MEDICAL BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE REPORT ISSUED: November 4, 2024
ATTENTION: Members, Medical Board of California
SUBJECT: Information Systems Branch Summary
STAFF CONTACT: Sean Eichelkraut, Information Technology Manager II

Requested Action:

This report is intended to provide the Members with an update on the Information Systems Branch (ISB) at the Medical Board of California (Board). No action is needed at this time.

Staffing Updates:

- The Help Desk Procurement Specialist, Information Technology Specialist I, who was a long-time Help Desk team member with over 32 years of state experience, retired in August 2024.
- The Board's Enforcement Business Integration Analyst, Information Technology Specialist I, promoted to the Department of Consumer Affairs Chief Policy and Analytics Officer.
- The Front-End Developer (Website) Information Technology Associate position has been earmarked for elimination as part of the vacancy reduction mandate.

This brings the total number of vacancies to five within the Information Systems Branch. Recruitment efforts are ongoing for the four positions currently approved to be refilled.

Infrastructure Updates:
- Replacement of all network switches in all Board and Health Quality Investigation Unit (HQIU) offices is underway and will be an ongoing project through the first half of 2025.
- As part of the network switch replacement, a network redesign is also underway to conform to modern best practices for security.
- The Tustin HQIU office has moved into a new location in Santa Ana.

Medical Board of California iOS App Update for iOS 17:

Originally launched in July 2018, the Medical Board of California iOS App is getting some updates to keep up with Apple's ongoing enhancements to the iOS operating system. Failing to conform to Apple's standards for operating system updates could result in the app being removed from the Apple Store for consumers to obtain, so these updates are being made proactively to mitigate that risk. While updating the project, push notifications are being implemented to keep the app updating even when the application is no longer running in the background. Originally, push notifications were deemed out of scope, as an original requirement was to not track any user information.

Feedback about the app has suggested that users are willing to opt into some obfuscated level of tracking to incorporate this push notification functionality. Usage will be tracked by non-identifying device IDs and no personal information about users will be tracked.

November 2024 Update: Testing is still in progress for the iOS application refresh. Release is planned for December 2024.

Complaint Tracking System Update:

November 2024 Update: Programming resources planned for the Complaint Tracking System development are still finishing the iOS App update, but infrastructure work is being done on the services needed to retrieve complaint data from Breeze. With current ISB staffing shortages, development of formal project management plans and schedules have not been produced. Further information will be provided by the next meeting.

HCAI Survey Update:

AB 133 authorizes the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), formally the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD), to collect additional workforce data from healing arts boards through California Business and Professions Code 502 effective July 1, 2022. Additional data collection items include: Anticipated year of retirement, physical address of primary and secondary practice locations and types, date of birth, gender identity, National Provider Identifier (NPI), work hours, sexual orientation, and disability status.

November 2024 Update: Over 171,072 (+18,149) surveys have been completed, representing just over 80.5% (+1.5%) of the Renewed and Current Physician and Surgeon population.

HCAI Surveys Completed Per Month
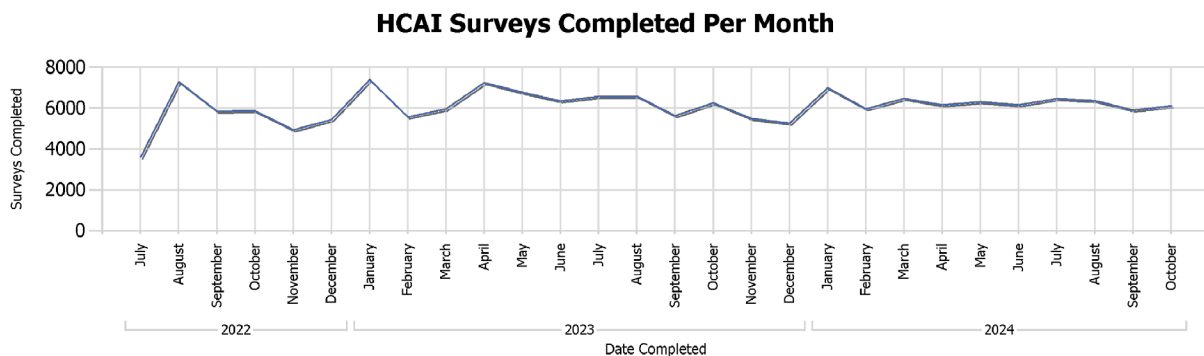
Effective January 1, 2025, Assembly Bill 1991 will require a change to the HCAI Survey web application that will make it mandatory for a licensee with a National Provider Identifier (NPI) to provide that information as part of the survey. If a licensee does not possess an NPI, they will still be able to indicate so on the survey. Enhancements to the web application will be deployed on January 1, 2025.

