



**ARIZONA  
PSYCHIATRIC  
SOCIETY**

June 30, 2021

Arizona Medical Board  
1740 West Adams Street, Suite 4000  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Board Members:

On behalf of the Arizona Medical Association and the Arizona Psychiatric Society, together representing over 4,500 physicians in the State of Arizona, we are writing to express our thanks to the Arizona Medical Board and its leadership for responsiveness to our prior comment letters and public testimony requesting change to the questions on Arizona's physician licensure application's confidential questions. The comments from ArMA and APS were supported by twenty-two additional Arizona physician organizations, representing the voice of over 15,000 members. Collectively, we appreciate the opportunity to work with the Board on this important issue.

We understand that after consideration of the comment letters, public testimony and opportunity for discussion within the leadership of the Physician Health Program and Arizona Medical Board, the recommendation to be brought to a vote at the July 2021 meeting of the Arizona Medical Board proposes the following revised language:

**Proposed initial application questions:**

“Do you **currently** have a medical condition that impairs your judgment or adversely affects your ability to practice medicine in a competent, ethical and professional manner?”

If yes, please provide an explanation, and if you are currently under a monitoring agreement with another State Medical Board, please provide a copy of the monitoring agreement.

**Proposed renewal application questions:**

“Do you **currently** have a medical condition that impairs your judgment or adversely affects your ability to practice medicine in a competent, ethical and professional manner?”

If yes, please provide an explanation, and if you are currently under a monitoring agreement with another State Medical Board, please provide a copy of the monitoring agreement.

**Our physician associations strongly support the recommended changes in language** and thank the members of the Board, the Physician’s Health Committee and all contributing staff for their receptive stance. The revised language promotes the goals of the recent guidelines of the Federation of State Medical Boards, recommending using language only requiring an applicant to disclose a known *current* condition which impairs their ability to practice safely. We believe this proposed language will help send a message to our physician community that our Board supports seeking timely mental health treatment, without fear of repercussion during initial licensure or renewal.

We stand ready to be your partners in the next steps, willing to provide support in the rulemaking process and assisting with the creation of FAQs to guide physicians in understanding the goals of the medical board. We are sincerely grateful to the Board. This is a major step in supporting physicians to seek appropriate care, and in promoting awareness to the members of our entire physician community in Arizona.

Health care professionals have long experienced high levels of stress and burnout, and with the COVID-19 pandemic increasing the mental health care needs of physicians, barriers to help-seeking pose an even greater threat to physician wellness. **We thank the Board for being a leader in destigmatizing mental health treatment and in promoting physicians to seek care. Your actions have the potential to save lives.**

Sincerely,



Jasleen Chhatwal, MBBS, MD  
President, Arizona Psychiatric Society



Miriam Anand, MD  
President, Arizona Medical Association