

Contact: Elizabeth Ingraham
+1 (215) 823-2108
eingraham@intealth.org

FSMB, Intealth, ACGME Establish Advisory Commission to Guide Alternate Pathways for State Licensure of International Medical Graduates

The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), Intealth™, and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) announced today they have established a new “Advisory Commission on Alternate Licensing Models” to provide guidance on alternative pathways for state licensure of physicians who have completed training and/or practiced outside of the United States. The majority of these physicians are international medical graduates (IMGs), encompassing both foreign nationals and U.S. citizens who completed their medical education and training outside the United States and Canada.

Approximately one-quarter of the U.S. physician workforce is comprised of IMGs. IMGs are a critical component of the U.S. health care system and help ensure access to care in underserved communities and physician specialties experiencing shortages, especially primary care. Some IMGs entering the U.S. health care system for residency and/or fellowship training have already completed postgraduate training and/or practiced medicine in another country.

Despite substantial increases in U.S. medical school [enrollment](#), steady increases in U.S. graduate medical [education](#), and reports that more than 99% of [U.S. MD](#) and [DO](#) graduates enter training or full-time practice in the United States, [current](#) and [projected](#) physician shortages persist.

There is increasing interest among state policy makers to improve patient access and reduce workforce shortages by changing licensure requirements for physicians who have completed training and/or practiced abroad. Some of these proposals bypass certain requirements, including requirements related to U.S. postgraduate training, that are designed to ensure physicians have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes to provide safe and competent patient care. While there are some shared characteristics among the proposals, there are also distinctions that may lead to varying outcomes across states and create confusion among physicians, regulators, and patients. In some cases, it is also unclear how medical boards and regulators will operationalize the proposed pathways.

In response, FSMB, Intealth, and ACGME, together with national organizations representing specialty certification and medical education, are working to develop meaningful recommendations for licensing requirements and pathways for internationally trained and practicing physicians.

This work has begun, and the commission is expected to issue recommendations and guidance, and identify resources for states, in the coming months. We look forward to working with states as they implement these proposals so that we have a consistent approach that protects patients and assures the readiness for these physicians to practice in the American health care system.

About FSMB

The Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) is a national non-profit organization representing the medical boards within the United States and its territories that license and discipline allopathic and osteopathic physicians and, in some jurisdictions, other health care professionals. The FSMB serves as the voice for state medical boards, supporting them through education, assessment, research and

(more)

advocacy while providing services and initiatives that promote patient safety, quality health care and regulatory best practices. The FSMB serves the public through Docinfo.org, a free physician search tool which provides background information on the more than 1 million doctors in the United States. To learn more about the FSMB, visit www.fsmb.org.

About Intealth

Intealth is a private, nonprofit organization that brings together the expertise and resources for advancing quality in health care education worldwide in order to improve health care for all. Through strategic integration of its divisions, ECFMG® and FAIMER®, Intealth offers a flexible and multi-layered portfolio of services. These services enhance and support the education and training of health care professionals, verify their qualifications required to practice, and inform the development of health workforce policies around the world. By leveraging these combined competencies, Intealth powers innovation in areas critical to the health professions. Learn more at www.intealth.org.

About ACGME

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education ([ACGME](http://www.acgme.org)) is an independent, 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization that sets and monitors voluntary professional educational standards essential in preparing physicians to deliver safe, high-quality medical care to all Americans. Graduate medical education (GME) refers to the period of education in a particular specialty (residency) or subspecialty (fellowship) following medical school; the ACGME oversees the accreditation of residency and fellowship programs in the US.

###

The Advisory Commission on Alternate Licensing Models

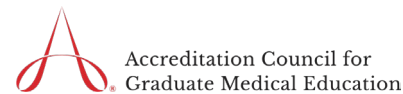
“The Advisory Commission on Alternate Licensing Models – co-chaired by the FSMB, ACGME and Intealth – includes representatives from medical school, medical licensing, graduate medical education (GME), specialty college, specialty board and international medical graduate (IMG) certification communities to develop meaningful recommendations about licensure requirements for postgraduate training (PGT) for two categories of physicians: IMGs who have completed most or all of their education and training overseas, and graduates of U.S. medical schools unmatched to an ACGME-accredited residency.

