



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

# **Board of Registration in Medicine**



**2023 Annual Report**



# Executive Summary

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine licenses more than 40,000 physicians, osteopaths and acupuncturists. The Board was created in 1894 to protect the public health and safety by setting standards for the practice of medicine and ensuring that doctors who practice in the Commonwealth are appropriately qualified and competent.

The Board's work in 2023 continued to reflect the mission "to ensure that only qualified physicians are licensed to practice in the Commonwealth, to ensure that those physicians and health care institutions in which they practice provide to their patients a high standard of care, and to support an environment that maximizes the high quality of health care in Massachusetts." In 2023, the Board met twenty-one times and accomplished the following:

- In its first full year of launching an online licensing platform, the Board improved the application experience while significantly decreasing the processing times of applications. In calendar year 2023, the Board processed 2,639 electronic Full License Applications with a median processing time of 21 days. For applications that did not require Licensing Committee review or follow-up, the median processing time was 13 days.
- On September 1, 2023, the Quality and Patient Safety Division (QPSD) implemented an online reporting portal designed to improve efficiencies for healthcare facilities reporting Safety and Quality Review (SQR) data to the Board and QPSD staff tasked with managing and analyzing the data.
- In continuing its efforts to meet the increased demand for physician services in Massachusetts, the Board adopted *Policy on Provisionally Issued Full Licenses for Qualified Applicants* (Policy 23-03), which allows qualifying full licensees to practice medicine in Massachusetts while the Board completes the administrative review of the application.
- BORIM was named a "2023 WellBeing First Champion" by the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation for its commitment in ensuring licensing applications are free from overly broad and intrusive mental health questions. BORIM was recognized by ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare, a coalition of leading health care organizations that works to eliminate barriers for health workers to obtain needed mental health care.
- The Quality & Patient Safety Committee hosted an in-person quality and patient safety conference on September 22, 2023 at UMass Memorial Medical Center's Albert Sherman Center. The goal of the conference was to support the Commonwealth's hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, and ambulatory clinics in creating strong Patient Care Assessment (PCA) programs of quality assurance, peer review, and credentialing.
- The Board took disciplinary action against fifty-four medical licenses.
- The Board approved 2,952 Initial Full Licenses, and 1,967 Initial Limited Licenses. By the end of 2023, Massachusetts had a total of 40,887 fully licensed physicians, 5,395 trainees with limited licenses, and 1,171 acupuncturists licensed to provide care to Massachusetts residents and patients who come to Massachusetts from around the world seeking quality care.

The complete Annual Report includes statistics and data from the Operations, Enforcement, Licensing, Legal and Quality and Patient Safety Divisions. Behind these numbers is the real work of the dedicated staff and Board Members committed to patient safety, transparency, fairness, outreach to consumers, and the continuous improvement of the health care system in the Commonwealth.

# The Board

The Board of Registration in Medicine consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor to three-year terms. There are two public members and five physician members. A member may serve only two full consecutive terms. Members sometimes serve beyond the end of their terms before a replacement is appointed. Members may serve on one or more of the Board's committees.

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## Members of the Board 2023

As of 12/7/23

Julian Robinson, M.D., Chair, Physician Member  
Nawal Nour, M.D., M.P.H., Vice Chair, Physician Member  
Booker T. Bush, M.D., Secretary, Physician Member  
Frank O'Donnell, JD, MPA, Public Member  
John McGahan, CAS, LADC, Public Member  
Sandeep Singh Jubbal, M.D., Physician Member

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The Board of Registration in Medicine also has jurisdiction over the licensure and discipline of acupuncturists through its Committee on Acupuncture. The members of the Committee include four licensed acupuncturists, one public member, one physician member actively involved with acupuncture and one physician member of the Board designated by the Chair of the Board. The Board appoints the Committee members to terms of three years.

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Weidong Lu, M.B., M.P.H., Ph.D., Lic. Ac., Chairman  
Wei Zhang, Lic. Ac., Secretary  
Joseph Audette, M.D., Physician Member  
Linda Robinson-Hidas, Lic. Ac.  
Nawal Nour, M.D., M.P.H., Physician Member and  
Member of the Board  
Dennis Moseman, M.S., D.C., Lic. Ac., Dipl. Ac., (NCCAOM)

## Members of the Committee on Acupuncture 2023

As of 12/14/23

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## **Board Leadership 2023**

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George Zachos, J.D., Executive Director

Vita P. Berg, J.D., General Counsel

Susan Carson, Director of Operations

Michael Sinacola, Director of Licensing

Lisa Fuccione, J.D., Director of Enforcement

Daniela Brown, R.N., Director of Quality and Patient Safety

Steven Hoffmann, J.D., Division of Law and Policy Manager

Richard Farmer, Licensing Division Manager

Carol Purmort, Deputy Director, Licensing Division

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## **Mission Statement**

The Board of Registration in Medicine's mission is to ensure that only qualified and competent physicians of good moral character are licensed to practice in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and that those physicians and health care institutions in which they practice provide to their patients a high standard of care, and support an environment that maximizes the high quality of health care in Massachusetts.

