

NEWSLETTER

Post Office Box 30250
New Orleans, LA 70190-0250
Telephone: (504) 568-6820
Facsimile: (504) 568-5754

630 Camp Street
New Orleans, LA 70130



MARK HENRY DAWSON, MD, RAYNE, PRESIDENT
J. MICHAEL BURDINE, MD, BATON ROUGE, VICE-PRESIDENT
KWELT J. AMUSA, MD, SLIDELL, SECRETARY-TREASURER
JOSEPH D. BUSBY, MD, WINNSBORO
RODERICK V. CLARK, MD, LAFAYETTE
KENNETH BARTON FARRIS, MD, NEW ORLEANS
CHRISTY L. VALENTINE, MD, NEW ORLEANS

CECILIA ANN MOUTON, M.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Volume 26 Number 1

March 2015

In this issue of the *Newsletter* we provide timely updates on subjects that may affect your practice. For more information about all of these topics and more – visit our website at www.lsbme.la.gov and while you are visiting, subscribe to the RSS feed to keep up with the News from the Board. Links to citations included herein may also be found on our website.

We welcome your feedback on the topics that are presented and recommendations regarding future topics as well as legislative and/or rule making efforts and board services. Please contact us at feedback@lsbme.la.gov.

From the Desk of the Executive Director

It has been a busy but productive year in so many ways. While this newsletter will update you on the many activities of the Board and other important information, I would like to take this opportunity to focus on some technological innovations we have put in place or will introduce in the next few months.

We have had several multi-year projects that are only now coming to fruition. In August 2014, our online renewal system was taken down so we could convert the entire system including new licenses to an electronic format. This required the installation of new servers as part of a new storage system and customized software to integrate the data collected. During this time, those individuals submitting renewal applications were required to submit paper renewals by mail and credit card payments were suspended. We understand that this change in the renewal procedures caused great inconvenience to our licensees and were hopeful that the transition could be accomplished within 3 months. Unfortunately, we experienced some delays but we are on track to go live this spring.

In the new system, licensees will be able to upload almost all documents except those requiring a notary, and our office will benefit from having a much better document management system. It is our goal to

transition to a completely paperless initial and renewal application process within the next 18 months. It took some time to get to this point, and we truly appreciate your patience as we worked to get it right.

Our new website made its debut in early 2014, with a new look and greater ease of use for our licensees and the public. Most importantly, the website and the licensing software are portable to hand held devices which will allow licensees to review the website and renew their licenses from a smartphone or tablet. Important information about Board activities is frequently posted on our website ("In The News"), so we encourage all licensees to check the website frequently, and we welcome comments and suggestions!

In 2014, the Board began the development and release of online orientation courses on the Board's rules applicable to each type of license. As of this writing, new applicants for licensure in Respiratory Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physician Assistants are required to register for an online course, review the rules and related materials, and then take a brief quiz. Applicants for permits for the Dispensing of Medications and to be a Supervising Physician (SP) of a Physician Assistant are also taking rules review courses. The courses being offered so far have been well received and the system seems to be working well. Additional Board Orientation courses for new applicants and permit holders will be offered in 2015, and improvements in current courses will be ongoing.

As we continue to safeguard the health and safety of the public, we increasingly use technological advances to do so. At times this means we all must grapple with new ideas, new systems, and put up with temporary inconveniences. We hope that these new systems will enable you to do your part with more convenience and less hassle.

Cecilia Mouton, MD

ALERT FOR PHYSICIANS: IF YOU ARE THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF A CLINICAL LABORATORY, SLEEP LABORATORY, OR SUPERVISE ALLIED HEALTH PROVIDERS, IT IS YOUR OBLIGATION TO ASSURE THAT ALL PERSONNEL ARE PROPERLY LICENSED. IF YOU ARE UNSURE, CALL OR SEND US AN EMAIL AND WE WILL BE HAPPY TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE.

Board Appointments

As of March 2014 the Board has two new members, Roderick V. Clark, MD and Christy L. Valentine, MD. They will serve until January 2018, and are replacing outgoing members Melvin Bourgeois, MD and Cynthia Montgomery, MD, whom the Board warmly thanks for their service to the Board and the medical community.

Dr. Clark was born in Alexandria and raised in Lafayette. He received his BS from UL Lafayette and his MD from the LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans. He completed a residency in Internal Medicine at UMC (now UHC) in Lafayette followed by a Nephrology fellowship at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, MS. He resides in Lafayette where he currently serves as Vice President of his Nephrology practice group, Acadiana Renal Physicians, and Medical Director of the Chronic Kidney Disease Clinic. Dr. Clark is also a physician executive at Lady of Lourdes Regional Medical Center, where he serves as Chairman of the Dialysis Committee in addition to other duties. Dr. Clark was nominated for his Board position by the Louisiana State Medical Society, for whom he has served on many committees. He is a member of numerous professional societies and has published and presented on many topics pertaining to Nephrology. He maintains current specialty board certifications in Internal Medicine and Nephrology, and is a fellow of the American Society of Nephrology as well as the American College of Physicians.

