

GEORGIA BOARD OF HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE
Board Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2025 8:03 AM – 10:40 AM
Virtual Meeting

Chairman: James Barber, M.D.

Executive Director: Chet Bhasin

A. Call to Order

Chairman Barber called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

B. Approval of Agenda

There being no objections, the agenda was adopted by general consent.

C. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 30, 2025, meeting were adopted by general consent.

D. Roll Call & Introductions

Anita Dunbar conducted the roll call. The following individuals were present (P) or absent (A):

Board Members:

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

Staff Present:

- Chet Bhasin (P)
- Cherri Tucker (P)
- Anita Dunbar (P)
- Leanna Greenwood (P)
- Augustine Agbontaen (P)
- Kimberly Rogers (P)
- Alexandria Dave-Moses (P)
- Freeman Montaque (P)

- Briana Harris (P)
- Lauren Brenneman (P)
- LePrissa Moore (P)

Consultant to the Board:

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

Attorney General's Representative:

- Jocelyn Curry, JD

Guests Present:

- Shelli Ann McKenzie, Founder, Help For American Heroes Inc.
- Laurie Ott, Executive Director, Georgia Higher Education Healthcare Initiative
- Betsy Bates, Legislative Consultant, Morehouse School of Medicine & Georgia Chapter of the AAP
- Marilane Bond, EdD, MEd, MBA, Associate Dean, Medical Education, Emory University
- Darrell Saabs, Government & Legislative Relations, Phoebe Putney Health System
- Kerri Conley, Chief Health Policy Officer, Georgia Hospital Association
- Emily Elder, Program Analyst, Senate Budget & Evaluation Office
- Angela Richard-Eaglin, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC, CNE, FAANP, Sr. Associate Dean, Chief of Clinical and Academic Education Sr. Associate Dean, Chief of Clinical and Academic Education, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Jessica Rivenbark, Vice President of Medical Education, Colquitt Regional Medical Center
- Morgan Hall, Analyst, House Budget Research Office
- Martha Elks, MD, Ph.D., FAPC, FACE, Senior Associate Dean of Educational Affairs, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Leanna Spiva, Ph.D., Assistant Vice President Nursing Practice & Operations, Wellstar Health System
- Shelly Nuss, MD, Founding Dean UGA School of Medicine, Campus Dean of Augusta University/University of Georgia Medical Partnership
- Tracy Suber, EdD, Vice President of Education, Phoebe Putney Health System
- Erica Sutton, MD, FACS, Sr. Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education, Morehouse School of Medicine, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Chadburn Ray, MD, FACOG, Associate Dean for Primary Care and Community Engagement, Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University
- Chelsea Hagopian, DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC, Executive Director, Georgia Nursing Workforce Center; Assistant Professor, Emory School of Nursing
- Alice House, MD, Associate Dean of Admissions and Student Affairs, Mercer University School of Medicine
- Melanie Townsend, Executive Director of Finance & Administration, School of Medicine
- Claribel Aguilar Whyte, M.Ed., Nursing Student, Emory University School of Nursing
- Ed Grimsley, MD, Senior Associate Dean, Mercer School of Medicine
- Donna Lamb, DHSc, MBA, BSN, President & CEO, National Resident Matching Program (NRMP)

- Rebecca Ryles, Lobbyist, RCR Capital Consultants

E. Chairperson's Report

Dr. Barber welcomed the board and expressed his pride in the work being done to address Georgia's healthcare workforce needs, especially in underserved areas. He noted the board's operational efficiency, with 99% of funds going directly to programs, and recognized the data-driven and accountable culture the board maintains. Dr. Barber thanked the legislature, Governor, staff, and board members — especially the Executive Committee. He announced that the upcoming July 24, 2025, meeting in Coffee County would be his final one as Chair.

F. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Bhasin reported:

- **FY25 Amended Budget:** \$20M GME competitive grant approved for rural sites south of State Route 540. Nearly 40 intent forms submitted; applications due May 5.
- **FY26 Budget:** Pending governor's signature. Further details will be shared at the July meeting.
- **Contract Processing:** FY25 agreements being processed; FY26 contracts to follow after budget is signed.
- **GME & Nursing School Grants:** Strong application volume; contracts underway.
- **Loan Repayment Program:** Processing approximately 200 awardees.
- **Communications:** Facebook page launched; X account retired.
- **Workforce Fair:** Recent fair at MCG in partnership with GBHCW attracted 20 hospitals/clinics and 40 residents/fellows.