HCAI Survey Response Rate For Current Licensing Population (161,895)

Survey Completed
130,406
80.55%

No Survey
31,489
19.45%
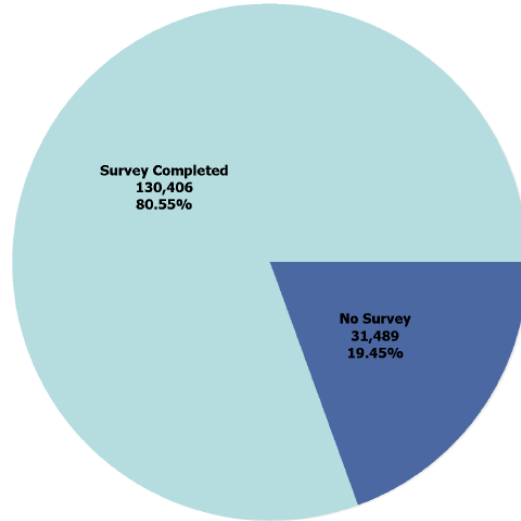
"Print Yourself" Wallet License with QR Codes Update:

Allowing licensees to print their own Wallet License Cards saves the Board resources in the generating, printing, and mailing of the plastic cards, which are not as common or useful as they once were. Licensees are able to forward the PDF version of their Wallet License to their employers and others as needed and are instantly available instead of the 4-6 weeks it previously took for plastic cards to reach licensees. QR Codes allow anyone to scan the license to instantly view the licensee's up to date DCA Search profile.

**November 2024 Update:** 193,743 (+21,206) Wallet Licenses have been generated.

Wallet Cards Generated Per Month

Date Generated
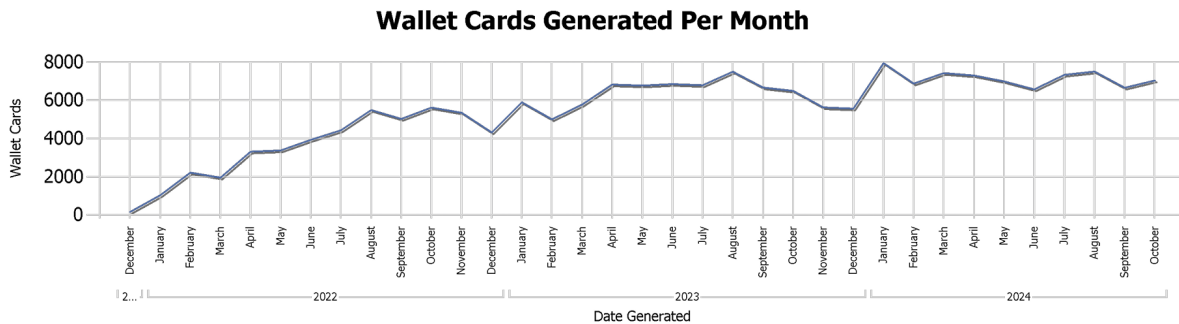
Direct Online Certification Submission (DOCS) Update:

The Direct Online Certification Submission (DOCS) service is a secure, fast, and reliable online document delivery system that allows medical schools and postgraduate training programs to submit certain primary-source licensing documents to the Board.

November 2024 Update: User registration for Medical Schools and Postgraduate Training Programs continues to rise. 1,136 (+164) Medical School Users representing 678 (+80) Medical Schools world-wide and 5,035 (+522) Postgraduate Training Program Users representing 5,921 (+460) Postgraduate Training Programs at 856 (+29) Facilities are currently registered in DOCS. More than 114,422 (+7,579) documents have been uploaded for 27,065 (+1,151) applicants since launching the platform.

A project to further enhance DOCS to allow medical schools and postgraduate training programs to submit certain primary-source license documents to the Board for individuals already licensed began in July 2024. This will allow the same interface to be used by the medical schools and postgraduate training programs to upload proof of postgraduate training required for a new license's first renewal. The expected Go-Live date for the enhancements has been moved up to before the end of 2024.