Dr. Valentine is a New Orleans native. She received her undergraduate degree from Xavier University of Louisiana, and her MD from the LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans. She completed a combined residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at Tulane University School of Medicine. She is a member of and currently serves as Treasurer for the Louisiana Medical Association, which recommended her to the Governor for nomination as a member of the LSBME. She is currently Vice President of the New Orleans Medical Association. In 2010, she was appointed by New Orleans Mayor Landrieu to serve as a Board Commissioner for the New Orleans East Hospital. She has and continues to serve on various committees to assist in the development of and opening of the New Orleans East Hospital in 2014. She is a member of the American College of Physicians and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Dr. Valentine is committed to improving access to quality health care and resolving disparities in care for all patients.

In the News

Measles alert

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Emergency Operations Center urges physicians to be aware of the national measles outbreak. DHHEOC encourages healthcare providers to consider measles when evaluating a patient with febrile rash and to ask about a patient's vaccine status and recent travel history.

By Louisiana statute, measles must be reported immediately upon suspicion. Please report suspected measles cases promptly to the Louisiana Office of Public Health Immunization Program at 504-838-5300 or Louisiana Epidemiology Hotline 800-256-2748 after hours.

Hydrocodone and other drug scheduling changes

Prescribers should take note of various changes enacted at the federal and state levels regarding schedule II drugs. First, effective August 2014, a new Louisiana law provides that no schedule II drugs can be filled more than 90 days after the date on the prescription. Prescribers may write multiple prescriptions to provide a 90 day supply, but the practitioner must place written instructions on each prescription issued. As part of the same law, a prescriber must query the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) of the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy before first prescribing a schedule II drug to a new patient being treated for non-cancer related chronic or intractable pain. As always, schedule II drugs require a written prescription (with few exceptions). Electronic prescribing is permitted provided the pharmacy has the proper software as required by the DEA for this purpose.

Additionally, effective October 2014, hydrocodone combination drugs (Vicodin, Lortab) have been reclassified as Schedule II instead of schedule III, as per the DEA. This means that these products, in addition to other schedule II drugs, cannot be refilled, and will require a new prescription each month. Physician Assistants authorized to prescribe Schedule II CDS; this may have an impact on healthcare delivery for some medical practices. For further information and FAQs on these prescribing changes, go to: www.lammico.com or contact the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy at info@pharmacy.la



License Totals by Category, 2014

| | |
|---|--------|
| Accupunturists/Assistants/ADS | 21 |
| Accupuncture Assistants | 59 |
| Accupuncture Detoxification Specialists | 21 |
| Athletic Trainers | 506 |
| Clinical Exercise Physiologists | 58 |
| Clinical Laboratory Personnel | 5,971 |
| Medical Psychologists | 89 |
| Midwives | 15 |
| Occupational Therapy/Assistants | 2,665 |
| Perfusionists | 106 |
| Physicians (MD/DO) | 19,182 |
| Physician Assistants | 1,377 |
| Doctors of Podiatry | 200 |
| Polysomnography/Technicians | 189 |
| Private Radiological Technologists | 10 |
| Respiratory Therapists | 3,788 |

Looking Downstream: Being Safety-Sensitive

One of the most important functions of the Board is to protect the public from unqualified, incompetent or impaired practitioners through the licensing and regulation of health care providers under our jurisdiction. And one of the greatest challenges facing medicine today is balancing the needs of patients in pain with the risks associated with prescription pain medications. Unfortunately, Louisiana has one of the highest rates of overdose death from prescription drug abuse in the country. The Board is committed to use all of our resources to combat this crisis; be it by educating physicians, assisting other agencies to disseminate important information, providing guidance to the legislature; or taking formal disciplinary action against prescribers when warranted. Recently we have heard from two federal agencies that have published reports that pertain to responsible prescribing.

In a recently released study on Drug Use Trends in Aviation and Pilot Impairment, brought to our attention by the National Transportation Safety Board, the NTSB found a significant increase in pilots' use of potentially impairing substances. It does not strain credulity to believe that if usage has increased in pilots, it has increased in other professions where vehicles are involved, such as truckers, bus and cab drivers and all manner of persons who drive a vehicle as a substantial part of their work responsibilities. As the use of impairing substances has increased in the general population, it has undoubtedly also increased in other safety-sensitive professions such as health care

providers, the police, the armed forces and others. It is imperative that physicians counsel their patients on the possibility of impairment while taking these medications, and how this might affect the ability to perform their job duties safely.

In late January, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published a report on opioid use among women of reproductive age in its weekly *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*. The study points out the "significant public health concern" of prescribing opioids to women of child bearing age, given the potentially adverse outcomes in pregnancy from exposure to opioids, such as neural tube defects, congenital heart defects, and neonatal abstinence syndrome. The report highlights prescribing to this group as a particularly serious problem, given the likelihood of exposures occurring among unrecognized or unintended pregnancies.