# Committees of the Board

## Complaint Committee

The Complaint Committee is comprised of two Board members who meet twice a month to review the evidence gathered by the Enforcement Division in all investigations. If the Complaint Committee determines disciplinary action is appropriate, it makes recommendations to the full Board regarding the type of sanction that could be imposed. When the evidence is insufficient to support disciplinary action, the Complaint Committee has the authority to close the investigation.

## Licensing Committee

The Licensing Committee is comprised of two Board members who meet twice a month. The primary role of the Licensing Committee is to ensure that every physician applying for licensure in the Commonwealth is a qualified and competent physician of good moral character and is in compliance with the Board's licensing regulations, including education and training. As a committee of the Board, the Licensing Committee is responsible for reviewing license applications with legal issues, competency issues, malpractice or medical issues, waiver requests and other issues requiring Board approval. The recommendations of the Licensing Committee are then forwarded to the full Board for its review. The Board in its discretion may accept, reject, or amend any Licensing Committee recommendation.

## Quality and Patient Safety Committee

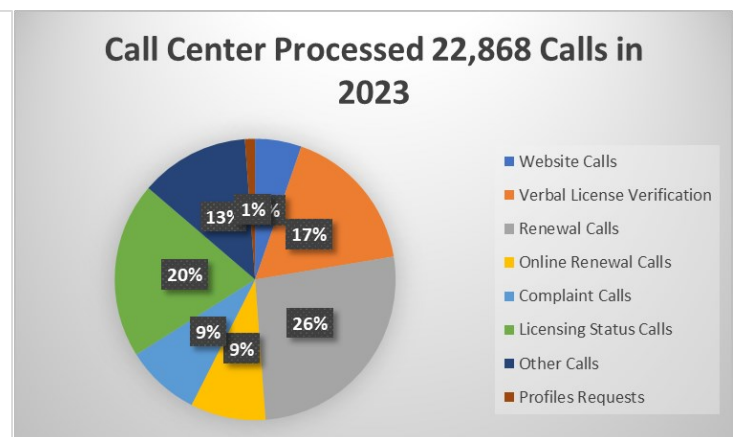
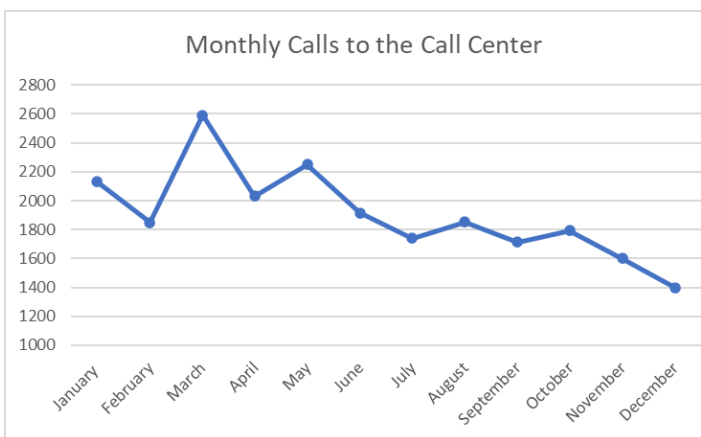
The Quality and Patient Safety (QPS) Committee membership is comprised of one Board member and a multidisciplinary group of providers. It includes members from the Boards of Nursing and Pharmacy, as well as a patient representative. Members of the QPS Committee work with hospitals and other health care facilities to improve quality and patient safety processes and ensure that physicians who practice within a facility are active participants in these programs. The Committee is committed to preventing patient harm through the strengthening of medical quality assurance programs in all institutions. The members provide the expertise that allows responsive feedback and thorough consideration of the issues brought before the QPS Committee.