G. Loan Repayment Population Change

Proposal: Increase eligible county population from 50,000 to 100,000 for physician, dentist, NP, and PA loan repayment programs.

Motion: To publish the proposed rule change for public comment.

Motion by: Dr. McFadden

Seconded by: Dr. Fricks

Outcome: The Board unanimously approved, by general consent, the publishing of the proposed rules change for public comment.

H. Budget Update

Mr. Montaque reported:

- Amended budget decreased to \$104.3M from \$120.4M; \$83M added to the amended budget.
- \$6.2M allocated for physician loan repayment; 66% processed.
- Loan repayment checks are being distributed; efforts continue to ensure timely processing.

I. Data Reports

1. **Optometry Workforce Data** (Leanna Greenwood):
 - Georgia lacks an optometry school; workforce trained out-of-state.
 - Dashboard shows workforce gaps and trends.
2. **Physician Workforce Data** (Augustine Agbontaen):
 - 27,954 actively practicing physicians in GA; average age 49.9.
 - 12.3% plan to retire within 5 years; 55% growth in core specialties since 2015.
3. **Physician Workforce Dashboard Update** (Augustine Agbontaen):
 - Enhanced to show age/gender trends and county-specific metrics.
 - Douglas County saw a 14.29% increase in physicians.
4. **5-Year Composite UME Match Outcomes** (Briana Harris):
 - Mercer, Morehouse, PCOM GA showed declines in match rates.
 - Emory showed 11.2% increase in 2025.
5. **GME Results for Class of 2025** (LePrissa Moore):
 - 775 graduates entered GME; 69.5% in core specialties.
 - 33.2% matched in GA-based programs.

Motion: To publish the workforce data and reports presented.

Motion by: Dr. Henson

Seconded by: Mr. Kemp

Outcome: The Board unanimously approved the publishing of the data reports as presented.

J. NRMP Match Process Discussion

Presented by Dr. Donna Lamb:

- GME remains concentrated in metro areas.
- Concerns raised about stress, inequity, and transparency in the match process.
- Further study ongoing on retention strategies.

K. Grants and Loan Repayment Program Updates

Lauren Brennenman reported:

- All FY25 LRP recipients have executed contracts; alternates received awards.
- 38 intent forms for \$20M GME grant submitted.
- Nursing grants issued to Mercer and Southern Crescent.

Loan Repayment Program Practice Location Change Requests:

The following applicants were approved for APRN Loan Repayment awards at the January 2025 Board Meeting and have requested changes to their approved practice locations:

1. **Zane Asare-Koku**
 - Original Practice Location: Liberty County
 - Requested Change: McIntosh County
 - **Motion:** To approve practice location change
 - **Motion by:** Dr. Henson
 - **Motion Seconded by:** Mr. Gautney

- **Outcome:** The Board unanimously voted to approve practice location change request from Zane Asare-Koku from Liberty County to McIntosh County.
- 2. **Kelly Sharpton**
 - Original Practice Location: Toombs County
 - Requested Change: Candler County
 - **Motion:** To approve practice location change
 - **Motion by:** Dr. Henson
 - **Motion Seconded by:** Mr. Gautney
 - **Outcome:** The Board unanimously voted to approve practice location change request from Kelly Sharpton from Toombs County to Candler County.
- 3. **Catherine Dennis**
 - Original Practice Location: Monroe County
 - Requested Change: Bibb County
 - **Motion:** To deny request due to county exceeding population requirement
 - **Motion by:** Mr. Gautney
 - **Motion Seconded by:** Dr. Henson
 - **Outcome:** The Board voted unanimously to deny change of practice location from Catherine Dennis from Monroe County to Bibb County due to county population over 50,000.

L. Old and New Business

- Dr. Cecil Bennett inquired about IMG legislation; no specific bills filed.
- Dr. Henson asked about hardship exceptions for late GME grant submissions; Mr. Bhasin confirmed hardship consideration only.

M. Adjournment

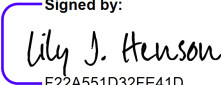
Motion: To adjourn the meeting.


Motion by: Dr. Henson

Seconded by: Dr. McFadden

Outcome: The Board unanimously approved motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at **10:40 AM**.

X  Signed by: 9/2/2025
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Secretary-Treasurer

X  DocuSigned by: 8/21/2025
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Executive Director