

January 2021

Dear North Carolina Physician, Physician Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner:

We are pleased 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 more than 50,000 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. 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 some Board members come to it as leaders of the profession, many have become leaders of medical regulation at the national level. 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. Historically these have been held in Raleigh at the Board's offices but, more recently, they have been held virtually. The meetings last 2.5 days (Wednesday morning through Friday noon) and usually occur during the third week of the month.

Also, two - 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 are encouraged to 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, travel, 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.

For in-person meetings, Board members stay at a local hotel and are reimbursed for meals, lodging and travel expenses.

Miscellaneous. Board members may not serve as expert reviewers in potential medical malpractice cases or serve as voluntary expert witnesses in medical malpractice cases during their tenure on the Board. Also, Board members should not serve in leadership roles of professional medical organizations while on the Medical Board.

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. A copy of the code of conduct can be viewed 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. Healthcare policy issues are endless: the opioid crisis, physician wellness, and telemedicine 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; 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 virtually attend one of our upcoming Board meetings. The March meeting will be held March 17 – 19 and the May meeting will be held May 19 - 21. Please contact Loney Johnson at 919.326.1109, extension 215, or loney.johnson@ncmedboard.org for more information.

If you'd like to contact me or one of the current or former Board members to ask them about their experience, please let me know and I will help arrange that. You can find the list of current Board members on our website, <https://www.ncmedboard.org/about-the-board/board-members>

Finally, please let me know if I can answer any questions or provide further information. I can be reached at 919-326-1109, extension 218 or david.henderson@ncmedboard.org

Sincerely,

R. David Henderson

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Chief Executive Officer