

Indiana Physician Assistant Newsletter June 2011

NEW PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT LAWS

New laws for Physician Assistants will go into effect on July 1st. Highlights are as follows:

- Physician Assistants (PA) may only prescribe or dispense drugs approved by their supervising physician
- A PA may not prescribe or dispense schedule I or II controlled substances.
- PAs can write a drug order for use in the hospital for a schedule II controlled substance, if the patient is in an inpatient hospital.
- For Schedules III, IV and V, a PA may prescribe a **1 time 30 day supply**. After the 1 time 30 day supply, the additional prescription must be issued by a physician.
- The supervising physician or physician designee shall review within 72 hours after a patient encounter, 100% of the charts for the first three (3) years of employment of the physician assistant by the same employer and at least 50% thereafter. However, if the physician assistant has had less than 1800 hours of practice, the supervising physician or physician designee shall review 100% of the charts within 72 hours of the patient encounter.
- A PA may request an exceptional circumstance waiver from the Medical Licensing Board if the PA and the physician want to work in a non-contiguous county.
- A physician still cannot be the supervising physician for more than two (2) physician assistants.

It is not necessary for a PA to resubmit a practice agreement if he/she needs to make changes in their prescribing practices. A copy of the agreement should just be kept on file at their practice location and made available upon request.

A copy of the changes can be found at <http://www.in.gov/pla/2592.htm>.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Prior to adjourning the 2011 Legislative Session, the Indiana General Assembly passed Senate Enrolled Act 363 titled *Criminal Background Checks of Licensed Professionals*. This Bill requires individuals obtaining licensure in certain healthcare professions to obtain a national criminal background check prior to being issued a license.

Effective July 1, 2011, physician assistants seeking initial licensure will be required to submit to finger printing and a national criminal background check by the Indiana State Police (*this is the background check that utilizes the criminal history record system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation*). The individual applicant will be responsible for the cost of the background check in addition to any of the usual costs associated with obtaining their license (*the fees will be paid separately to different agencies*). The results of the background check will be shared with the Indiana Professional licensing Agency – in our case, with the Physician Assistant Committee and the Medical Licensing Board specifically – and after that, only confidentially with the appropriate government agencies and law enforcement entities listed in statute.

During the review of an application, if the background check evidences a prior criminal history, the committee will have the discretion to determine whether or not the crime has a current and direct bearing upon the ability of the individual to practice safely and to determine whether a license should be granted or denied (*i.e., a committee/board may grant a license even if an applicant has a criminal conviction on their record if it is determined that the applicant is safe, competent, and no longer a threat to the public as a result of their conviction*).

The bill also allows the committee to perform a random audit of currently licensed individuals during their license renewal period who would then have to submit to a background check in order to renew their license. It has not been decided how, if, or when this component of the bill will be implemented.

As we continue to evaluate the bill and work out the details with the Indiana State Police for conducting background checks and sharing the information, we will update our website, application instructions, Facebook page, and the committee's newsletter with additional details and information.

In the meantime, for more details about this bill, please refer to <http://www.in.gov/apps/lisa/session/billwatch/billinfo?year=2011&session=1&request=getBill&docno=363> where you can read in detail the bill digest, the actual changes made to law, and the respective amendments and votes.

STAFF & CONTACT INFORMATION

Kristen Kelley – Director
Jody Edens – Assistant Director
Donna Moran – Litigation/Probation Specialist
Meredith Shirley – Case Manager
Dawn Shaffer – Case Manager
Elizabeth Sangar – Case Manager
Kathy Garner – Case Manager

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All members of the committee are appointed by the Governor in increments of 3 year terms. The committee consists of 3 physician assistants who have had at least 3 years of practice experience, 1 physician and 1 consumer member. The committee is made up of the following:

Steven Jacobs, PA-C, President - Bloomington
James Chapman, PA-C, Secretary - Fort Wayne
Donald Munson (Gregg), PA-C - Carmel
Joe Fox, M.D. - Indianapolis
The Consumer member position is currently vacant

COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE

Steven E. Jacobs, PA-C was first appointed by the Governor to the Indiana Physician Assistant Committee in 1997 and is currently serving as chairman. A native of Bloomington, he enlisted in the US Navy in 1980 and achieved the enlisted rank of Chief Hospital Corpsman after he graduated from the George Washington University Physician Assistant Program. He served on active duty until 1995 and was recalled to active duty post 911 in 2001 and 2002. He served in Thailand providing Tsunami medical relief in

2004-2005. He was recalled in 2006 to serve as Commander US Navy at Camp Lejeune and is currently on employment leave from Indiana University.

Steve continues to fulfill his duties to the Physician Assistant Committee by traveling back to Indianapolis for the scheduled meetings. He also has a master's degree of physician assistant studies, with a focus on internal medicine, from the University of Nebraska. He is planning on retiring from the US Navy in May 2012. Steve is also very active with the Indiana Academy of Physician Assistants.

2011 COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Please note that meeting dates are subject to change or may be cancelled due to lack of business. Board meetings are held in the Indiana Government Center South, 402 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

- Sept 8
- Dec 8

A list of disciplinary actions may be found on our license litigation system at <http://www.in.gov/ai/appfiles/pla-litigation/> Free online licensure look-ups may be obtained at <https://extranet.in.gov/WebLookup/Search.aspx> This is a real time database and is the best resource for accurate data.