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FSMB Survey: Opioid Prescribing, Telemedicine among Most Important Regulatory Topics for State Medical Boards

Physician stress and burnout, medical marijuana and Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) also listed as important regulatory topics

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 17, 2018) – Today, the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) announced that resources related to opioid prescribing and telemedicine are currently the most important regulatory issues to state medical boards. The announcement comes after analyzing responses from 51 state medical boards as part of the FSMB’s 2017 annual survey to its member boards.

Physician stress and burnout, medical marijuana and the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) also made the list of top issues for medical boards.

“Our member boards play a central role in providing guidance to policymakers and healthcare professionals on how to navigate some of our nation’s most pressing medical issues,” said Humayun J. Chaudhry, DO, MACP, President and CEO of the FSMB. “Anticipating these trends will help the FSMB provide boards with resources they need to address these challenges and continue their mission.”

Each of the 51 participating medical boards was asked to choose five of the most important topics from a list of 16, including an “other” option. The top five and the percentage of boards that chose them were:

- Resources related to opioid prescribing (74%)
- Telemedicine (74%)
- Physician stress and burnout (44%)
- Medical marijuana (42%)
- Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC) (38%)

The FSMB periodically convenes representatives of state medical boards, together with experts in specific subject areas, to study and develop recommendations on issues pertinent to medical regulation. The Federation currently has official model [guidelines and policies](#) for four of the medical regulatory topics that boards deemed most important:

- **Opioid prescribing:** [Model Policy on the Use of Opioid Analgesics in the Treatment of Chronic Pain](#) (Adopted in April 2017 by the FSMB House of Delegates)
- **Telemedicine:** [“Model Policy for the Appropriate Use of Telemedicine Technologies in the Practice of Medicine”](#)
- **Medical marijuana:** [Model Guidelines for the Recommendation of Marijuana in Patient Care](#)
- **Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC):** [Model legislation](#) (22 states are now members of the IMLC, with seven more states considering adopting legislation to join)
- **Physician stress and burnout:** In 2016, the FSMB formed the “Workgroup on Physician Wellness and Burnout” to identify resources and strategies to help identify, manage and prevent physician burnout as well as reduce the stigma associated with seeking help for burnout. The workgroup will be releasing a report and recommendations once approved by the FSMB House of Delegates in April 2018.

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. You can also follow FSMB on Twitter ([@theFSMB](#)).

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