



Composite State Board of Medical Examiners



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2007

Visit us on the web at www.medicalboard.georgia.gov

Letter from the Executive Director

During Fiscal Year 2007, the Composite State Board of Medical Examiners (CSBME) continued to improve its process times for the licensure and enforcement divisions, and also improved its customer satisfaction. As a gauge of customer satisfaction, the Board participated in a survey conducted by the Governor's Office of Customer Service and Georgia State University. The survey took a sampling of recently licensed individuals and asked them to rate the service they received from the agency. The Board ranked higher and received an overall satisfaction rating higher than any other agency within the "Healthy Georgia" peer group. This ranking was accompanied by the Board's continuous quality improvement efforts which enabled us to drive down the average time to complete the application process by more than 30 percent over our 2005 benchmarks. There is still more work to do, but the members of the Board are pleased with the improvements we have made over the last four years.

During FY 2007, the Board developed a public relations outreach slide show that is used as an information tool for consumers and health care providers. Both Board members and staff have spoken across the state about the Board's mission and activities, and about the ways in which we can help both consumers and the health care providers we regulate.

The Board is currently in the process of updating the statutes that govern the Board, which is familiarly known as *The Medical Practice Act*. The Board is seeking legislative approval to make some "housekeeping" amendments that will improve the current functions of the Board, including a provision to increase the number of members comprising the Board in an effort to assist with an ever increasing workload.

In FY 2007, the Board successfully worked with the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) community to help implement the nurse prescriptive authority bill. The Board appointed two APRNs from the community to serve on the Committee to help develop and review standards for nurse practitioners. As of December 10, 2007, a total of 556 APRNs had registered, approved protocols with the Board.

During FY 2007, the entire management team completed Governor Sonny Perdue's Executive Leadership Training Program. With this training and other exciting changes, including the implementation of on-line applications and complaints, the board is focused to lead the way in continued improvement during FY 2008.

LaSharn Hughes, MBA
Executive Director
Composite State Board of Medical Examiners

The CSBME Mission: Protecting Georgians

Our mission statement – "To drive the continued improvement in the delivery of safe, quality and ethical health care to the citizens of Georgia through the development and promotion of high standards for the licensure of physicians and other health care providers as provided under the Medical Practice Act" – is a constant reminder of our purpose.

The Board fulfills its mission through three core activities:

- Licensing qualified health care practitioners.
- Enforcing rigorous quality and ethical standards within the practice of the professions we regulate.
- Providing Georgia's health care consumers with information that enables them to make wise choices.

The Board

CSBME is an independent executive agency charged with the licensing and regulation of physicians, physician's assistants and anesthesiologist's assistants (PA), respiratory care professionals (RCP), acupuncturists, clinical perfusionists, physician residents in training (residents), orthotists, and prosthetists.

The Board is comprised of thirteen members appointed by the Governor, of whom twelve (12) are practicing physicians and one (1) is a consumer. The Board also includes an ex-officio member who is a practicing physician's assistant. The physician's assistant, acupuncturist, RCP, perfusionist, and orthotist & prosthetist committees each include volunteers from the professions they regulate. These committee members, like the Board members themselves, are unpaid volunteers who give generously of their time and effort to protect the health and medical safety of the people of Georgia. The Board and its advisory committees represent health care professionals from across the state, and their backgrounds reflect the rich diversity that makes our state a vibrant and growing one. Each member has a successful career that he or she sets aside for over twenty-four days a year to serve the citizens of Georgia.

The members of the Board are:

Eddie R. Cheeks, M.D.

President
Augusta

Joseph C. Finley, Sr., M.D.

Immediate Past President
Alpharetta

John Grant Lewis, M.D.

Rome

Roland S. Summers, M.D.

Past President
Savannah

Ted Perry, M.D.

White

William Roundtree, M.D.

Columbus

Charles White, D.O.

Cleveland

Grace V. Davis, M.D.

Vice President
Sylvester

M. Vinayak Kamath, M.D.

Past President
Augusta

Wm. Alan Woolery, D.O., Ph.D.

Past President
Warner Robins

William Butler, M.D.

Macon

Jean Sumner, M.D.

