overall.

Titled “Balancing Access, Safety, and Quality in a New Era of Telemedicine,” the one-day symposium will identify gaps in knowledge, policy and structural resources that must be addressed in order to facilitate telemedicine’s adoption and expansion -- while ensuring patient safety and medical quality as key priorities.

The event will be held Thursday, March 10, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Westin Washington, D.C., City Center Hotel, 1400 M Street Northwest, Washington, D.C.

Approximately 100 invited participants will spend the day exchanging ideas in large- and small-group sessions that will focus on technology; issues related to patients, providers and payers; and the role of state and federal policy makers in telemedicine’s future.

“The practice of telemedicine in the United States and worldwide is moving forward at a rapid pace, presenting both opportunities and challenges as it grows,” said FSMB Chair Freda M. Bush, M.D., FACOG. “FSMB plays a unique role in the national discussion of telemedicine, via its status as the voice of the nation's physician-licensing organizations. We believe it is important for our organization to play a lead role in helping telemedicine evolve in a way that ensures patient protection, medical quality and sound regulatory policy.”

“While the potential benefits of telemedicine are vast, ranging from improved care for underserved and rural communities to lowered cost and greater efficiencies, its rapid growth raises new questions related to patient safeguards, privacy of medical information and regulatory and licensing standards,” she said.

Symposium participants will include representatives from state medical and osteopathic boards, policymakers and elected officials, providers, consumers, payers, corporate leaders, academics and other stakeholders. Highlights of the symposium discussions will be distributed nationally after the event. The afternoon keynote address will be delivered by Rep. Erik Paulsen (R, MN-3), the Co-Chair of the Medical Technology Caucus in the House of Representatives.

FSMB has been a leader in developing policies that will help expedite the expansion and adoption of telemedicine services while maintaining the authority and level of public protection afforded to state medical and osteopathic medical boards. Its House of Delegates published a policy on telemedicine in 1996, and updated its definition of telemedicine at its 2010 meeting.

Sponsors of the event include: Allied Telesis, American Telemedicine Association, the Center for Telehealth and e-Health Law, OptumHealth, Polycom, Prime Policy Group, Sidley Austin LLP, and Zipnosis.

The media is invited to attend the symposium. For more information, call (202) 530-4872.

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