

**Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce
Board Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2024
2 MLK Jr. Dr. SE, East Tower 11th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30334**

Dr. Barber, the Chairman, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. with the following board members present:

Chairman – James Barber, MD
Vice Chairman – William Kemp
Secretary/Treasurer – Lily Henson, MD
Terri McFadden, MD
Garrett Bennett, MD - Online
Carolyn Clevenger, DNP
Steven Gautney, MSHA
Michael Groover, DMD
William Fricks, MD
Amy Reeves, PA-C
James Smith Jr, MD - Online
Joseph Walker, MD
Kitty Carter-Walker, MD
Bhuvnendram Indrakrishnan, MD

Board Members Absent

Scott Bohlke, MD

Staff Present

Chet Bhasin – Executive Director
Cherri Tucker – Consultant
Anita Dunbar – Office Coordinator
Yvette Speight – Legal Secretary
Leanna Greenwood – Data Team Manager
Augustine Agbontaen – Data Analyst
Kimberly Rogers – Finance and Data Administrative Assistant
Alexandria Moses – Communications Coordinator

Consultant to the Board

Al Dever, MD, Ph.D., Faculty, WellStar Kennestone Family Medicine Program

Attorney General Representative

Jocelyn Curry, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General of Georgia

Guests Present

Jill Brazell – St. Francis Emory Healthcare

Donna Pratt – Morehouse School of Medicine
Keri Conley – Georgia Hospital Association
Chelsea Hagopian – Georgia Nursing Workforce Center
Mary Enloe – Senate Budget and Evaluation Office
Hugh Sosebee – Mercer School of Medicine
Helen Sloat – Nelson Mullins
Jagdeep Singh, MD – St. Francis Emory Healthcare
Mark Smith – Governor’s Office
Jenna Shuckman – Governor’s Office
Joseph Alexander Rogers – Southwest Dekalb High School
Ashlan Porter – Georgia Board of Nursing
Natara Taylor – Georgia Board of Nursing

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Barber presented the meeting agenda for approval.

ON MOTION (Henson/Gautney), the Board unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Henson presented the meeting minutes for the October 19, 2023 meeting for review and approval.

ON MOTION (Smith/Kemp), the Board unanimously approved the October 19, 2023, meeting minutes as presented.

Introductions

Dr. Barber asked to conduct a roll call among board members, staff, and guest attendees.

Chairman’s Report

Dr. Barber began his report by addressing the healthcare needs of Georgia’s underserved and primary care. He advised in October 2023, Forbes ranked U.S. healthcare and found Georgia the worst in the nation. Dr. Barber spoke of the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforces' (GBHCW) primary focus of primary care.

Dr. Barber then gave statistics based on Orthopedic Surgeons. He stated there are no orthopedic surgeons in 93% of rural communities or counties. He advised per 100,000 people in the population; there are 22 Orthopedic surgeons per 100,000 in the metro area. In rural areas, the numbers peak at 0.14 surgeons per 100,000. In 2000, the metro area of Orthopedic surgeons was 77%, and in 2019, it was estimated at 93%. Dr. Barber stated U.S. rural patients are older and sicker than their urban counterparts.

He advised obesity is markedly higher at 40% v. 33%, hypertension at 40% v. 29%, smoking at 30% v. 25%, and diabetes at 17% higher in rural areas versus urban areas. Dr. Barber advised minorities are especially hard hit in rural Georgia and rural U.S.

Dr. Barber stated statistics show the average minority in a rural area travels 26 miles to the nearest trauma center and six miles in urban areas. The incidence of amputation for diabetic foot ulcers for rural African American patients is 28% versus 18% for non-rural areas. Motor vehicle accident death rate per 100,000 is 6.8% in urban counties and 29.2% in rural counties.

Dr. Barber closed by advising that GBHCW is entrusted with a big and important mission. Our legislators support us, and we have a great GBHCW team.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Bhasin started his report by advising the Governor has released his amended FY24-FY25 budget recommendations. He advised \$50M has been put in for a new medical school at the University of Georgia (UGA), and \$178M was added for a new dental school to be located at Georgia Southern at the Savannah Campus. He stated \$500M goes to the state pension fund and another \$208M to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Mr. Bhasin spoke about two bills currently in the legislature with GBHCW named. The first bill, being carried by Senator Hodges is SB238, if passed and signed into law, would allow healthcare licensure boards to share data with the Board to provide more extensive healthcare workforce reporting. The next bill, HB872, being carried by Representative Hawkins, is a revision of the Board's loan repayment program law. This revision will allow fourth-year dental students to apply with specific criteria to participate in the dental loan repayment program.