Wrightsville

Kathleen Kinlaw

Consumer Member
Decatur

Carolanne Redfearn, PA-C

Ex-Officio Member
Thomasville

Licensing

Profession	Active Licenses	New Licenses issued in FY07
Physician	27,842	1,539
Resp. Care Professional	4,636	606
Physician's Assistant	2,492	253
Resident	1,660	777
Acupuncturist	170	24
Perfusionist	120	12
Orthotist / Prosthetist	193	152
ALL LICENSES	37,113	3,363

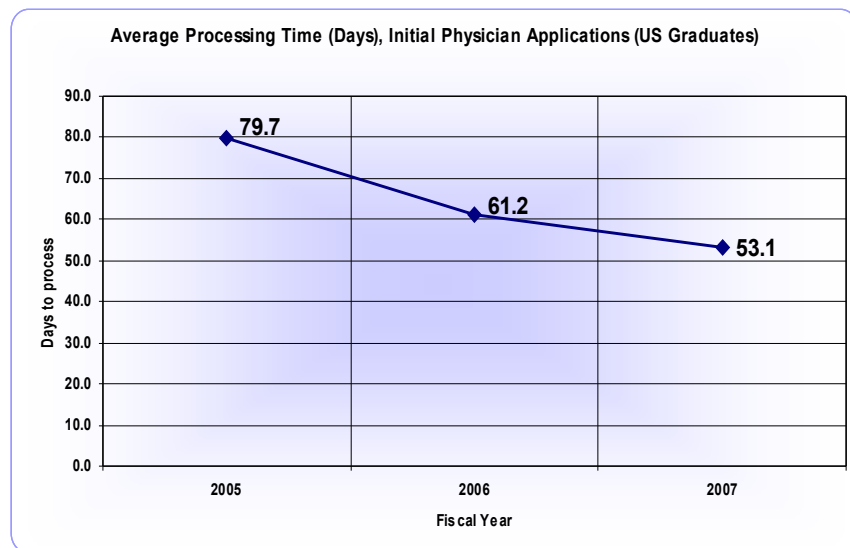
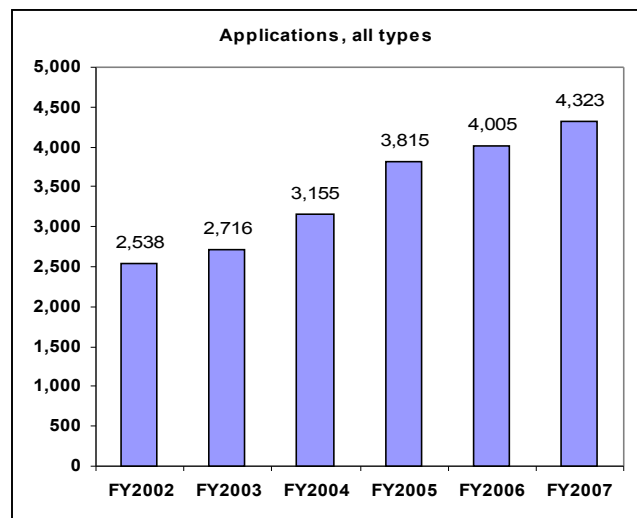
Active licenses by profession on December 10, 2007. Physician includes 30 professionals holding Institutional Physician, Provisional Physician, and Volunteer in Medicine licenses. Orthotist / Prosthetist includes professionals holding Orthotist, Prosthetist, and Orthotist & Prosthetist licenses.

conduct standards.

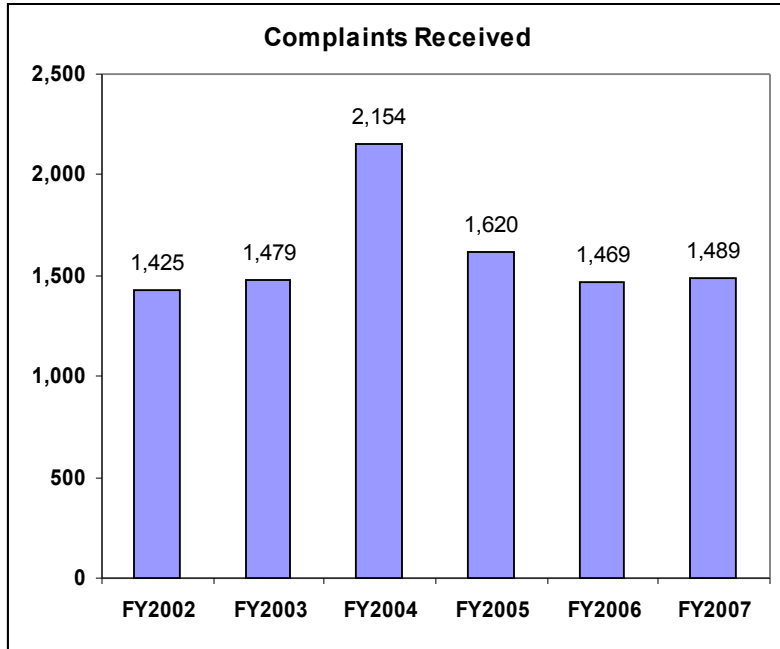
CSBME regulates and licenses thirteen professions with a combined total of 37,113 actively licensed practitioners. During FY 2007, the CSBME Licensure Unit received 4,323 applications (excluding renewals), an increase of 7.9% over FY 2006 and 37.0% over FY 2004.