Applicant Documents Uploaded by Month
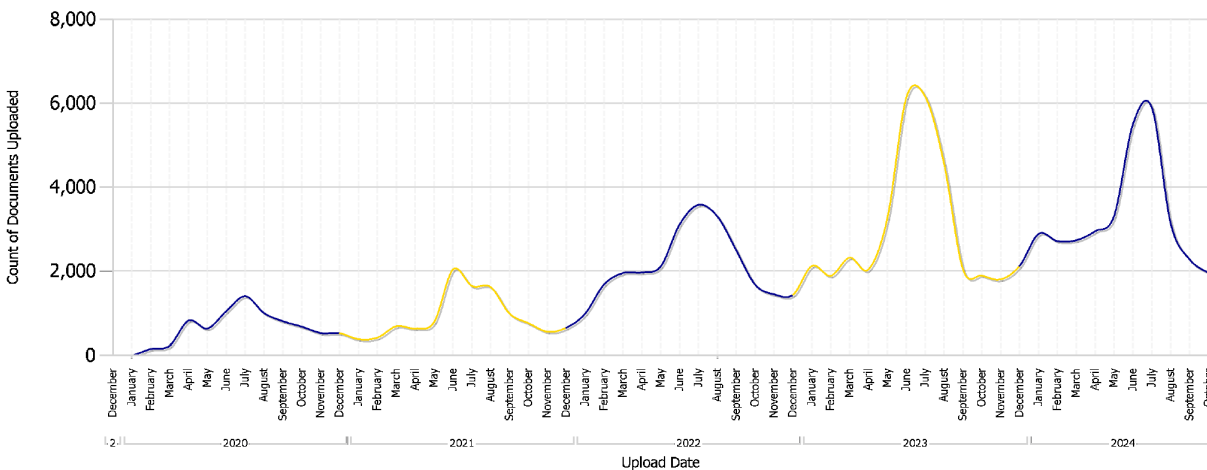
Volunteer Physician Registry Update:

The Volunteer Physician Registry (VPR) is intended to be used by clinics or other entities seeking volunteer physicians. Physicians in the registry have provided information about areas where they would be willing to volunteer and have provided details regarding their area of practice and foreign language proficiency. Originally implemented in 2006 and most recently refreshed in December 2018, the web application was due for cosmetic and technological improvements to ensure compliance with State of California and accessibility standards. For security and support considerations, the existing volunteer accounts will be migrated to the new system, but license authentication will be performed using the IDEAL (Interoperability Development Effort to Authenticate Licensees) interface.

November 2024 Update: Development and testing have concluded. Existing volunteers will be migrated into the new system as part of the deployment. Launch of the new system is pending a final web service deployment to notify volunteers when their license status changes, affecting the status of their volunteer profile. While an

exact date is not currently available, the expected Go-Live date for the new system has been moved up to before the end of 2024.

BreEZe Online Complaint Form Redesign Update:

The Information Systems Branch (ISB) Breeze Business Integration team is working with the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Office of Information Services (OIS) BreEZe team to implement the recent changes made to the Board's hard copy Complaint Form to the BreEZe Online Complaint Form. The goal of these updates is to streamline the forms to attempt to collect as much relevant data and medical releases as possible in the early stages of the complaint submission process. The paper form updates have led to an increase in initially required information and releases being provided with complaints submitted in hard copy. On May 5, 2021, the BreEZe Online Complaint Form was updated to warn individuals who submit a complaint anonymously, that if the Board is unable to obtain documentation or evidence of the complaint allegations, the complaint may not be able to be pursued and it will not be possible to provide updates regarding the complaint. The goal is to encourage complainants to provide their contact information so additional communication can occur if necessary. Additional enhancements are still in the development stages as the Board works with OIS to continue to improve BreEZe. ISB is currently working with the vendor on changing some of the BreEZe screens core functionality to make the process more user friendly for complainants.

November 2024 Update: Vendor Quality Assurance testing is still ongoing. The code is now expected to be released in January 2025 (previously October 2024). At that time, the Board will be the pilot for configuring this enhanced functionality for our BreEZe online complaint form submission. The estimate for release of the Board's enhanced online complaint form is now mid-2025.

BreEZe Electronic Only Renewal Notice Project:

The Information Systems Branch (ISB) Breeze Business Integration team is working with the MBC Executive and Licensing leadership on a project to phase out initial paper license renewals to achieve mandated budget reductions and increase efficiency. The current plan calls for replacing the multiple page paper renewal packet, mailed to all licensees if they have not renewed by 120 days prior to the expiration date, with a single page letter notifying licensees that their license is ready for renewal and future notices will be only sent via email. It will also reenforce the importance of licensees keeping their email address up to date with the Board as required by law. Licensees are currently notified 180 days prior to their license expiration and if they successfully renew before the 120-day milestone, they do not receive any additional paper notices.

November 2024 Update: Plans are being developed to implement this project over a two-year timeframe, coinciding with the two-year renewal cycle, to ensure impact to licensees is minimized and all licensees are notified in advance.