



For Immediate Release: March 7, 2013

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Health Care Regulators Build Momentum In Collaborative Efforts to Impact Patient Safety

National organizations representing boards regulating U.S. physicians, pharmacists and nurses continue dialogue on shared advocacy agenda

DALLAS – The leadership of the Tri-Regulator Collaborative – the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) – met February 13 to continue building on collaborative initiatives begun during last fall’s historic Tri-Regulator Symposium.

During the Dallas meeting, leaders of the three organizations extended the work begun during the Symposium on a variety of issues, including discussions on health care workforce planning, licensure portability, telemedicine, maintenance of licensure, the value of inter-professional communication, education, professionalism and team-based care.

The three organizations formalized their advocacy partnership in 2011 with the creation of the Collaborative. Together, their various state member boards regulate a combined 5 million physicians, pharmacists and nurses in the U.S.

“At a time of great change in the health care system, sound regulatory policies are vital in order to protect patients from harm,” said Humayun Chaudhry, DO, FSMB President and CEO. “The need for collaboration across professions in shaping these policies is more important than ever. We’re very pleased with the progress we are making in exploring new ways to work together.”

Held in Washington, D.C., last October, the first-ever Tri-Regulator Symposium, “Protecting Patients and the Public: A Heritage of Excellence,” was designed to advance consensus building and dialogue on issues of state-based regulation and licensure. During the initial meeting of the FSMB, NABP and NCSBN, participants found many similarities in the issues challenging their respective professions.

“We have found much common ground in our individual organizational experiences that contribute to the collective knowledge of regulation in the U.S.,” said NCSBN CEO Kathy Apple, MS, RN, FAAN. “We know that shared lessons learned are the building blocks to what ultimately best protects the public.”

Expanding national dialogue to the states

Discussion in Dallas included expanding the ongoing national dialogue to include webinars for the tri-regulator membership to discuss topics that are relevant to each organization. Additionally, the leadership of the Tri-Regulator Collaborative envisioned opportunities for their members in each state to have more regular contact and interaction with each other.

“We’re very excited about replicating the national dialogue currently underway at the state level,” said NABP Executive Director/Secretary Carmen Catizone, MS, RPh, DPh. “Increasing interaction between the professions on a state level provides the opportunity for states to share best practices and policies, which supports our shared goal of furthering the protection of public health.”

The Tri-Regulator Collaborative leadership also discussed scheduling future meetings of the three organizations, including a first-ever meeting of the Boards of Directors of FSMB, NABP and NCSBN in 2014; a second Tri-Regulator Symposium in 2015 in Washington, D.C.; and a third Symposium in 2017.

Proceedings from historic 2012 Symposium available soon

Proceedings of the October 2012 Symposium will be available electronically in the near future on the websites of the three organizations, as well as in print format. Keynote speakers at the event included former U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, PhD, and U.S. Health Resources and Services Administrator Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN.

Other featured speakers addressed specific issues impacting nurses, pharmacists and physicians. Joseph Rannazzisi, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control at the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was the featured speaker in a session on combating opioid prescription abuse. Edward Salsberg, MPA, Director of the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis, U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, spoke on health care workforce needs in the U.S.

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The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)

The Federation of State Medical Boards is a national non-profit organization whose members are the 70 state medical licensing and disciplinary boards of the U.S. and its Territories. FSMB is focused on improving the system of medical licensure in the United States and advancing the quality, safety and integrity of health care in general. The FSMB celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2012.

The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP)

The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy® (NABP®) was founded in 1904 and represents all of the pharmacy regulatory and licensing jurisdictions in the United States, eight provinces of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. NABP is an independent, international, and impartial association that assists its member boards and jurisdictions in developing, implementing, and enforcing uniform pharmacy standards.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN®)

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing provides education, service and research through collaborative leadership to promote evidence-based regulatory excellence for patient safety and public protection. Founded in 1978, NCSBN provides the opportunity for U.S. state and territorial boards of nursing to act and counsel together on matters of common interest and concern affecting public health, safety and welfare. NCSBN's members include the boards of nursing in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and four U.S. territories — American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands and the Virgin Islands. There are 12 associate members.

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