Georgia's orthotics and prosthetics licensing law mandated all practitioners of these professions to be duly licensed on or before July 1, 2007. By that date, CSBME had issued 162 licenses.

Through the licensure process, CSBME ensures that physicians and other CSBME-regulated professionals meet the standards of education, training, and professional conduct necessary to serve Georgia patients effectively and safely. As a part of the licensure application process, applicants must submit an application for licensure and have their school submit original documents of their education and training. Applicants must also provide details of their work history and proof of their clinical knowledge as demonstrated by rigorous subject-based examinations. Additionally, applicants are required to reveal any information about their medical history that could affect their ability to practice, as well as any arrests, or convictions. Additionally, an applicant must report any disciplinary actions taken against them by other licensing boards, and whether there are any open investigations or complaints pending in other state licensing boards. Every two years, licensees must renew their licenses in order to continue to practice. The renewal process allows CSBME to ensure that each licensee continues to meet current training, continuing education, and professional



CSBME also achieved new best marks in its continuing drive to deliver quality licensing services to the professionals and patient communities of Georgia. The agency reduced its average processing times for initial physician applications by 33% over 2005 benchmarks, and its average processing time for initial physician's assistant applications by nearly 30% over 2005 benchmarks.



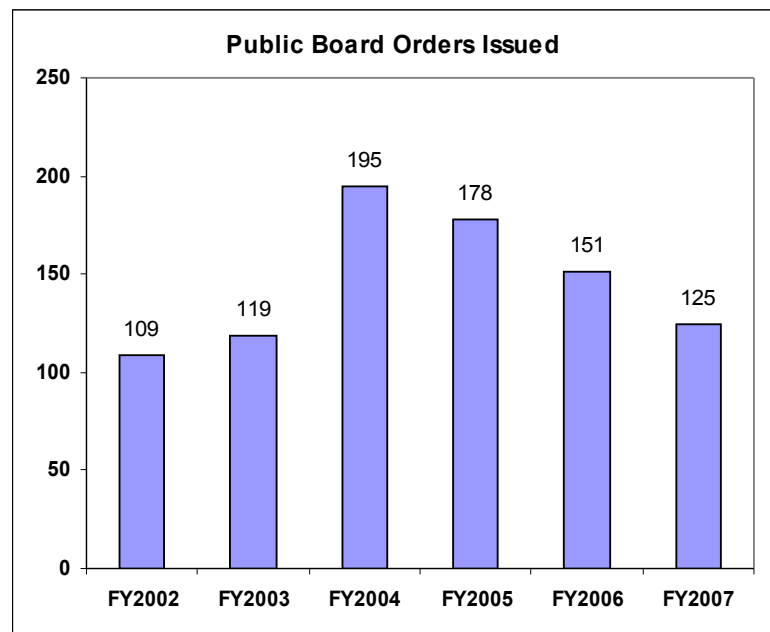
Enforcement & Investigations

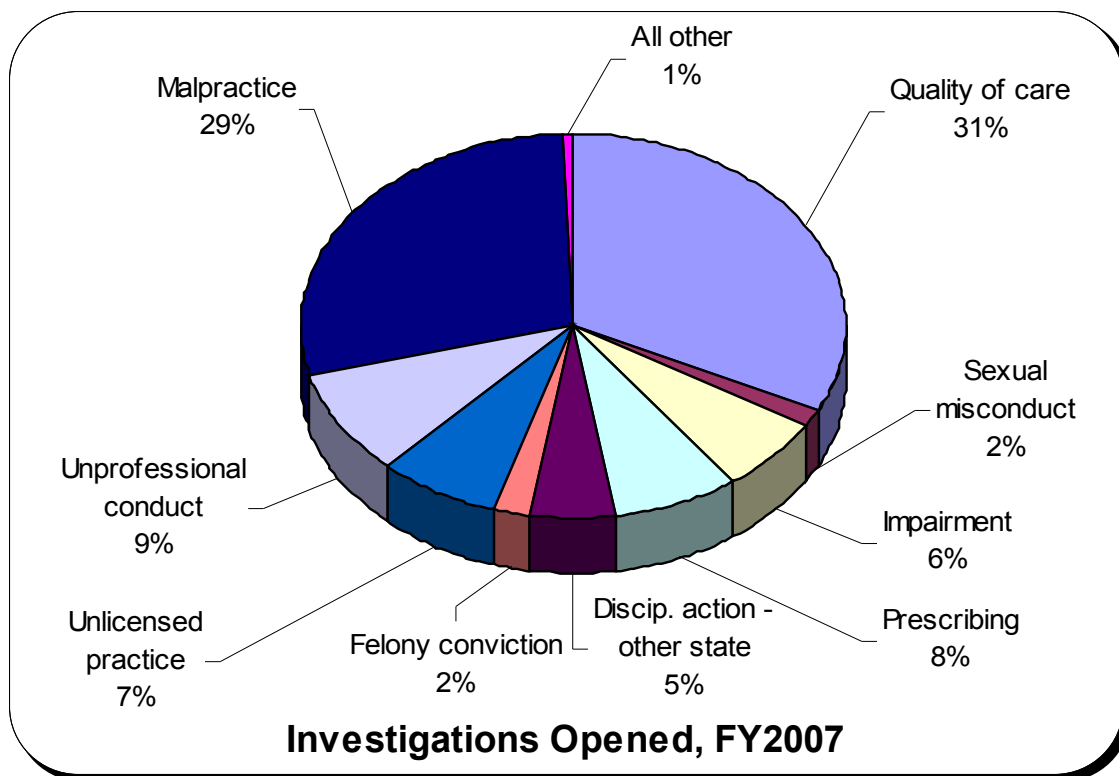
The Board's responsibility extends beyond the licensing of physicians and other health care providers. CSBME is also responsible for regulating the practice of the health care providers through Georgia's Medical Practice Act and its companion rules. The Board devotes much of its time to this serious responsibility, investigating complaints from consumers and reviewing malpractice settlements and judgments, as well as information received from hospitals, other state medical boards, and organizations such as the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB).

