

**BOARD MINUTES
MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL LICENSURE
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021**

A specially called telephonic meeting of the Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure was held on September 7, 2021, at 5:00 pm, in the Executive Conference Room of the Office of the Board located at 1867 Crane Ridge Drive, Jackson, Mississippi, after being duly noticed on the websites of the Mississippi Public Meeting Notice and this Board, in accordance with law.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:

David W. McClendon, Jr., M.D., Ocean Springs, President
Michelle Y. Owens, M.D., Jackson, Vice President
C. Kenneth Lippincott, M.D., Tupelo, Secretary
Charles D. Miles, M.D., West Point
H. Allen Gersh, M.D., Hattiesburg
Kirk Kinard, D.O., Oxford
Dan Edney, M.D., Vicksburg
Roderick Givens, M.D., Natchez

ALSO PRESENT:

Stan T. Ingram, Complaint Counsel for the Board
Paul Barnes, Board Attorney
Alexis Morris, Special Assistant Attorney General
Kenneth Cleveland, Executive Director
Mike Lucius, Deputy Director
Jay Ledbetter, Chief of Staff
Anna Boone, Director of Licensure Division
Kristin Wallace, Clinical Director of Physician Compliance
Jonathan Dalton, Investigations Supervisor
Frances Carrillo, Staff Officer

NOT PRESENT:

Thomas Joiner, M.D., Jackson
Shoba Gaymes, Jackson, Consumer Member
Major General (Ret.) Erik Hearon, Jackson, Consumer Member

The conference call meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Dr. McClendon, President. Dr. Cleveland performed the roll call of Board Members. Dr. Cleveland verified that there was a quorum present.

PROPOSED COVID MEDICAL MISINFORMATION POLICY

The Board discussed adopting a policy statement regarding misinformation / disinformation by Licensees.

After being recognized, Board Attorney Paul Barnes requested and recommended that the Board go into executive session to discuss prospective litigation regarding the proposed policy statement.

A motion was made by Dr. Miles, seconded by Dr. Owens, and carried that the Board meeting be closed to discuss whether to enter into executive session on this matter.

A motion by Dr. Givens, seconded by Dr. Owens, and carried that the Board enter into executive session for privileged discussions with counsel concerning prospective litigation related to a potential policy change.

Upon a motion by Dr. Owens, seconded by Dr. Miles and carried, the Board came out of executive session.

In open session, the Board discussed the merits of the proposed Medical Misinformation or Disinformation Policy. Two changes to the wording of the policy were discussed and agreed to: to remove the words "and adopts" and to remove the words: "as the Policy of the Board." All members present voted Yea except Dr. Gersh, who voted Nay.

After discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Owens, seconded by Dr. Givens, and carried to accept the Policy with the agreed changes. All members present voted Yea except Dr. Gersh, who Abstained.

A copy of the final Policy as adopted by the Board are attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. McClendon adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.


William David McClendon, Jr., M.D.
President

Minutes taken and transcribed by:
Frances Carrillo
September 7, 2021



MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF MEDICAL LICENSURE

Kenneth Cleveland, M.D. | Executive Director

MEDICAL MISINFORMATION OR DISINFORMATION POLICY

The Mississippi State Board of Medical Licensure agrees with the following statement of the Board of Directors of the Federation of State Medical Boards:

Physicians who generate and spread COVID-19 vaccine misinformation or disinformation are risking disciplinary action by state medical boards, including the suspension or revocation of their medical license. Due to their specialized knowledge and training, licensed physicians possess a high degree of public trust and therefore have a powerful platform in society, whether they recognize it or not. They also have an ethical and professional responsibility to practice medicine in the best interests of their patients and must share information that is factual, scientifically grounded and consensus-driven for the betterment of public health. Spreading inaccurate COVID-19 vaccine information contradicts that responsibility, threatens to further erode public trust in the medical profession and puts all patients at risk.

These principles are not limited to COVID-19 vaccine issues. Physicians have an ethical obligation to ensure that medical information they provide in a media environment is accurate, inclusive of known risks and benefits, commensurate with their medical expertise, and based on valid scientific evidence and insight gained from professional experience. Further, it is strongly recommended that in the use of social media, physicians should separate their personal and professional content online. Physicians must understand that actions online and content posted can affect their reputation, have consequences for their medical careers, and undermine public trust in the medical profession.