## Executive Division

The Executive Director of the agency reports to the Board and, under their direction, is responsible for the administration of the Agency and oversight of staff including management, personnel, regulatory and organizational functions. The Executive Director supervises the senior leadership team who, in turn, manage the various divisions of the Agency. A primary responsibility of the Executive Director is to support and assist the Board in all matters pertaining to its mission.

## Operations Division

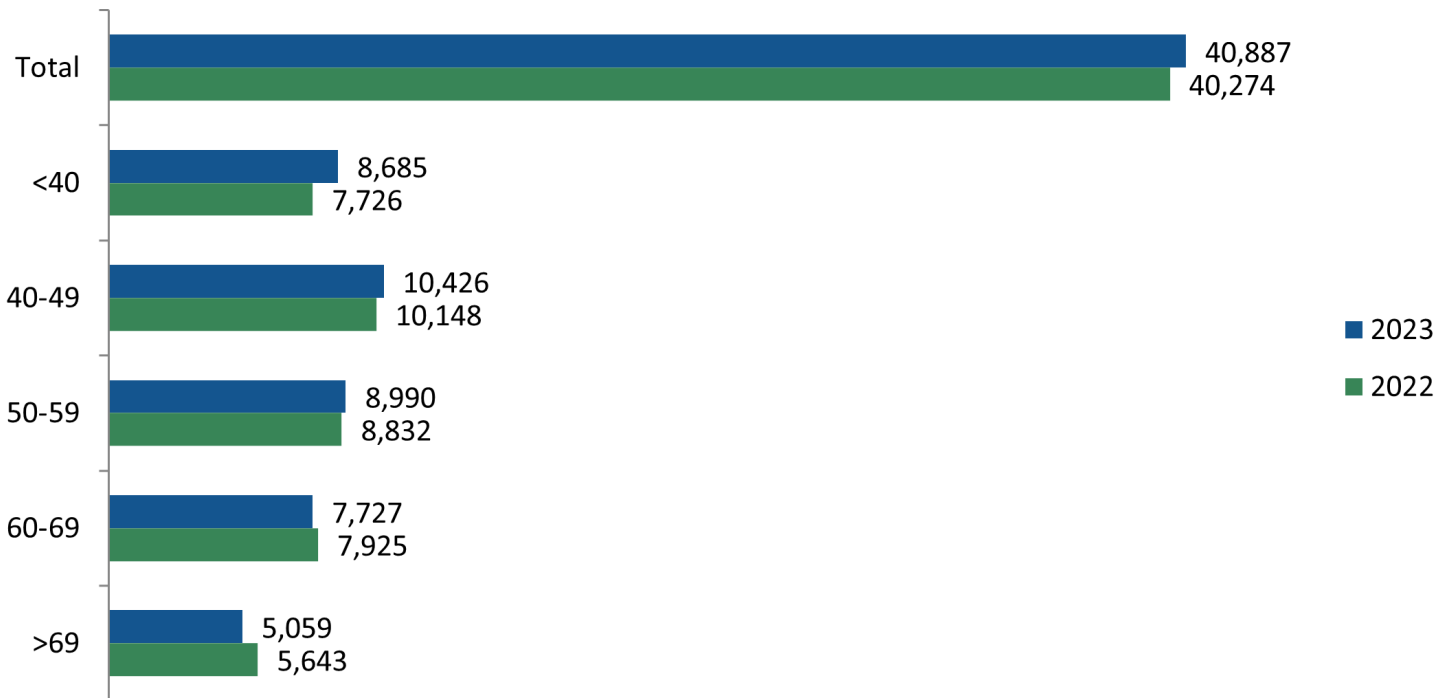
The Operations Division is supervised by the Director of Operations, who is responsible for budget, human resources, procurement, expenditure tracking and facilities. The Director also manages the Call Center, Document Imaging Unit, Mailroom, and Reception. Staff in the Call Center provides physicians with substantive responses, decreasing the number of calls that go to voicemail, assists callers with obtaining forms or other documents, provides copies of requested Profiles documents, and handles all licensing status calls. The Document Imaging Unit scans agency documents into an electronic database, which has allowed staff to access the agency's documents from their desktops.



# Licensing Division

The Licensing Division is the point of entry for physicians applying for a license to practice medicine in the Commonwealth and has an important role in protecting the public. The Division conducts an in-depth review of a physician's credentials to validate the applicant's education, training, experience, and competency.