CSBME provides a variety of avenues for ensuring that its licensees are practicing ethically and professionally within the guidelines of the law. The CSBME website, www.medicalboard.georgia.gov, contains the laws and rules practitioners must follow and includes information and forms for filing complaints about illegal, unethical, or unprofessional practice. CSBME also publishes newsletters and coordinates its efforts with professional associations to educate practitioners about how to avoid the kinds of actions that could result in Board discipline. These measures are in place to help the Board guard against unprofessional conduct and protect the safety of Georgia health care consumers.

The Board complaint process is as follows: Once a complaint is received, CSBME staff members research the particulars of the allegation. This could include gathering information from medical records, malpractice settlements, statements from the respondent and complainant, and other sources. This information is then forwarded to the Board, which, through its Investigative Committee, evaluates the complaint and presents its recommendation to the full Board. The Board then decides upon the appropriate action to take, or it could return the case to the staff for further investigation or order a peer review of the complaint. Board actions can range from closing the case with no further action, issuing a letter of concern, ordering various practice restrictions and/or fines, and sanctioning the practitioner's license. License revocation is the most severe sanction.

In FY 2007, CSBME received 1,489 complaints against its licensees, a decrease of 17.2 percent over the preceding year, and of 39.3 percent over the peak year of FY 2004. During FY 2007, the Board took 125 public disciplinary actions, ranging from fines, orders for additional medical training or education, and up to license revocation.





When CSBME receives a complaint against a licensee or alleged unlicensed practitioner, it accords the practitioner the rights of due process. One of the pillars of due process is the presumption of innocence. CSBME Investigations, a certified law enforcement unit, helps the Board ensure that disciplinary actions are taken only after thorough investigation of the allegations.

During FY 2007, CSBME received 949 allegations that were sent for investigation. Of these, malpractice and quality of care cases accounted for 28.7 and 32.1 percent of the total intake, respectively.

