

**The Louisiana State
Board of Medical Examiners**

MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting

June 23, 2023
Virtual Zoom Meeting

A meeting of the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners Medical Psychology Advisory Committee, pursuant to lawful notice, was duly convened and called to order at 1:30 p.m., June 23, 2023, via Zoom virtual video.

Members present were as follows:

Dr. Warren Lowe
Dr. K. Chris Rachal
Dr. Darla Burnett
Dr. Robert Dahmes
Dr. Glen Ally

Also present at the Meeting:

Vincent Culotta, LSBME Executive Director
Patricia Wilton, LSBME Executive Counsel
Jacintha F. Duthu, LSBME Executive Staff Officer
Olivia PeLong, Executive Program Specialist
Tracy Mauro, IT Support Staff

No Public Comments

General Administrative Matters; Public comments; Meeting Order advised the public that any comments can be emailed to publiccomment@lsbme.la.gov. verified the identity of all videoconference participants, and he ensured the meeting was clear and audible to the public and those on the tele- and videoconference.

Old Business

1. **Minutes of the meeting:** On the motion of Dr. Dahmes duly seconded by Dr. Rachal; all present approved and accepted the March 24th 2023 minutes of the Medical Psychology meeting.

Motion by Dr. Lowe to add “Telehealth Discussion” to the agenda. Second by Dr. Rachel.
Motion approved unanimously.

New Business

- 1. Consultation with Nurse Practitioners (NPs).** Discussion regarding MPs consulting with NPs or PAs. MPs are receiving referrals from NPs and PAs who are functioning as the primary care giver. The opinion was expressed that this is currently acceptable as NPs and PAs in Louisiana must continue to have a collaborative agreement with a physician and are functioning as an extension of that physician. However, if the law in Louisiana changes to allow for the independent practice of NPs, then there may need to be a change in the Rules or statute governing MPs to allow for such consultation/collaboration. No further action needed or taken on this matter.
- 2. MP Advance Practice Act.** Discussion regarding applicants for Advanced Practice. For the past 13 years applicants for Advanced Practice have been granted that practice with only the MP license. There has recently been suggested a potential conflict in the current statute that would suggest an applicant for Advance Practice must also be licensed by LSBEP. Ms Wilton suggested this interpretation is understandable as the statute appears to have a typographical error allowing for such an interpretation. This has not been the interpretation understood by LSBME nor MPs. In support of the historical interpretation that a “current and unrestricted license” from LSBEP is NOT required for application to Advance Practice, Dr. Ally will provide a 2010 Louisiana State Attorney General’s opinion that had been requested by LSBEP indicating that a license by LSBEP was no longer required once an applicant attained the initial MP license from LSBME. It was also pointed out by Dr. Lowe that the Section of the statute that may be misinterpreted also requires a “current certificate of prescriptive authority” issued by LSBEP. However, LSBEP stopped issuing such certificates in 2009. Hence, no one would be able to meeting such an interpretation of the statute. Dr. Ally pledged to send a copy of the Attorney General’s opinion to Ms. Wilton for consideration. LSBME will give further information as soon as possible. Until that time, applicants for the Advanced Practice to be considered by the MPAC will be put on hold. No further action needed or taken on this matter.
- 3. Inquiry from Louisiana Department of Health regarding MP billing codes.** LSBME received an inquiry regarding MPs and the use of Evaluation and Management codes. Dr. Ally noted that MPs are authorized to utilize E&M codes to bill for services. However, that does not obligate insurers to reimburse for same. For example, Medicare does not recognize MPs billing for E&M codes. LSBME issued an “advisory opinion” indicating that it was the opinion of LSBME that MPs are “authorized to utilize E/M codes when billing for services provided for management of psychiatric disorders.” No further action needed or taken on this matter.
- 4. CE Broker.** There have been some issues to work out with CE Broker regarding the Ethics requirement in the MP statute. The statute requires two hours of ethics; however, CE Broker may have difficulty with Ethic that is CE versus Ethics that is CME. This appears to be a coding issue to be worked out. It was noted by Dr. Culotta that the Ethics course offered by LSBME can be applied to this requirement and can be applied annually. No further action needed or taken on this matter.

5. **Buprenorphine for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD).** A question was raised from MPs to the MPAC whether or not MPs are authorized to prescribe buprenorphine for OUD. The statute prohibits MPs from prescribing opioids and opioid derivatives for pain problems. However, in treating substance abuse disorders and specifically OUD MPs could be of significant help in treating this disorder given the shortage of providers. It was the opinion of the MPAC that MPs can use medical assisted therapies such as buprenorphine to treat OUD. Dr. Culotta advised that he would bring to LSBME for a possible “Statement of Position” that MPs are authorized to prescribe buprenorphine for the purpose of treating OUD. Motion was made by Dr. Rachel duly seconded by Dr. Dahmes that Dr. Culotta report to the LSBME. Motion carried unanimously.
6. **Telehealth.** Senator Fred Mills introduced a bill governing the use of Telehealth in Louisiana. Currently, there are no rules regarding Telehealth specifically discussing MPs. However, MPs are generally bound to the rules that currently apply to physicians. There will be Rules forthcoming regarding Senator Mills’ bill that has passed into law. At this time, the MPAC is not sure if there will be Rules specifically applicable to MPs. No further action needed or taken on this matter.

Executive Session

Dr. Ally moved the MPAC move into executive session duly second by Dr. Dahmes. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Ally moved the MPAC move into regular session duly second by Dr. Burnett. Motion passed unanimously.

No action was taken from Executive Session

Adjourned 3:30 pm