



Dear Colleague:

On April 24, 2010, the FSMB House of Delegates adopted an important policy report that we believe will help pave the way for a new era of patient safety and health care quality in the United States.

The report, titled "Maintenance of Licensure," lays the groundwork for strengthening the medical licensure renewal process by implementing new standards for lifelong learning among physicians.

This is the latest step in a seven-year initiative intended to better align the continuing medical education process with the maintenance of skills among physicians. The FSMB's efforts in Maintenance of Licensure (MOL) began in 2003, as state medical boards – like several other health care organizations, including specialty organizations – began to embrace the idea of enhancing quality and safety by requiring demonstration of lifelong learning as a condition of licensure or certification. In 2004, the nation's medical boards adopted this concept formally, joining a growing movement that recognized this concept as being essential to medicine's future.

Since then, we have engaged in a long, deliberative process, which sought wide input and debate from a broad group of stakeholders in health care in advancing the MOL concept. The result is a carefully thought-out framework for a transition to MOL that takes into consideration both the needs of patients and the practical realities of busy physicians.

Over the last decade, the public has increasingly focused on quality and safety in health care. Our patients want us to provide a system that ensures trust and protection, and we believe it is incumbent upon all of us in the medical community to do just that. After seven years of study, we know that Maintenance of Licensure is the right thing to do – now it is time for us to find a path forward that will enable us to do it the right way. This means thoughtful deliberation and prudent decision-making.

Our focus now shifts to implementation: We are committed to serving as a resource to all of the nation's medical boards as they consider how to develop their own MOL systems.

We remain committed, as always, to the physician community and ensuring that, as MOL continues to evolve, it does so in a way that reduces burdens for them and ultimately becomes a tool for improving the quality of health care for all Americans.

These new FSMB web pages will serve as a clearinghouse of information about MOL for anyone interested in learning more about this initiative. Please visit this site often to keep up to date.

Your feedback is welcome as we move forward with this important work. If you have any questions or comments, please call the FSMB at 817-868-4000.

Sincerely,

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