



**Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners  
Development Committee**

**Tuesday, September 26, 2023**

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**MINUTES**

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The Development Committee meeting of the Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners was called to order at 7:30 a.m. in the Poplar Room, Ground Floor, Metro Center Complex, 665 Mainstream Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37243 by Dr. Melanie Blake.

Committee members present: Melanie Blake, MD  
Robert Ellis, Consumer Member  
John McGraw, MD  
Deborah Christiansen, MD  
Keith Anderson, MD

Staff present: W. Reeves Johnson, MD, Interim Medical Director  
Francine Baca-Chavez, JD, Office of General Counsel  
Stacy Tarr, BME Executive Director  
Brandi Allocco, Administrative Director

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Blake with a roll call of members and staff present. Having determined a quorum with three members present, Dr. Blake opened the meeting with the second agenda item.

**I. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION AS NEEDED REGARDING THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESS AND OVERSIGHT OF BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS COMMITTEES**

The Board of Medical Examiners oversees three (3) committees for other professions. One of these committees is the Advisory Committee for Acupuncture, which had three (3) cases open in the Office of Investigations and three (3) cases open in the Office of General Counsel between January 2023 and August 2023. The Committee for Clinical Perfusionists had zero complaint cases open during the same time frame. The Polysomnography Professional Standards Committee had one case open in the Office of Investigations in January 2023, which has since been closed. The Board of Medical Examiners has the highest numbers of complaints submitted to the Office of Investigations of any health professional board, including the Nursing Board, which has the greatest number of licensees. Moving forward the Board of Medical Examiners' Administrative Report will include information regarding licensees of the three (3) committees.

Dr. Keith Anderson joined the meeting during the first agenda item.

**II. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION AS NEEDED REGARDING T.C.A. § 68-3-502**

Mr. Gary Bishop, Tennessee Department of Vital Records, appeared before the Development Committee to discuss the concerns raised by Dr. Keith Anderson concerning the processing of death certificates. The Board approved the Committee's proposal of two letters of warning being issued prior to discipline at the July 2023 Board of Medical Examiners meeting. The first concern is the process for resetting passwords in the VRISM system once they are expired. The current process requires the provider to call the Department of Vital records to have a password reset link sent to their email address. Unfortunately, this requires the provider call during business hours and at times the email may never arrive due to firewalls. This causes a delay in the provider's ability to timely sign death certificates. Another area for concern is the system does not always notify the provider when there is a death certificate pending signature. Dr. Anderson suggests the system should allow the provider to choose a preferred method of communication such as a text message, rather than an email to ensure they are being notified of a pending death certificate. Mr. Bishop reports that an expired password should not lock the account until one hundred and twenty (120) days have passed since the password expired. As for the firewall, the IT department for the provider should include the Department's email address on their allowed list to ensure emails are not lost to the firewall. Mr. Bishop states the Department of Vital Records is currently working on a phone application to allow physicians to go directly to the signature without needing to click through multiple pages.

**III. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION AS NEEDED REGARDING PRECEPTORSHIP PLAN GUIDE**

Reeves Johnson, MD, Interim Medical Director, presented to the Committee a proposed preceptorship plan guide. This will allow applicants to formulate a preceptorship plan prior to appearing before the Board when re-entry is deemed appropriate. This will reduce the repeat appearances by applicants and allow the Board to issue a limited license at the time of the applicant interview, rather than a contingency for limited licensure. The Committee proposed some amendments to the preceptorship plan guide as presented. Dr. Deborah Christiansen motions to approve the preceptorship plan guide as amended. Mr. Robert Ellis seconds the motion, and it passes. The Committee will bring the preceptorship plan guide with the amendments to the full Board for approval.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Yarnell Beatty, Tennessee Medical Association, made public comment regarding Tennessee Code Annotated § 63-1-401. Mr. Beatty requests that a pain management specialist be involved in the review and development of the chronic pain treatment guidelines and the pain clinic guidelines. The guidelines are reviewed by the Commissioner of Health annually and the Board is presented with the updated guidelines to review and implement. This topic will be revisited at the November 2023 Board of Medical Examiners Development Committee Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 am.