**SUPPORTING MASSACHUSETTS PROSECUTORS**



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-+:: ***Massachusetts District Attorneys Association***

**Marian** T. **Ryan** *District Attorney Middlesex*

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Board of Registration in Medicine 200 Harvard Mill Square, Suite 330

Wakefield, Massachusetts 01880

Re: Notice of Public Hearing & Comment Dear Members of the Board:

April 18, 2017

**Dani e l** F. **Conley** *District Attorney Suffolk*

Timothy J. Cruz

*District Attorney*

*Plymouth*

Joseph D. Early, Jr. *District Attorney Worcester*

**Anthony D. Gulluni** *District Attorney Hampden*

**Michael O ' Keefe** *District Attorney*

*Cape* & *Islands*

**David E. Sullivan** *District Attorney Northwestern*

**Thomas M. Quinn** Ill

*District Attorney*

*Bristol*

Tara L Maguire

*Executive Director*

We write to respond to the Notice of Public Hearing & Comment which we received recently. The Massachusetts District Attorney's Association strongly supports the proposal to include a licensure requirement for physicians that they undergo training in recognizing and responding to domestic and sexual violence, as well as child abuse and neglect.

In our experience, we have seen how physicians trained to recognize and support child and adult survivors of domestic and sexual abuse can contribute not only to their healing but also to their safety. Moreover, doctors who have reported child abuse and neglect and/or assisted adult survivors in reporting have contributed significantly to the overall safety of our community.

Conversely, we have also seen that doctors who are not trained to recognize the symptoms of domestic and sexual violence or child abuse and neglect can and do overlook opportunities to assist their patients, sometimes with unfortunate results. As basic training in the recognition, identification, and response to familial violence and sexual assault can make the difference between a successful intervention on behalf of a patient and a bad outcome, we strongly support training physicians in these areas.

As the Notice of Public Hearing does not go into detail about the nature and scope of such training, we of course cannot comment on the suitability of the proposed training. We would suggest, however, that requiring such training not just once, but rather periodically over the course of a physician's career would be ideal to ensure that physicians are up to date on how best to recognize and respond to child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault situations. Also, to the extent that the training is still in the planning or revision process, we would be happy to offer our assistance - in those efforts.

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Please feel free to contact me if you would like any additional infom1ation or if we can be of any assistance.

Very Truly Yours,

Marian T. Ryan

President

Massachusetts District Attorney Association