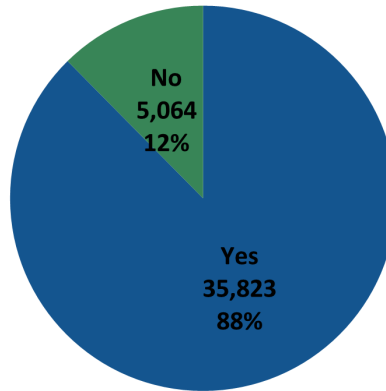
## 2022-2023 Full License Physician Demographics



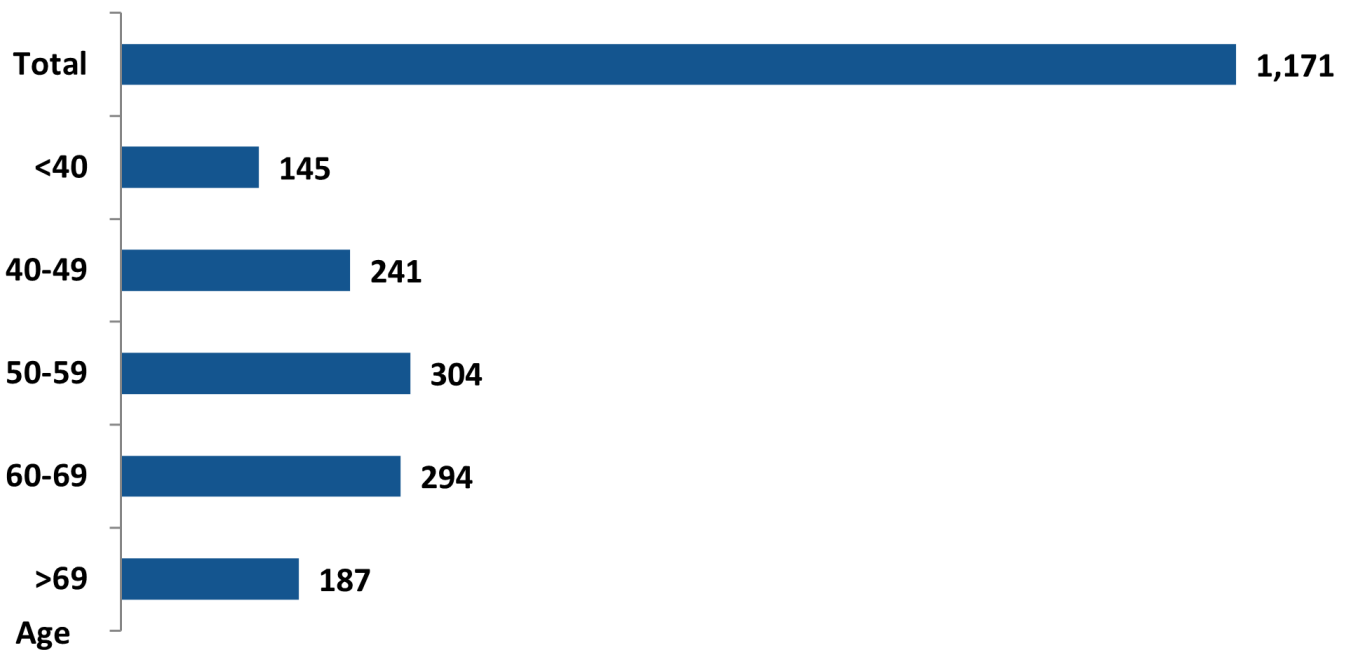
Medical Licenses					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Initial Full Licenses	2,952	2,915	2,467	1,616	2,123
Full Renewals	21,979	16,253	21,406	18,696	20,373
Lapsed Licenses Revived	222	216	177	173	184
Initial Limited Licenses	1,967	1,892	1,878	1,800	1,899
Limited Renewals	3,805	3,752	3,613	5,231	3,528
Temporary (Initial) Licenses	14	22	12	8	9