“The Commission recognizes that there is interest among a growing number of states and territories to improve access to care and address a worsening physician shortage by creating new licensure categories or modifying traditional PGT requirements for licensure. Such approaches must be balanced with the need to protect the public from harm and assure the delivery of quality health care safely to all populations.

“The first phase of the Commission’s work will focus on developing guidance for state medical boards related to IMGs who were trained overseas, also sometimes known as “fully-trained physicians,” whose training may or may not meet the standards and competencies required in the United States. The second phase of the Commission’s work will explore novel approaches to address needs of graduates of U.S. medical schools unmatched to an ACGME-accredited residency training program.”

Specifically for this first phase, the workgroup will:

- Review the evidence and rationale supporting our nation’s decades-long model of core criteria for full, unrestricted medical licensure
 - Obtain a medical degree from an accredited or recognized medical school
 - Obtain ECFMG-certification (for IMGs)
 - Complete a full examination sequence, e.g., USMLE
 - Complete a minimum period of ACGME-accredited post-graduate training in the United States
- Draft a report summarizing recent legislative trends in the medical licensure of IMGs
 - Describe factors and forces behind the introduction and/or adoption of bills in multiple states that advance or establish alternate pathways to licensure
 - Evaluate *temporary* and/or *permanent* licensure categories that some states have proposed or enacted, for IMGs who do not meet traditional GME requirements for achieving eligibility to apply for a full and unrestricted medical license
 - Identify areas in current legislation that need further definition and clarity to prevent unintended consequences for the public.
- Identify guidelines for model legislation and/or rules and regulations for U.S. states and territories regarding alternatives to licensing IMGs outside of the aforementioned core criteria.
 - Identify federal requirements (e.g., work visas) that may impact an IMG’s ability to access obtainable alternative pathways.
 - Determine need, feasibility and potential impact of alternative training for IMG post-graduate medical education.
 - Identify appropriate and necessary guardrails for new licensure categories/pathways in order to balance improved access to care with measures to protect the public from harm and assure the delivery of quality health care safely to all populations.



Membership

Members

Hank Chaudhry, DO, MACP (co-chair)	Federation of State Medical Boards
John Combes, MD (co-chair)	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
Eric Holmboe, MD, MACP (co-chair)	Intealth
Melanie Blake, MD, MBA	Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners
Helen Burstin, MD, MACP	Council of Medical Specialty Societies
Robert Cain, DO, FACOI	American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
Sanjay Desai, MD, MACP	American Medical Association
Rich Hawkins, MD, FACP	American Board of Medical Specialties
Oliver Kim, JD	Virginia Board of Medicine
Nicole Krishnaswami, JD	International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities
Trudy Hall, MD	National Medical Association
Geneviève Moineau, MD, FRCPC	World Federation for Medical Education
Thomas Nasca, MC, MACP	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
Shannon Scott, DO, FACOFP	American Osteopathic Association
David Skorton, MD	Association of American Medical Colleges
Danny Takanishi, MD, FACS	Hawaii Medical Board
Tim Terranova	Maine Board of Licensure In Medicine

Ex-Officio Members

Jeff Carter, MD	FSMB Chair, Board of Directors
Katie Templeton, JD	FSMB Chair-elect, Board of Directors
George Abraham, MD, MACP	FSMB Board of Directors

Staff

Andrea Ciccone, JD	Federation of State Medical Boards
David Johnson, MA	Federation of State Medical Boards
Kandis McClure, JD	Federation of State Medical Boards
Lisa Robin, MLA	Federation of State Medical Boards
Mark Staz, MA	Federation of State Medical Boards
Kara Oley, JD	Intealth
Matthew Shick, JD	Intealth
Jessica Salt, MD, FACP	Intealth
Tracy Wallowicz, MLS	Intealth
Lauren Holton, EdD	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
Kristin Hitchell, JD	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
Mary Klingensmith, MD, FACS	Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education