COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF REGISTRATION IN MEDICINE

COMMITTEE ON ACUPUNCTURE

POLICY 2023-02

POLICY ON DOCTORAL DEGREES

December 14, 2023

On January 19, 2023, the Board of Registration adopted three recommendations made by the Committee on Acupuncture’s (COA) Doctoral Degrees Workgroup.[[1]](#footnote-1) The COA adopts and implements the following recommendations:

1. The COA designates the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM)[[2]](#footnote-2) as the only accrediting agency approved by the COA for doctoral programs under 243 CMR 5.04(1)(a).
2. Graduates of an ACAHM accredited doctoral program may advertise their degrees following their names.
3. The phrase, “accredited by the ACAHM” as used in 243 CMR 5.04(1)(a), includes both accredited programs and doctoral programs in pre-accreditation status or candidacy status. This means that licensees who graduated from a doctoral program that held ACAHM pre-accreditation status or candidacy status at the time of graduation are deemed to be graduates of an ACAHM accredited program for purposes of this regulation.

By adopting these three principles, the Committee reaffirms its existing regulations at 243 CMR 5.09(1)(d)(e)(f) and (g). Licensed acupuncturists who hold a Ph.D. in a field other than acupuncture or oriental medicine remain prohibited from the use of the title “Doctor” or “Dr.” in connection with the licensee’s acupuncture practice.

1. This matter was considered by the Board of Medicine because the COA had been unable to achieve a quorum of members to consider the questions raised over an extended period of time. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The ACAHM was formerly the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)