## 2023 Board Certified Licensed Physicians



## 2023 Licensed Acupuncturist Demographics



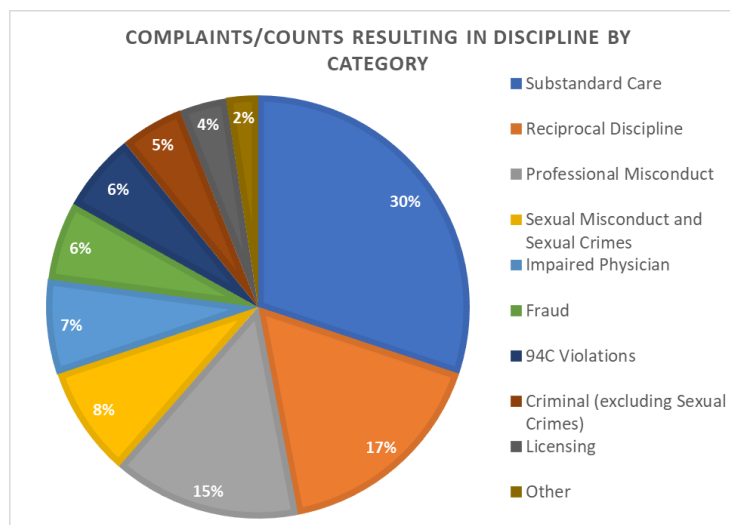
Acupuncture Licenses					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Active Acupuncturists	1,171	1,165	1,122	1,099	1,138
Initial Licenses Issued	41	48	48	32	43
Renewals	542	530	534	536	501
Temporary (initial) Licenses	0	0	0	0	0

# Enforcement Division

The Enforcement Division is mandated by statute to investigate complaints involving physicians and acupuncturists, and to litigate adjudicatory matters. Complaints come from various sources (e.g. consumers of healthcare and their advocates; law enforcement agencies; health care facilities; health care professionals). Complaints are investigated by teams comprised of a complaint counsel, an investigator and/or a nurse investigator.

Investigations					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
<b>Physicians</b>					
New complaint investigations opened during the year	845	615	627	955	553
<i>Source of Complaints:</i>					
Patients	439	376	354	581	298
Relatives of patients	142	122	120	180	76
Statutory report	105	90	128	176	160
Other	159	27	25	18	17
No. of physicians who agreed not to practice medicine during investigation	13	13	5	18	11
Investigations closed during the year	1015	778	594	347	364
Pending investigations as of 12/31	1006	1216	1316	1282	673
<b>Acupuncturists</b>					
New complaint investigations opened during the year	3	4	3	3	2
Investigations closed during the year	4	6	1	1	1

Other sources include physicians who self-report; law enforcement; attorneys representing patients.



Disciplinary Actions					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Number of medical licenses disciplined	54	43	60	50	57
Resignation	12	16	14	22	18
Revocation	9	1	6	11	11
Summary Suspension	1	2	1	7	6
Indefinite Suspension and Probation	10	5	9	7	12
Practice Restrictions	3	3	1	0	2
Reprimand	17	15	24	5	5
Admonishment	4	5	6	0	4
Fine	3	2	1	1	2
<i>Total amount (\$) imposed per year</i>	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$12,500
Continuing Professional Development	4	2	4	2	3

The total number of disciplinary actions taken by the Board may exceed the total number of licenses disciplined because multiple actions can be taken against a single license.

Summary Suspensions are interim actions taken on an emergent basis when there is evidence that the physician is an immediate threat, or may pose a serious threat, to the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Disciplinary Hearings					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Statements of Allegations (SOA's) referred to the Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA) for a hearing	18	22	14	29	30
SOA's at DALA awaiting a hearing, as of 12/31	30	37	45	56	52
Recommended Decisions issued by DALA	21	21	20	23	23

An SOA is an Order for a physician to Show Cause why his or her license should not be disciplined. An SOA may encompass more than one complaint against the physician.

The Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA) is an independent agency within the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, which was established by the legislature to provide a neutral forum for holding adjudicatory hearings in any case in which a party has a right to such a hearing before an administrative agency may make a final decision or take a final action." See The Executive Office for Administration and Finance 2013-2015 Strategic Plan, p. 15. DALA is responsible for issuing findings of facts and conclusions of law; the Board is responsible for determining and imposing the sanction.

# Quality and Patient Safety Division

The Quality and Patient Safety Division (QPSD) of the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine oversees institutional systems of quality assurance, risk management, peer review, and credentialing. This comprises the Patient Care Assessment (PCA) Program which is a requirement under regulation 243 CMR 3.08. QPSD seeks to be collaborative and educational in working with healthcare facilities (HCF) to ensure the existence of a program of robust peer review and quality assurance.

