

CONTINUING COMPETENCE--*CONTINUING DEBATE*

"Currently no state medical board requires physicians to demonstrate their continuing competence to practice, and efforts to strengthen the requirements for relicensing physicians have been successfully opposed by professional organizations. As a result, many physicians continue for decades to practice medicine with little change from what they learned in medical school and hospital residency. States are stricter in testing the skills of motor vehicle drivers."

--Thomas H. Meikle Jr., MD, President, Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, "States Must Act to Reform Medical Education," *The Journal of American Health Policy*, March/April 1992, Vol. 2, No. 2

"The issue of continuing competency assessment is gaining political force. . . . Boards, as the bodies responsible for licensing physicians, are increasingly going to have to respond to this concern. Or others will!"

--Mark R. Yessian, PhD, "How Can State Medical Boards Compete in the Quality Assurance Marketplace?," *Federation Bulletin*, Federation of State Medical Boards, Vol. 81, No. 2, 1994

"States should require each board to develop, implement and evaluate continuing competency requirements to assure the continuing competence of regulated health care professionals. . . . The evidence that continuing education cannot guarantee continuing competence is sobering."

--*Reforming Health Care Workforce Regulation: Policy Considerations for the 21st Century*, December 1995, Pew Health Professions Commission

"What is the role of boards in ensuring continuing professional competence? Should boards regulate continuing education providers, or should this be the function of educational organizations and oversight bodies?"

--Kathleen Hamilton, Director, California Department of Consumer Affairs, speaking at Citizen Advocacy Center annual meeting, San Francisco, November 13, 2002 [*News & Views*, Citizen Advocacy Center, Fourth Quarter, 2002. Vol. 14, No. 4]

"It was more than 30 years ago, in the pages of the *Federation Bulletin*, that Robert C. Derbyshire, MD, wrote ' . . . whenever the subject of recertification or re-examination was brought up in almost any medical gathering it was greeted by an uncomfortable silence or open hostility.' I regret to say that during the past three decades the prevailing attitude in the profession toward a physician having to prove his continuing competency has changed little."

--Ronald C. Agresta, MD, FSMB President, "Maintenance of Competency: An Old Emerging Issue," *Journal of Medical Licensure and Discipline*, Federation of State Medical Boards, Vol. 89, No.1, 2003

"It's hard to say when the board will feel that they have gathered enough information and are ready to move ahead. . . . There always is something new that we need to learn about and consider before making a proposal."

--Neal Kohatsu, MD, Medical Director, Medical Board of California, "Maintenance of Competence: The Debate Heats Up," *Journal of Medical Licensure and Discipline*, Federation of State Medical Boards, Vol. 89, No. 1, 2003

"I have given a *lot* of thought to this and brought my staff, faculty (including the former CEO of the American Board of Medical Specialties), our faculty in podiatric medicine, and our colleagues at the National Board of Medical Examiners into the discussion. . . .

"First, you will never know how much we respect the California Board of Podiatric Medicine for being the first Board of any discipline, to our knowledge, to have made a true Maintenance of Competence requirement a legal requirement of licensure. The medical profession is many years away from attaining this enlightenment, if it ever happens at all. We are not aware of any State or country, anywhere in the world, where this is the law. Your Board has done the right thing, and we congratulate you. Your Board will be recounted as heroes in the history books, and I mean this honestly and literally."

--William A. Norcross, M.D., Clinical Professor of Family Medicine, and Director of the Physician Assessment and Clinical Education (PACE) Program, University of California at San Diego, April 2, 2010