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## **FSMB Calls for Improved Information Sharing Between VA and State Medical Boards**

*GAO report: 90% of potentially dangerous VA physicians not reported to National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) or state medical boards*

Washington, D.C. (December 1, 2017) –On Wednesday, the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) testified before the House Committee on Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, on the issue of “Examining VA’s Failure to Address Provider Quality and Safety Concerns.” Members of the committee called for the hearing after a new Government Accountability Office (GAO) [report](#) found that in an audit of five VA medical facilities, eight of nine providers who had adverse privileging actions were never reported to the NPDB or state medical boards.

“Providers who are unqualified or unsafe to practice medicine in the VA should not be allowed to practice outside of, or elsewhere in, the VA, nor should such providers be able to conceal their disciplinary actions with secret settlement arrangements,” said Humayun Chaudhry, DO, MACP, President and CEO of the FSMB. “Proper notification of provider disciplinary proceedings within the VA to the appropriate state medical board and the NPDB will help ensure that unsafe and dangerous physicians are identified and prevented from also treating patients outside the VA.”

In his testimony, Dr. Chaudhry shared that through consultation with several state medical boards, FSMB confirmed that the VA does not always alert state boards in a timely fashion about violations, disciplinary actions, or suspected violations of a state’s *Medical Practice Act*. He stressed that the primary mission of every state medical board is public protection, and it is imperative that boards are provided with disciplinary information so that they can carry out their critically important work.

Dr. Phil Roe (R-TN), Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, echoed Dr. Chaudhry’s concern, “One of the reasons we have such confidence in our medical system is because of our board system that allows us to make sure that patients understand when they come in that they are going to get the highest

quality of care. And with no information, you're absolutely right you [state medical boards] can't do your job.”

In response to the GAO report and testifying before the committee, the VA states it is currently rewriting and updating its policies and taking three major steps to improve clinical competency and reporting:

- 1.) Reporting more clinical occupations to the NPDB
- 2.) Improving the timeliness of reporting
- 3.) Enhancing oversight to ensure that no settlement agreement waive VA's ability to report to NPDB and state licensing boards

To watch Dr. Chaudhry's opening statements to the committee, click [here](#). The FSMB's full written testimony and other hearing documents can be viewed by clicking [here](#).



Witnesses being sworn in before the House Committee on Veterans Affairs hearing. (From L to R) Shereef M. Elnahal, M.D., M.B.A. (Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Quality, Safety, and Value, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs); Gerard R. Cox, M.D., M.H.A. (Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Organizational Excellence, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs); Humayun J. Chaudhry, D.O., M.A.C.P. (President and Chief Executive Officer, FSMB); Randall Williamson (Director, Health Care, U.S. Government Accountability Office)

## **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](http://www.fsmb.org). You can also follow FSMB on Twitter ([@theFSMB](https://twitter.com/theFSMB)).

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