## REGULATORY REPORTING

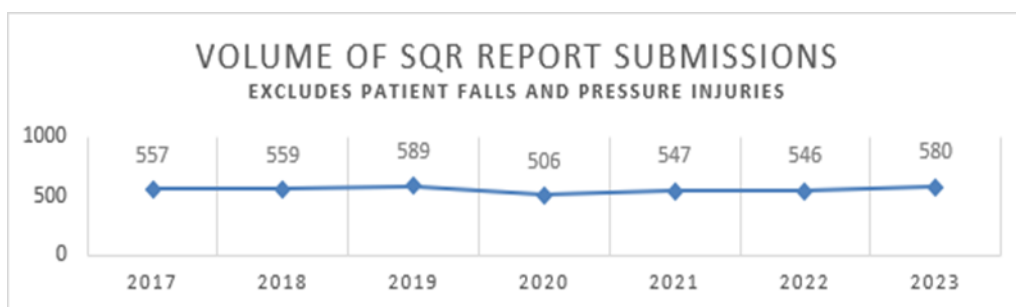
### Annual Reports (AR) and Semi-Annual Reports (SAR)

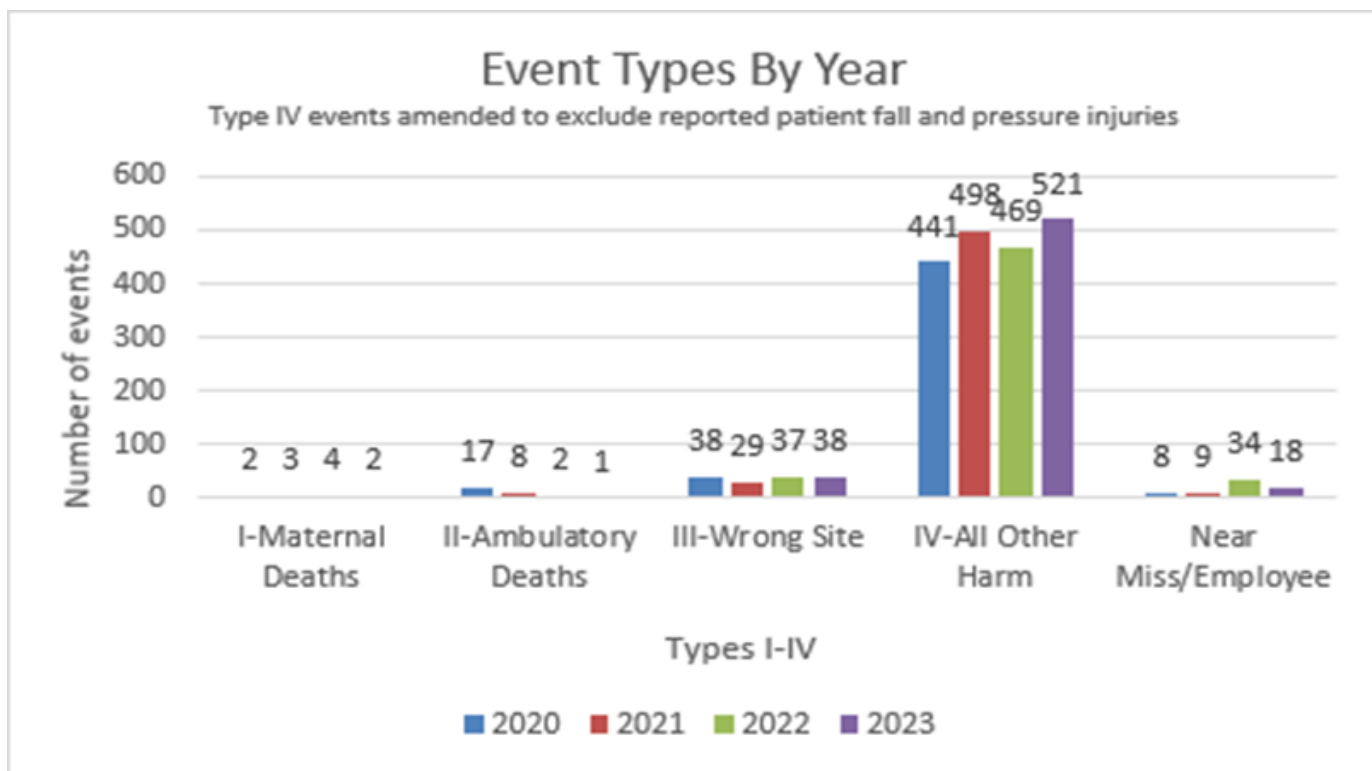
Health Care Facilities submit an Annual Report and a Semi-Annual Report to the Quality and Patient Safety Division within the Board of Registration in Medicine. These reports support the quality initiatives that are ongoing within the facility in addition to the required elements stated in the statute.

Healthcare Facility Reviews (HCFR) are provided to the HCF by a nurse analyst in order to provide feedback on their ongoing quality work. This document is a means to enhance communication to facilities to recognize the quality work that they have achieved and provide recommendations and suggestions in areas that have been identified as best practices to assist in guiding their work.