Mr. Bhasin advised the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) has released \$432,338 for child and adolescent psychology fellowships at the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University. He stated staff will be amending their agreement to add the funds.

Mr. Bhasin advised the \$100,000 disregarded in the budget for the Neurologist Workforce study has been released, with the process following by using these limited resources in the best way.

Dentist for Rural Area Assistance Repayment Program

Ms. Speight presented the Dentist for Rural Area Assistance Repayment Program applicant ranking list for review and approval by the Board.

On **Motion (Henson/Gautney)**, the Board unanimously approved the applicant ranking list for the Dentist for Rural Area Assistance Repayment Program awards

Physician Assistant Loan Repayment Program

Ms. Speight presented the Physician Assistant Loan Repayment Program applicant ranking list for review and approval.

On **Motion (Henson/ Smith)**, the Board unanimously approved the applicant ranking list for the Physician Assistant Loan Repayment Program awards.

Physicians for Rural Areas Assistance Loan Repayment Program

Ms. Speight presented the Physician for Rural Areas Assistance Loan Repayment Program applicant ranking list for review and approval.

On **Motion (Smith/ Henson)**, the Board unanimously approved the applicant ranking list for the Physicians for Rural Areas Assistance Loan Repayment Program awards.

Georgia Physician Education Loan Repayment Program

Ms. Speight presented the Georgia Physician Education Loan Repayment Program applicant ranking list for review and approval.

On **Motion (Henson/ Gautney)**, the Board unanimously approved the applicant ranking list for the Georgia Physician Education Loan Repayment Program awards.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Loan Repayment Program

Ms. Speight presented the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Loan Repayment Program applicant ranking list for review and approval.

On **Motion (Henson/ Indrkrishnan)**, the Board unanimously approve the applicant ranking list for the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Loan Repayment Program awards.

Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment Program.

Dr. Clevenger presented the Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment Program applicant ranking list for review and approval.

On **Motion (Henson/ Indrkrishnan)**, the Board unanimously approved the applicant ranking list for the Nurse Faculty Loan Repayment Program awards.

Nursing Workforce Committee Update

Ms. Porter, the President of the Georgia Board of Nursing, spoke about multi-state licensing for nurses working in the Georgia (GA) area. She advised nurses with residences in GA practice in GA. If the nurse has a multi-state license, they can practice anywhere. She reported there are nurses practicing in GA as traveling nurses, but their addresses are from different states, so they are practicing on a multi-state license. She advised the Georgia Board of Nursing can't keep up with nurses who are multi-state.

Ms. Taylor, the Executive Director for the Board of Nursing, further advised if a nurse lives in GA, they must practice in GA. She reported they can have a multi-state license, but it is two separate licenses.

Ms. Taylor advised, the National State Board of Nursing does have a data system where the Georgia Board of Nursing and employers are able to look to see if a nurse has a multi-state

Budget Overview

Mr. Bhasin began the Budget Overview report by reporting the governor has released his recommendations for the amended FY24 budget and there was a one-time salary supplement of \$1,000 provided to full-time benefit-eligible employees.

He reported there were no reductions in the Graduate Medical Education (GME), the Mercer School of Medicine Operating Grant, and the Morehouse School of Medicine Operating budget lines.

Mr. Bhasin stated the Governor's recommendations for the amended FY24 budget for the Physicians for Rural Areas program and all the loan repayment programs were previously discussed. He advised in last year's budget, there was an addition of \$850,000 for a behavioral health loan repayment program for psychiatrists, psychologists, and counselors. Because there was no legislation passed that would have allowed the Board to enact the program the recommendation is to remove the funding for FY2024.

Mr. Bhasin reported there is no change to the Undergraduate Medical Education program.

Data Presentations

Mr. Agbontaen began the Data Presentation by advising he would be reporting on the 2023 GME Residency 5-year outcome and the Nursing Summary Reports.

