



For Immediate Release: January 21, 2014

Contact: Drew Carlson

(817) 868-4043, dcarlson@fsmb.org

Federation of State Medical Boards and partners collaborate to provide educational resources for safe prescribing of opioid analgesics

Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies grant to help state medical boards educate health care professionals in the safe prescribing of extended-release and long-acting opioid analgesics

(Eules, Texas, January 21, 2014) – The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) and FSMB Foundation are collaborating with several partners to provide state medical boards with resources to educate health care professionals on the safe and responsible prescribing of extended-release (ER) and long-acting (LA) opioid analgesics for patients with chronic pain.

In a collaboration led by the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), the UNMC and partners CE City, the France Foundation, and the FSMB and the FSMB Foundation, recently received a Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) grant from the ER/LA Opioid Analgesics REMS Program Companies to provide educational programming in ER/LA prescribing to health care professionals.

The grant will provide resources for the FSMB and its philanthropic arm, the FSMB Foundation, to award REMS grants to state medical boards to conduct free live seminars on ER/LA prescribing for health care professionals in their respective states, and provide free online continuing medical education resources on the FSMB Foundation's website.

“Health care providers who prescribe these medications to treat chronic pain are in a key position to balance the benefits and risks of chronic opioid therapy,” said Humayun Chaudhry, DO, President and CEO of the FSMB. “State medical boards are, in turn, in a key position to

provide educational resources to help the licensees in their states learn safe, responsible prescribing of opioid analgesics.”

The Food and Drug Administration has mandated that manufacturers of ER/LA opioid analgesics make available comprehensive prescriber education in the safe use of these medications, with the goal of reducing serious adverse outcomes resulting from inappropriate prescribing, misuse and abuse of these drugs – while maintaining patient access to pain medications.

Given the broad spectrum of health care providers who prescribe opioids, the educational activities will be targeted to a multidisciplinary, interprofessional audience of prescribers. However, the primary audience for the program are clinicians who are registered with the DEA, eligible to prescribe Schedule 2 and 3 drugs, and have written at least one ER/LA opioid prescription in the past year. All education will be offered free to learners; live programs are anticipated to begin in June 2014.

The REMS grant is the latest initiative by the FSMB aimed at addressing the rise of opioid abuse and related deaths in the United States, while safeguarding legitimate access to medications for patients with pain. Initiatives launched by FSMB include:

Updating of FSMB’s model pain policies. In 2013, the FSMB adopted updates to its longstanding model pain policy, *Model Policy for the Use of Opioid Analgesics in the Treatment of Chronic Pain*. Since the last revision of the policy in 2004, a significant body of research and experience has accrued, providing new insights into the risks of opioid prescribing. In addition, the FSMB adopted the related *Model Policy on DATA 2000 and Treatment of Opioid Addiction in the Medical Office*.

Release of revised version of *Responsible Opioid Prescribing*. The FSMB Foundation released an updated second edition of *Responsible Opioid Prescribing: A Clinician’s Guide*, which provides prescribers with an understanding of expectations of regulators and offers pragmatic steps for adopting a risk management approach associated with any use of opioid drugs. The book, available in print and ebook formats, provides important new material, including research on opioid prescribing that was not available when the first edition was published in 2007.

Continuing Medical Education for prescribers of opioids. The FSMB, in collaboration with Boston University School of Medicine and the Council of Medical Specialty Societies, is co-sponsoring a series of live and online CME activities, entitled *Safe and Competent Opioid Prescribing Education (SCOPE) of Pain*. SCOPE of Pain is designed to help licensees safely and effectively manage patients with chronic pain, when appropriate, with opioid analgesics.

###

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. It assists these state and territorial medical boards as they go about their mandate of protecting the public's health, safety and welfare. The FSMB leads by promoting excellence in medical practice, licensure and regulation.

The **FSMB Foundation** is the philanthropic arm of the Federation of State Medical Boards. The Foundation's mission to promote research and education to improve the quality of health care through effective physician licensure and regulation. The FSMB Foundation undertakes educational and scientific research projects designed to expand public and medical professional knowledge and awareness of challenges impacting health care and health care regulation.

For more information about the FSMB and FSMB Foundation, please visit www.fsmb.org.