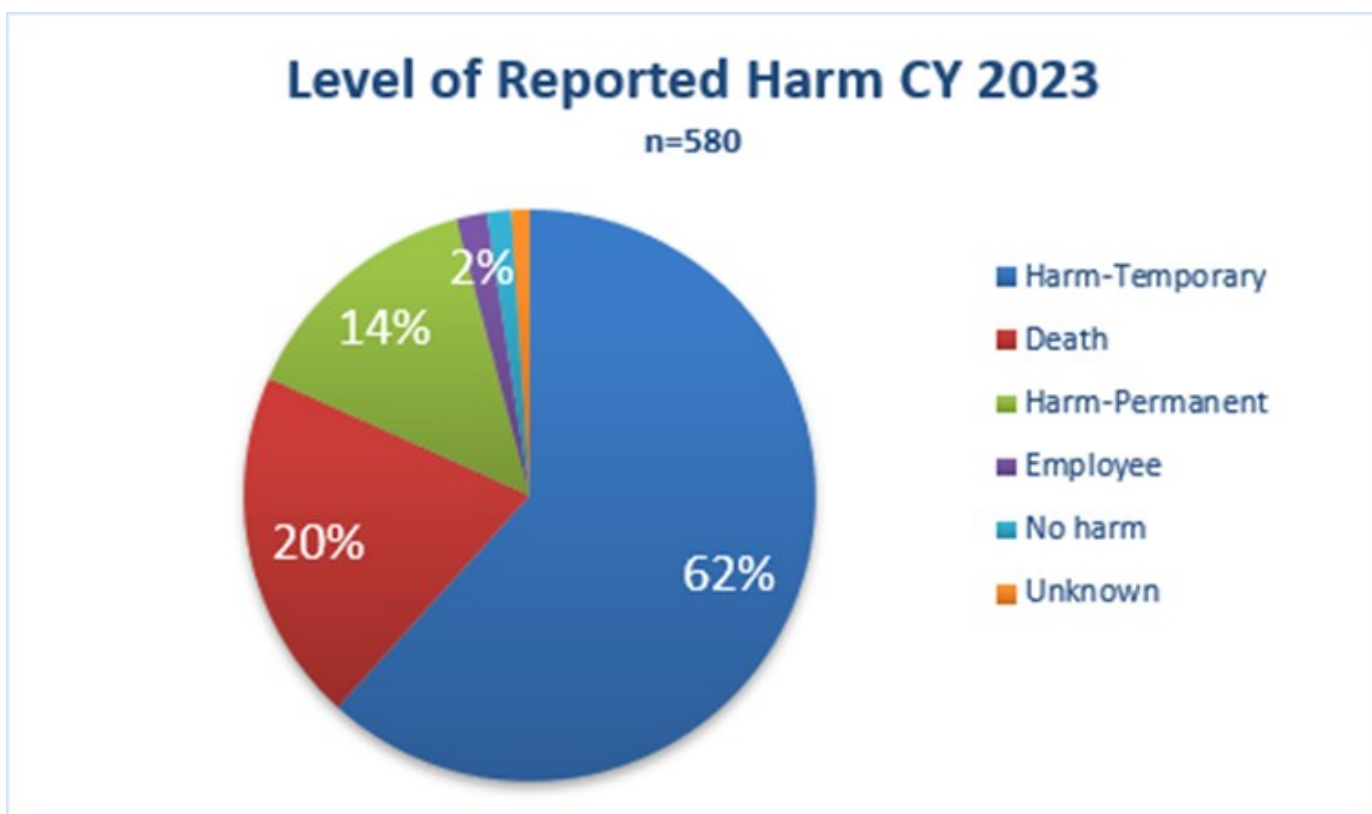
### Safety and Quality Review (SQR) Reports

SQR reports are peer-review protected reports for the HCF to review events or complaints that arise during the course of patient care. The reports are reviewed by the QPSD team to ensure the facility has address the issues with a robust process improvement plan when indicated.