Mr. Agbontaen advised the calculations are based on the five-year rolling average, and all programs are expected to maintain a 45% retention rate. He began by reporting on the programs that fell below the retention rate in the year 2019-2020 cycle.

He reported in family medicine, two programs fell below the retention rate. Those two programs were Houston Healthcare and Memorial Health University Medical Center.

For Internal Medicine, there was Advent Health Redmond and AU/UGA Medical Partnership at St. Mary's.

For Pediatric and Preventative Medicine, no program fell below the 45% retention rate.

In OB/GYN, Atrium Health Navicent and Memorial Health University Medical Center were below the retention rate.

For General Surgery only, Atrium Health Navicent was below retention rate.

In Psychiatry, the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University fell below the retention rate.

For Residency Capitation, Advent Health Redmond, AU/UGA Medical Partnership at St. Mary's, Houston Healthcare, and Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University all fell below the 45% retention rate.

On **Motion (Gautney/ Henson)**, the Board unanimously approved publishing the 2023 GME 5-Year Outcomes Report to be published.

Mr. Agbontaen began the 2020 Nursing Summary report by advising of the supply and distribution of losses using data from licensure renewal provided by the Board of Nursing.

He advised 154,505 nurses are licensed with a Georgia mailing address. 17,744 nurses listed and out-of-state addresses, accounting for 10.3% of the total number of nurses.

Mr. Agbontaen reported 91.5% of nurses identify as female, 8.3 identify as male, and 0.2% did not indicate a gender.

Mr. Agbontaen stated that 1,415.8 nurses per 100,000 population provided a Georgia address.

Mr. Agbontaen advised Columbia County has the highest rate of nurses per 100,000 people (2,672.2), with a total of 4,341 nurses serving a population of 162,419. Schley County ranks second with a rate of 2,699.0 and 120 nurses serving a population of 4,496. Seminole County ranks third, with a rate of 2,552.9 and a total of 233 nurses serving a population of 9,127. He then advised the counties with the lowest rates of nurses per 100,000 people are Clayton (568.8), Crawford (568.4), and Echols (217.0).

Mr. Agbontaen reported the average age of all nurses is 46.7 years old. 60.9% of the nursing workforce is 50 years old or younger.

He advised in license distribution 17.5% of nurses hold an LPN license, 73.5% hold an RN license, and approximately 9.0% possess a PRN license.

Mr. Agbontaen reported in Urban and Rural Area distribution 75.3% of nurses serve in urban counties with a population of over 50,000 compared to 24.7% who serve in rural counties with populations under 50,000.

Ms. Taylor, the Executive Director for the Board of Nursing, further advised if a nurse lives in GA, they must practice in GA. She reported they can have a multi-state license, but it is two separate licenses.

Ms. Taylor advised, the National State Board of Nursing does have a data system where the Georgia Board of Nursing and employers are able to look to see if a nurse has a multi-state license.

On **Motion (Smith/ Henson)**, the Board unanimously the 2023 Nursing Workforce Summary to be published.

Communication Report

Ms. Moses began the Communication Report by reporting on the FY23 Fiscal Report. She advised the report includes information on all the programs Board oversees and operates. Also included in the report is the outlook for FY24. Ms. Moses stated integrating live data for HB1013 for the data team is in the final stages. She reported the Board continues to collaborate with the Medical Education Advisory Committee (MEAC) and continues to administer nursing school grants of \$3M, Collaborates with the nursing licensure boards, how to increase residency and fellowship programs in Georgia, and how to retain them program graduates.

On **Motion (Henson/ Gautney)**, the Board unanimously approved the FY23 Annual Report to be published.

Ms. Moses began the Loan Repayment Programs and Scholarship Awards Report by advising of the recipients of the Loan Repayment Programs and the maps of any rural areas where the individuals are practicing. She ended her report by advising the scholarship program would be completely phased out in FY26.

On **Motion (Smith/ Henson)**, the Board unanimously approved the Loan Repayment Programs and Scholarship Awards Report to be published.

Old/New Business

No Old/New Business

Adjournment

There being no further business, Dr. Barber asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The Board voted to adjourn at 10:10 a.m.

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Secretary/Treasurer

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Executive Director