

February 2019

“...for the benefit and protection of the people of North Carolina.”

Dear North Carolina Physician:

We are glad that you are considering applying for a position on the North Carolina Medical Board. We welcome your interest.

The North Carolina Medical Board was established in 1859 and has the distinction of being the oldest continually operating medical board in the country. By statute, the Medical Board's mandate is: "to regulate the practice of medicine and surgery for the benefit and protection of the people of North Carolina." The Board's main responsibilities are licensing and regulating the practice of more than 40,000 physicians, physician assistants, and several other healthcare providers. There are 13 Board members consisting of eight physicians, one physician assistant, one nurse practitioner, and three public members. This affords licensees the privilege of professionally led regulation, something which is not the case in every state.

Serving on the Board is both a responsibility and an honor. Many former Board members recall the importance of the work, the pride they felt in being part of it, and how serving on the Board made them better practitioners. While many Board members come to it as leaders of the profession, many North Carolina Medical Board members have gone on to leadership at the national level of medical regulation. With the ever-changing face of medicine in this country, it is good for our state to be represented in the national discussion on health care.

Here are some of specifics of serving on the North Carolina Medical Board:

- Time commitment:

The Board meets six times per year in the odd-numbered months, in Raleigh. The meetings last 2.5 days (Wednesday morning through Friday noon) and usually occur during the third week of the month.

Also, approximately three times a year you will be assigned to an eight-member panel of the Board that holds disciplinary hearings for one – two days during the even-numbered months. The Board retains an independent counsel (a former trial judge) to participate in hearings and assist with procedural matters.

In addition, there is Board work at other times, off site. Those tasks include reviewing meeting materials (15- 20 hours per meeting or hearing), reviewing license applications, and participating in task forces, committees and legislative efforts. Some, but not all, Board members write articles for The Forum, or speak to civic organizations and professional groups.

Finally, Board members attend the annual meeting of the Federation of State Medical Boards. The FSMB meeting is a three-day meeting, usually held in late April, and can be very helpful as most state medical and osteopathic boards are grappling with similar issues.

- Expenses:

Board members are reimbursed \$50 per hour (up to a maximum of \$200 per day) for Board work, including preparation and attending hearings and meetings. The Board has a professional staff which posts reading material to a secure website about two weeks before each Board meeting.

Board members stay at a local hotel and are reimbursed for meals, lodging and travel expenses.

Board members may not offer to or serve as expert reviewers in potential medical malpractice cases or offer to or serve as voluntary expert witnesses in medical malpractice cases during their tenure on the Board. This helps avoid actual or apparent conflicts of interest and other proscriptions of the North Carolina State Ethics Act.

Although most Board members find that service on the Board means a financial loss, the rewards from serving the public and the profession make it worthwhile.

- Miscellaneous:

Board members are required to sign a code of conduct document, which sets forth behavioral expectations intended to assure the public that the Board and its individual members uphold the highest level of integrity and ethical standards. Please see a copy of the code of conduct on the NCMB Review Panel website.

To be productive, it is essential that Board members be proficient users of computer hardware and software. While Board staff is available to provide some training and assistance, each Board member must be able to use a keyboard, use basic Microsoft and Adobe software products, and be willing and able to check Board e-mail regularly. The Board provides each member with a laptop computer for use while on the Board.

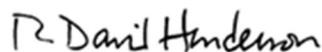
Licensing and discipline are the two main functions of the Board, but many other issues present themselves. Administrative rules are constantly in flux. Health care policy issues are endless: the opioid crisis, physician wellness, and new modes of healthcare delivery are examples of the current topics which confront the NCMB. You are encouraged to go to the Board's website www.ncmedboard.org to learn more about the Board's work.

When we asked Board members what is needed to be successful, they replied: collaborating with fellow Board members and Board staff to take full advantage of all the expertise available in order to be fully informed; being confident in your position but open to other points of view; putting the mission of the organization above any individual interest; being creative, independent thinkers; having respect for fellow Board members and sense of collegiality, leading to trust in one another; being aware of the time commitment - not only the Board meetings, but the time required to prepare for Board meetings; listening analytically, learning, adapting, and having patience with issues, which often take time to work through; and having empathy but being willing to impose discipline if required.

You are welcome to visit the Board office during the Wednesday and/or Thursday afternoon sessions for the May 2019 meeting (May 15th and 16th) or the July 2019 meeting (July 17th and July 18th). If you would like to observe one of these Board meetings, please contact Loney Johnson via telephone at 919.326.1109, extension 215 or by email at loney.johnson@ncmedboard.org. Loney will plan your visit logistics with you.

Please feel free to contact me or one of the current or former Board members to ask them about their experience. I can be reached at 919-326-1109, extension 218 or david.henderson@ncmedboard.org. You can find the list of current Board members on our website, <http://www.ncmedboard.org/about-the-board/board-members>. If you would like their contact information, please let me know.

Sincerely,



R. David Henderson, JD
Chief Executive Officer