CSBME agents completed 913 investigations during the year, an increase of 6 percent over the previous year. At year-end, there were a total of 142 active investigations. Of these active cases, 93 percent had been received in the preceding ninety days. The efficiency gains CSBME saw in FY 2007 were accompanied by an impressive gain in the quality of investigations, as the number of cases returned for further investigation fell from 4.76% of total investigations completed to 2.63% of total investigations completed. This represented an impressive 41.5 percent reduction in the unit's "re-work" rate. These achievements were realized despite the loss of one agent position for five months in the fiscal year.

In FY 2006, the Board implemented a new probation compliance function in order to more adequately monitor compliance with the conditions the Board imposed in its consent orders. The results from the first year exceeded CSBME's high expectations. The results in FY 2007 showed a continuing improvement in this function, with a 135 percent rise in the number of telephone contacts to licensees on probation and an 80 percent rise in correspondence contacts. CSBME realized efficiency gains in this function as well, executing telephone and correspondence contacts in an average of 42 percent and 29 percent of the time these activities required in FY 2006.

Board Goals and Initiatives for 2008

Fiscal Year 2007 was a successful one for CSBME, and this was not something that happened by chance. As in any successful endeavor, the achievements were preceded by careful planning and prioritization that provided a road map to assist the agency in allocating its resources to the most important activities. The Board continues to look for ways to improve the quality of healthcare for Georgia citizens. For Fiscal Year 2008, CSBME has identified four important goals and initiatives to which it will commit its resources and efforts. Specifically:

- The Board will proactively provide education to health care providers and consumers of the valuable resources CSBME offers.
- The Board will continue to work with the American Cancer Society, Pharmacy Board, Georgia Drugs and Narcotics, and the General Assembly to develop and implement new pain management guidelines to help physicians make informed choices about prescribing opioid drugs.
- The Board, having learned a valuable lesson from the experience of the Louisiana Medical Board during Hurricane Katrina, will update its disaster and business continuity plans to keep its operational capabilities during a disaster.
- The Board will continue to work with the General Assembly and the Governor's Healthy Georgia initiatives to improve the quality of accessible health care in our state.
- The Board will implement its e-government initiative that includes online license applications and the filing of online complaints.

Our Staff

Our people are at the heart of our accomplishments. CSBME is fortunate to have dedicated, competent personnel who take their jobs – and our mission – seriously. Every day, these men and women perform the tasks that enable CSBME to protect the health of Georgians through our licensing and enforcement activities. They include:

LaSharn Hughes, MBA
Executive Director

Jeffrey D. Lane, M.S.
Director of Investigations

Surender Kumar, M.D.
Medical Consultant

Robert Sessions, M.D.
Medical Consultant

Phyllis White
Operations Analyst

Idrisa Smith
Licensing Manager

Gladys Henderson
Physician Licensure

Carol Dorsey
*Acupuncture Licensure and
Nurse Protocol Review*

Shonda Roberts
Physician Licensure

Tosha Giles
Enforcement Unit

Franchesca Virgil
Enforcement Unit

Adrienne Baker
Medical Board Agent, Principal

Lem Roberts
Medical Board Agent, Senior

Emmalie Kirkland
Medical Board Agent, Senior

Elizabeth Beavers
Compliance Manager

Jim H. McNatt, M.D., MBA
Medical Director

Robert Jeffery
Director of Operations

Peter Ciejek, M.D.
Medical Consultant

Diane Atkinson
*Administrative Assistant
to the Executive Director*

Jeriste Dorsey
Financial Administrator

Jean Rice
Systems Administrator

Deborah Bruce
Physician Licensure

Lynette Riddle
*RCP, Perfusionist, and
Orthotist & Prosthetist Licensure*

Nancy Teele
Enforcement Unit Supervisor

Sharon Cloud
Enforcement Unit

Steve Wills
Medical Board Agent, Senior

Charles Kingsland
Medical Board Agent, Senior

Stephanie Cleary
Medical Board Agent

Virgil McIver
Paralegal

Mary Harris
Information and Referral Specialist

FY 2007 Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue:

Fiscal Year 2007 Appropriation	\$ 2,202,555
Application, Renewal, and other License Fees	\$ 3,525,098
Other Income	\$ 244,607

Total Revenues **\$ 5,972,260**

Expenditures:

Personal Services	\$ 1,779,378
General Operating	\$ 133,331
Investigative & Related	\$ 116,424
Travel	\$ 33,697
Voice, Data, & Information Systems	\$ 227,241
Rent	\$ 40,000

Total Expenditures **\$ 2,330,071**

Net Contribution to State Treasury: **\$ 3,642,189**