Types 1 through 4, as defined in PCA Regulations 243 CMR 3.08



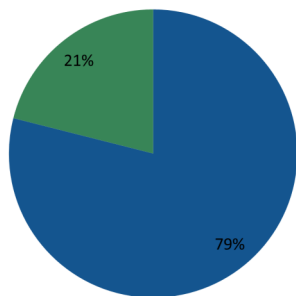
# Division of Law and Policy

The Division of Law and Policy operates under the supervision of the General Counsel. Attorneys for the Division of Law and Policy research legal issues, provide legal analysis, and advise the Board in making legal determinations. The Board's Data Repository Unit (DRU) and Physician Health and Compliance Unit (PHC) are within the Division of Law and Policy. DRU staff is responsible for evaluating statutory reports, overseeing the accuracy of Physician Profiles, and reporting Board actions to the health care databanks. PHC is responsible for monitoring licensees who are on probation as a result of disciplinary action. Division of Law and Policy staff work with other Divisions of the Board on issues related to licensure, physician health, policy, statutory reports and public information.

## Mandated Reports Received by the Data Repository Unit

Source of Report	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Court Reports – malpractice	195	150	150	47	62
Court Reports – criminal	2	3	7	10	713
Malpractice Closed Claim Reports	558	882	478	1102	1025
Initial Disciplinary Action Reports	28	17	23	28	28
Subsequent Disciplinary Action Reports	6	2	8	12	15
Annual Disciplinary Action Reports	14	47	1	15	29
Professional Society Disciplinary Actions	4	0	4	16	17
5d (government agency) Reports	14	0	3	7	7
5f (peer) Reports	40	39	36	41	56
Self Reports (not renewal)	1	2	1	7	7

2023



■ Total Physicians Monitored  
■ Physicians Who Completed Agreements

## Licensees Being Monitored by the Board

Reason for Monitoring	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Behavioral Health	3	2	2	2	5
Mental Health	1	0	0	2	0
Substance Use	11	14	17	16	26
Clinical Competence	6	4	5	7	19
Boundary Violations	2	1	1	4	5
BH/MH and SU	4	6	2	3	0
Misconduct	3	4	4	1	0
Physical Health	0	0	1	0	0

## Adopted, Revised, and Rescinded Policies

Board Meeting	Type	Policy
11-May-23	Policy - New	2023-01 <i>Policy on DRU Referrals of Certain Reports</i>
15-Jun-23	Policy - Revision	20-05 <i>Interim Policy on Emergency Temporary Licenses</i>
15-Jun-23	Policy - Revision	15-05 <i>Prescribing Practices Policy and Guidelines</i>
29-Jun-23	Policy - Revision	22-01 <i>Interim Policy on Practice by Limited Licensees During Public Health Emergency</i>
29-Jun-23	Policy - Revision	20-09 <i>Interim Policy on Emergency Temporary License for Full License Applicants</i>
29-Jun-23	Policy - New	23-02 <i>Policy on Deadlines for Post Recommended Decision Filings</i>
29-June-23	Policy- Rescinded	20-06 <i>Policy on Substantial Equivalency</i>
21-Sep-23	Policy - Revision	98-02 <i>Policy on Release of Physician Addresses</i>
21-Sep-23	Policy - New	23-03 <i>Policy on Provisionally Issued Full Licenses for Qualified Applicants</i>
05-Oct-23	Policy - New	23-04 <i>Pilot Policy on Board Sponsorship for a 5<sup>th</sup> Attempt at USMLE Step 3</i>

## Important Links

BORIM Policies and Guidelines: [Physician Regulations, Policies, and Guidelines | Mass.gov](#)

BORIM Board Meeting Minutes: [BORIM Board Meeting Minutes | Mass.gov](#)

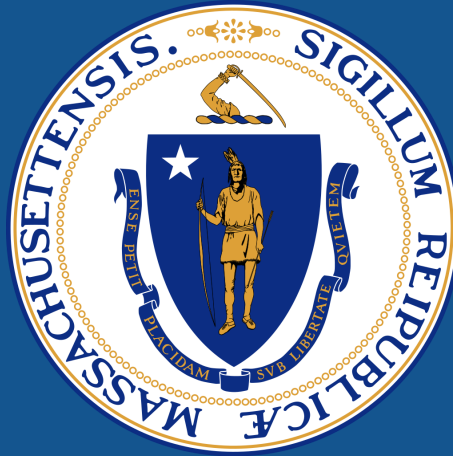
Information on Submitting a Complaint: [Submit a Complaint | Mass.gov](#)

Physician Wellness Page: [Physician Wellness | Mass.gov](#)

Implicit Bias Recourse Page: [Implicit Bias Resource Page | Mass.gov](#)

BORIM Meeting Calendars: [BORIM meeting calendars | Mass.gov](#)

View Board Actions: [View Board of Registration in Medicine Actions | Mass.gov](#)



## **Board of Registration in Medicine**

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