

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Professions Licensure
Board of Registration of Physician Assistants**

**MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
(OPEN SESSION)**

**April 14, 2022
Via WebEx**

Board Members

Present: Shannon Sheridan-Geldart, PA-C, Physician Assistant Educator, Vice-Chair
Robert Baginski, MD, Physician Member
Richard Baum, MD, Physician Member
Mary Kuzmeski PA-C, Physician Assistant 2
Hannah Nolan, MPAS PAC, Physician Assistant 3

Board Members

Not Present: Dipu Patel, PA-C, Physician Assistant 1, Chair
Paul Crehan, PA-C, Physician Assistant 4, Secretary

Staff Present:

Steven Joubert, Executive Director, Multi-Boards
Mary Strachan, Esq., Board Counsel, Office of the General Counsel

Staff Not Present:

Karen Geoghegan, Assistant Executive Director, Multi-Boards
Eleanor Montgomery, Office Support Specialist, Multi-Boards

I. Call to Order | Determination of Quorum | Notice of Electronic Recording

Ms. Shannon Sheridan-Geldart, Board Vice-Chair called to order the Executive Session of the Board of Registration of Physician Assistants at 9:31 A.M. Members present via WebEx roll call: Shannon Sheridan-Geldart: present; Robert Baginski: present; Richard Baum: present; Mary Kuzmeski: present; Hanna Nolan: present. Absent: Dipu Patel; Paul Crehan.

II. Conflict of Interest | Approval of General Session Agenda:

The General Session agenda for April 14, 2022, was reviewed for approval. Board members were asked to disclose any conflicts of interested with the present agenda.

DISCUSSION: There were no conflicts of interest with the General Session agenda. Ms. Shannon Sheridan-Geldart called for a motion to approve the General Session agenda.

ACTION:

Motion to approve the agenda made by Dr. Robert Baginski, seconded by Ms. Mary Kuzmeski, and unanimously passed by roll call vote as follows: Shannon Sheridan-Geldart: approve; Robert Baginski: approve; Richard Baum: approve; Mary Kuzmeski: approve; Hannah Nolan: approve; Absent: Dipu Patel; Paul Crehan; Abstained: None; Opposed: None.

Document: April 14, 2022 General Session Agenda

III. Approval of Minutes – February 10, 2021

DISCUSSION:

None.

ACTION:

Motion to approve the February 10, 2021 General Session minutes as presented by Dr. Robert Baginski, seconded by Ms. Mary Kuzmeski and unanimously passed by roll-call vote as follows: Shannon Sheridan-Geldart: approve; Robert Baginski: approve; Richard Baum: approve; Mary Kuzmeski: approve; Hannah Nolan: approve; Absent: Dipu Patel; Paul Crehan; Abstained: None; Opposed: None.

Document: February 10, 2022, General Session Minutes

IV. Investigations – N/A

V. Flex Session – Announcements & Topic for Future Agenda

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Joubert stated that he had a discussion with Board Counsel about a letter received from UMass Chan Medical School, Commonwealth Medicine. He explained that the letter stated that they conducted an audit of Physician Assistants prescription guidelines. Mr. Joubert read the letter to the Board.

The letter reads as follows:

By way of introduction of the Executive Director, I'm the Executive Director of medical management at the Office of Clinical Affairs for Commonwealth Medicine, University of Mass Medical School, acting as consultants to EOHSS and MassHealth. In my role as director, I am responsible for managing the Non-Institutional Provider Review program, which is charged with reviewing individual clinicians not employed by institutions, who are contracted with MassHealth to provide services to its members. The NIPR team reviews individual providers referred to it for evidence of Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse identified as issues involving quality of care record keeping documentation, billing, coding, prescribing and medical necessity among others. The purpose of this writing is to inform you of concerns regarding

what we have identified as a general lack of compliance with prescriptive practice guidelines for physician assistants engaged in prescriptive practice. Lately the majority of provider cases NIPR has reviewed were an APRN, CNP or PAs employed in the practice. The guidelines we review are not meeting or falling short of the criteria outlined in the corresponding regulations for each professional group. Some guidelines are outdated, and some are missing altogether.

When we encounter such guideline deficiencies during our review, we are required by MassHealth regulations to site an administrative fine of 100 dollars per each day of service submitted for an office visit, where a PA prescribed a new medication or refilled the current medication for a MassHealth member. Apart from the lack of adherence to the guidelines promulgated by each of the respective Boards, these violations can total a significant dollar amount and place a heavy financial burden on the provider practice being reviewed, not to mention the additional resources required on NIPR part to identify and process the guideline deficiencies.

It is our hope and intention that by bringing this matter to your attention, you will be able to communicate to and remind PA's of their responsibility to be knowledgeable of the guidelines and their duty to comply with the criteria.

Thank you for your consideration of this communication. Please feel free to contact me, should you have any questions.

Mr. Joubert stated that the letter was signed by Terry Lindblom and he is a PA, CA, MBA, Director of Medical Management Office of Clinical Affairs.

Ms. Sheridan-Geldart stated that she thought that Medical Management Office of Clinical Affairs they do research on complaints or kind of go over things and then they find that PAs don't have prescriptive practice guidelines on file and wanted to know if that was the gist of the letter. Mr. Joubert agreed with Ms. Sheridan-Geldart. He stated that that was exactly it. Ms. Sheridan-Geldart stated that she feels it is clearly stated in PA regulations. She also said that she feels it's the providers' responsibility to ensure that the guidelines are in place. Dr. Baum agreed with Ms. Sheridan-Geldart and stated that the Board should invite whoever wrote the letter to come to the next General Session because he has some questions about what triggered the audit and would he like to have a discussion about it. Mr. Joubert said that the suggestion sounds good. Dr. Baginski stated that he and Ms. Sheridan-Geldart both know Terry Lindblom pretty well. He stated that Terry is a good guy and that is his primary role to do general reviews of Medicare and Medicaid. He also stated that he's sure that Terry would be very willing to come to a meeting. Mr. Joubert said that he would reach out to Terry Lindblom. Mr. Joubert then stated that that was all he had and asked if the Board had anything that they would like for him to research, he would be happy to do that for them and bring it to the next meeting. None of the Board members had anything to be researched. Ms. Sheridan-Geldart read from the agenda, as required before entering into Executive Session.

ACTION:

Motion to move into Executive Session by Ms. Mary Kuzmeski, seconded Dr. Robert Baginski and unanimously approved by roll call vote as follows: Shannon Sheridan-Geldart: approve; Robert Baginski: approve; Richard Baum: approve; Mary Kuzmeski: approve; Hannah Nolan: approve; Absent: Dipu Patel; Paul Crehan; Abstained: None; Opposed: None.

The General Session adjourned at 9:40 A.M.