

# 2020 STRATEGIC GOAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Medical Board of California's (Board) 2018-2021 Strategic Plan outlines the Board's key initiatives and is a mechanism to measure performance and gauge overall effectiveness. This report highlights and describes goals set forth in the Strategic Plan that were achieved during 2020.



## MISSION

The mission of the Medical Board of California is to protect health care consumers through the proper licensing and regulation of physicians and surgeons and certain allied health care professionals and through the vigorous, objective enforcement of the Medical Practice Act, and to promote access to quality medical care through the Board's licensing and regulatory functions.

## VISION

To be the premier consumer protection agency leading the effort to advance high quality, safe medical care.

## 1

## LICENSING

Protect consumers by setting requirements for licensure, including education, experience, and demonstrated competence, and efficiently issue licenses to individuals meeting those requirements.

- 584 users within 103 registered medical schools and 1,217 postgraduate training programs for the Direct Online Certification Submission (DOCS) portal. Registered users have uploaded over 6,500 documents to the system. DOCS served as an important function in facilitating Board licensing processes during the pandemic.
- The Board created a new webpage dedicated to information on how to register with and utilize DOCS through the application process.
- In January 2020, the Board implemented a law change that required California residents to obtain a postgraduate training license. As a result, the Board received 50% more licensing applications, which included physician's and surgeon's licenses. In addition, the Board issued 23% more licenses.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, licensing staff was encouraged to come up with processes to telework. As the pandemic continues, a majority of licensing staff continues to partially telework to ensure the health and safety of all staff and maintain social distancing. While teleworking, licensing continues to protect health care consumers by proper licensing.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Consumer Affairs implemented waivers to extend deadlines for physician's and surgeon's license and postgraduate training license applicants and licensees.
- Eighty-two percent of licensees renewed online in 2020, which is a 12.5% increase since 2018. In 2019, the Board began sending an electronic courtesy renewal notice to physicians 180 days prior to the license expiration date.

## 2

## ENFORCEMENT

Protect the health and safety of consumers by effectively investigating complaints, by enforcing the laws and regulations of the Medical Practice Act when violations occur, and by educating consumers on the laws and regulations governing safe practices in California.

- In January 2020, a new law requiring mandatory reporting went into effect. The passage of SB 425 included funding for an Associate Governmental Program Analyst (AGPA) and a part-time Management Services Technician (MST) devoted to these mandatory reports.
- Changes to the complaint initiation process decreased the average number of days to initiate complaints ensuring compliance with the 10 day mandate.
- The number of pending complaints decreased by 50% and the number of cases over 1 year decreased by over 80%.
- In November 2020, the California Department of Public Health provided 2019 death certificate data. The data will be reviewed as part of the Prescription Reviewer Program (formerly known as the Board's Death Certificate Project) to identify physicians who may be inappropriately prescribing opioids to their patients.
- Procedures were reviewed and updated.
- Looked at more ways to go paperless, including a possible pilot program for digital or e-signatures on authorization forms, requesting a portal for physicians or facilities to upload medical records, and working with California Correctional Healthcare Services to electronically receive medical records.
- Continued to collaborate with other DCA Board/Bureaus to cross-report complaints.
- The Medical Consultant Program staff worked with reviewers assigned to cases older than 30 days to ensure timely resolution.
- Expert Program conducted trainings via WebEx, and advertised specialties needed in the Board's quarterly newsletter. Analysts processed billing and responded to questions from reviewers, HQIU, and the AG's Office. In addition, analysts researched and provided feedback reports to experts who have attended the expert reviewer training and have submitted a sample report for review. Analysts routinely reviewed reports of experts/consultants with expired contracts. The analysts sent out renewal applications, request updated payee data forms, etc.

# 3

## LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

Advocate for and sponsor legislation and adopt regulations, policies, and procedures that strengthen and support the Board's mandate, mission, vision, and goals.

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- Featured a newsletter article in the Spring 2020 newsletter with information on Board's pending legislation page on its website, outlining the legislative bills the Board is monitoring and how consumers can be engaged in the legislative process.
- Reviewed the Board's existing laws and regulations, and stakeholder suggestions, to identify needed changes. Legislative proposals were presented and approved by the Board.
- Several rulemaking files are in progress.

## 4

## OUTREACH

Promote consumer protection through increasing public, licensee, and community partner awareness of the Board, its mission, activities, and services.

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- Outreach events were suspended due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, however, the Board's licensing outreach staff continued to update information on its website, participate in teleconferences with stakeholders, and correspond with medical schools, programs, and applicants on licensing requirements and COVID-19 waivers.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board's outreach consists largely of social media messaging, newsletter articles and email messaging.
- The Board evaluated statistical data regarding its electronic outreach and used the data to guide its outreach activities.
- Developed a full media campaign centering on the recruitment of expert reviewers. The campaign consisted of a video, podcast, and social media messaging.
- In early 2020, the Board collaborated with the Pharmacy Board to issue a joint statement to licensees regarding the hoarding of medicine.

## 5

## ADMINISTRATION

Protect the consumers of California by promoting organizational success through proper Board governance, effective leadership, and responsible management.

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- The Board's President and Vice-President attended the Feb. 10 all staff meeting.
- The annual President's Employee Award was presented at the January 2020 Board meeting.
- Success achieved in continuous process improvement/efficiency savings.
- Establishment of staff wellbeing group.