When practicing medicine, physicians are not just obligated to evaluate the risk/benefit on an individual level when prescribing controlled and other mood altering substances to a patient. These recent reports reiterate that it is incumbent upon physicians to "look downstream" and prescribe responsibly.

UPDATES**Prescription Monitoring Program**

The prescription monitoring program (PMP) of the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy announced in September that prescribers and pharmacists who have access to the Louisiana PMP may use a "delegate" to assist in obtaining patient reports or other data. Delegates must register and have their own PMP accounts which are linked to their supervisor's account. A delegate must use his or her own account and is not permitted to use a supervisor or another delegate's account. The authorizing supervisor or prescriber is accountable for the actions of the delegate. Prescribers or pharmacists interested in assisting an employee to register as a delegate may go to www.pharmacy.LA.gov for more information.

Currently the PMP has **8,759** registered users, **5,575** of whom are prescribers or prescriber delegates. The PMP system was queried more than **1.4 million** times in 2014.

Prescribers can use the PMP to search for their patients' information but they can also review all controlled substance prescriptions being dispensed under their DEA number by using the "**practitioner self-lookup**" feature. This feature is a very useful tool in detecting drug diversion. If a prescriber utilizes this feature and identifies unknown patients, the pharmacy board encourages the prescriber to contact the dispensing pharmacy to verify the accuracy of the information

submitted to the PMP before concluding that the prescription is a forgery.

Free CME Courses for Prescribers of Opioids for Chronic Pain

After receiving a grant from the Federation of State Medical Boards in March, the LSBME held 5 Opioid Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) sessions on the safe prescribing of Extended Release/Long Acting Opioids beginning in June. Over 250 physicians have attended sessions in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, and Shreveport; all were very well received.

Spotlight on Licensee Groups in 2014

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

The Physician Assistant Advisory Committee welcomed 2 new members in December, John Hendrick and Mitchell Martin. They replace exiting members Peter Stevens and Julie Vajnar, whom the Board thanks warmly for their service.

ATHLETIC TRAINERS

Jason Dunavant, MS, ATC, LAT was recently appointed as a committee member on the Athletic Trainer Advisory Committee to replace Committee Chairman Gary Lewis. Also, Athletic Trainers have a new Practice Act, we encourage you to go to the Board's website to review.

MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

New legislation was passed creating 2 new types of providers who may be supervised by MPs, see Legislation Passed in 2014.

Legislation Passed in 2014

Telemedicine (July)

Act 442 amended the Medical Practice Act with regards to Telemedicine. The act creates a new category of Telehealth which establishes the platform for non-physician healthcare providers to practice Telehealth. Rule making efforts to further this law are ongoing.

Medical Psychology Supervision (December)

Acts 136 and 137 establish two new categories of providers who are licensed and regulated by the Louisiana State Board of Examiners of Psychologists: Licensed specialists in school psychology (LSSP) and provisionally licensed psychologists (PLP). The laws provide a supervisory relationship with a psychologist or medical psychologist.

Rules – Adopted and Promulgated in 2014

Perfusionists (July)

Rules adopted with respect to the general regulation, licensure, certification and practice of perfusionists.

Physicians – Office Based Surgery (November)

The amendments update definitions and better provide for consistency with current terminology in the application of various levels of sedation and corresponding health care providers involved in the treatment and care of patients undergoing office-based surgery (OBS); redefine exemptions and prohibitions; better provide for quality of care and patient monitoring; add more specificity to documentation requirements and maintenance of medical records and pre-surgical evaluations; provide mechanisms for the Board to identify physicians performing OBS procedures; and update the rules generally.

Verification of Drug or Device Suppliers

In order to protect the general public from dangerous counterfeit, misbranded, adulterated or stolen prescription (legend) drugs and devices, federal and/or state laws require the verification of a legend drug or device supplier's license prior to the purchasing of the vendor's products. The Louisiana Board of Wholesale Drug Distributors (LBWDD) is a state agency charged with the responsibility to safeguard life and health and to promote the public welfare by licensing and regulating all entities engaged in the wholesale distribution of legend drugs or devices in/into the state of Louisiana.

In a physician's office setting, the person(s) or management staff responsible for the purchasing of a prescription legend drugs or devices should first verify the credentials (license) of the supplier of any legend drug or device before placing an order. The LBWDD may be contacted at 12091 Bricksome Avenue, Suite B, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816; by phone at 225-295-8567; by fax at 225-295-8568; or by email at lsbwdd@lsbwdd.org.

TO VERIFY THAT A VENDOR IS LICENSED BY THE LBWDD, GO TO:

<http://www.lsbwdd.org/wholesaler-license-lookup/>

- 1.) Visit the above link.
- 2.) Type in the name of your supplier and click "Lookup".
- 3.) Check to see if your supplier is displayed on the list?
- 4.) If your supplier **is** on the displayed list, expand the selection and print a copy for your records as proof of "due diligence".
- 5.) If your supplier **is NOT** on the displayed list, then the prescription drug or device supplier is not authorized (licensed) to sell or distribute in or into the State of Louisiana.