

As a physician who has treated patients at Compass Medical, the Board of Registration in Medicine reminds you of your responsibility to ensure continuity of care for your patients. This responsibility includes communicating with your patients in a timely manner and providing updated contact information throughout this time of transition so that care is not compromised in any way. Communication should include if you have accepted a position at another location. Please consider addressing any referral or medication needs as well. Also please consider the appropriate method of communication (for example, if a patient is not an avid user of technology, relying on website announcements is unlikely to be an effective communication strategy for that patient).

Please note, Massachusetts law has recognized that “A physician who has undertaken to render medical services violates his duty of care if he abandons his patient or fails to take steps called for by good medical practice.” *Matter of Spring*, 380 Mass. 629, 638-639 (1980). You should keep this responsibility in mind to ensure continuity of care for all your Compass Medical patients.

If you are considering terminating a patient-physician relationship, the Board of Registration in Medicine alerts you to AMA Code of Medical Ethics, “1.1.5 Terminating a Patient-Physician Relationship”:

“Physicians’ fiduciary responsibility to patients entails an obligation to support continuity of care for their patients. At the beginning of patient-physician relationship, the physician should alert the patient to any foreseeable impediments to continuity of care.

When considering withdrawing from a case, physicians must:

(a) Notify the patient (or authorized decision maker) long enough in advance to permit the patient to secure another physician.

(b) Facilitate transfer of care when appropriate.”

Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine