

# Business Meeting Minutes

## October 11, 2024



WASHINGTON  
**Medical  
Commission**  
Licensing. Accountability. Leadership.

### Virtual Meeting via Teams Webinar

Link to recording: <https://youtu.be/WIFs-idFyY?si=b8SIP2J9gXkNomKI>

#### Commission Members

Michael Bailey, Public Member  
Christine Blake, Public Member  
Toni Borlas, Public Member – Absent  
Daniel Cabrera, MD  
Po-Shen Chang, MD  
Jimmy Chung, MD  
Diana Currie, MD  
Karen Domino, MD, Chair  
Arlene Dorrough, PA-C – Absent  
Anjali D’Souza, MD  
Harlan Gallinger, MD

April Jaeger, MD – Absent  
Jamie Koop, Public Member – Absent  
Ed Lopez, PA-C, Officer-at-Large  
Sarah Lyle, MD  
Terry Murphy, MD, Vice Chair – Absent  
Elisha Mvundura, MD – Absent  
Robert Pullen, Public Member – Absent  
Scott Rodgers, JD, Public Member  
Claire Trescott, MD  
Richard Wohns, MD

#### WMC Staff in Attendance

Colleen Balatbat, Staff Attorney  
Jennifer Batey, Legal Support Staff Manager  
Amelia Boyd, Program Manager  
Carolynn Bradley, Mgmt Analyst/Contract Manager  
Kayla Bryson, Executive Assistant  
Jimi Bush, Director of Quality & Engagement  
Adam Calica, Chief Investigator  
Carmen Challenger, Health Services Consultant  
Marisa Courtney, Licensing Manager  
Joel DeFazio, Staff Attorney  
Gina Fino, Director of Compliance  
Ryan Furbush, Paralegal  
Rick Glein, Director of Legal Services  
Kayla Gregory, Investigator  
Mike Hively, Director of Operations & Informatics

Ken Imes, Information Liaison  
Kyle Karinen, Executive Director  
Sara Kirschenman, Staff Attorney  
Christopher Knight, Management Analyst  
Mike Kramer, Compliance Officer  
Stephanie Mason, Public Information Officer  
& Legislative Liaison  
Micah Matthews, Deputy Executive Director  
Lynne Miller, Paralegal  
Fatima Mirza, Program Case Manager  
Freda Pace, Director of Investigations  
Stormie Redden, Legal Assistant  
Chris Waterman, Complaint Intake Manager  
Trisha Wolf, Staff Attorney  
Mahi Zeru, Equity & Social Justice Manager

#### Others in Attendance

Sunil Aggarwal  
Marlon Basco-Rodillas, Dept. of Health (DOH)  
Pamela Beall  
Rose Bigham, Washington Patients in Intractable  
Pain (WashPIP)  
Alisha Briggs  
Chris Bundy, MD, Executive Medical Director,  
Washington Physicians Health Program

Heather Cantrell, DOH  
Heather Carter, Assistant Attorney General  
Zach Correia  
Maria Higginbotham  
Martha Mioni  
Hillary Norris, Washington State Medical  
Association (WSMA)  
Susan Olsen

## Others in Attendance continued

Kathy Pfeil  
Gina Robertshaw  
Jeb Shepherd, WSMA

Sarah Tompkins  
Susie Tracy

### 1.0 Call to Order

Karen Domino, MD, Chair, called the meeting of the Washington Medical Commission (WMC) to order at 9:05 a.m. on October 11, 2024.

### 2.0 Public Comment

Kathy Pfeil from Olympia, WA, shared her experience with chronic pain management following a car accident when she was 35. Now in her 70s, she noted that for nearly 20 years, pain medications helped her live a full life, allowing her to work, return to college, and even become a minister. However, as regulations around prescribing pain medications changed, she has found that effective treatments are increasingly difficult to access. She highlighted the automatic assumption of tapering patients off these medications, regardless of their success in managing chronic pain. She has been prescribed various alternative treatments, none of which provide the same relief as pain medications. She also raised concerns about the lack of patient support after medication changes, particularly for individuals facing complex, long-term medical needs.

Jeb Shepherd, director of policy at the Washington State Medical Association, expressed gratitude to the Washington Medical Commission. He thanked Micah Matthews and Dr. Fino for attending the association's October annual meeting in Spokane, appreciating their presence and attentiveness to physicians' discussions on resolutions. He also thanked the Commission for addressing concerns regarding the AI interpretive statement, acknowledging Dr. Domino and the staff for their openness to continued dialogue on the matter.

Maria Higginbotham expressed gratitude to the Washington Medical Commission for reviewing their petition on the opioid rules, specifically regarding tapering practices. She highlighted a recent shift across most pain clinics in the state, driven by updates to the opioid dose calculator from the AMDG, leading clinics to initiate tapering for all patients regardless of medical conditions. She explained this shift has destabilized many patients, leaving them unable to function, affecting their families, and straining community resources. She noted that some patients abandon pain management entirely, facing painful choices to endure suffering, risk dangerous street drugs, or even contemplate suicide. She stated she shared with Amelia Boyd, Program Manager, a study from the University of Alabama, "CSI Opioids," which investigates suicides linked to prescription opioid reductions, emphasizing the tragic necessity of such research. She expressed deep appreciation for the Commission's efforts on behalf of chronic pain patients.

### 3.0 Chair Report

Dr. Domino expressed appreciation for the recent retreat, highlighting its educational value and the opportunity it provided to connect with other Commissioners from both panels and staff. She thanked the staff for organizing the successful event.

### 4.0 Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda contained the following items for approval:

4.1 Agenda for October 11, 2024.

#### 4.2 Minutes from the July 19, 2024, Business Meeting

**Motion:** The Chair entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### Rules Hearings

Rules hearings were held on the following:

- Military spouse temporary permits, [WSR 24-18-041](#), [WAC 246-918-076](#) (physician assistants) and [246-919-397](#) (physicians) How to obtain a temporary practice permit—Military spouse proposed updates to incorporate [RCW 18.340.020](#). The proposed language for this rule was approved without any amendments.
- General provisions for opioid prescribing and tapering rules for allopathic physicians and physician assistants, [WSR 24-18-091](#). Proposed amendments to the commission's opioid prescribing rules to exclude patients with sickle cell disease, clarify tapering considerations and, in this supplemental, to clarify the use of biological specimen testing. The proposed rules amend WAC [246-918-801](#) Exclusions, [246-918-870](#) Periodic review—Chronic pain, and [246-918-900](#) Tapering considerations—Chronic pain for physician assistants, as well as WAC [246-919-851](#) Exclusions, [246-919-920](#) Periodic review—Chronic pain, and [246-919-950](#) Tapering considerations—Chronic pain for allopathic physicians. The proposed language for this rule was approved without any amendments.

#### 5.0 New Business

##### 5.1 2026 Meeting Dates

Ms. Boyd presented the proposed meeting dates for the year 2026. The Commissioners suggested a change to the date of the Commissioner retreat.

**Motion:** The Chair entertained a motion to approve the 2026 schedule with the suggested amendment. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

#### 6.0 Old Business

##### 6.1 Committee/Workgroup Reports

These reports were provided in writing and included in the meeting packet. There were no additional reports.

##### 6.2 Rulemaking Activities

The rulemaking progress report was provided in the meeting packet. In addition to the written report, Ms. Boyd made the following requests:

- Initiate CR-103 permanent rulemaking to formalize the rules approved through expedited rulemaking (CR-105) concerning physician assistant collaborative practice under [ESHB 2041](#). The CR-105 was filed as [WSR #24-15-055](#).
- Initiate the CR-103 permanent rulemaking to formalize the rules approved through expedited rulemaking (CR-105) removing references to osteopathic physician assistants. The CR-105 was filed as [WSR #24-15-054](#).

**Motion:** The Chair entertained a motion to initiate the CR-103 for both rulemakings. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

## 7.0 Policy Committee Report

Christine Blake, Public Member, Policy Committee Chair, asked Micah Matthews, Deputy Executive Director, to report on the items discussed at the Policy Committee meeting held on September 26, 2024.

Mr. Matthews explained that the Committee is requesting three votes. The first was to reaffirm the **Guidance Document: Medical Directors: Roles, Duties, and Responsibilities (GUI2020-02)**. He noted that this document is due for its four-year review and that no substantive changes have been made.

**Motion:** The Chair entertained a motion to reaffirm the document as presented. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

The second was to rescind the **Policy: Telemedicine, POL2021-02**. He explained this needed to be rescinded because the uniform telehealth law was passed in Washington, making it the first state to do so. The law includes all the existing policy positions, which are now codified in statute, thereby superseding the original.

**Motion:** The Chair entertained a motion to rescind the policy. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

The third was to approve the following documents for DOH Secretary review:

- **Proposed Policy: Processing Complaints Against Medical Students, Residents, and Fellows**
- **Proposed Policy: Commissioner and Pro Tem Recusal Policy to Address Conflicts of Interest**
- **Proposed Interpretive Statement: “Qualified Physician” Under Optometry Law**
- **Proposed Policy: Artificial/Assistive/Augmented Intelligence (AI)**

Mr. Matthews explained that these four items were to be voted on as a group unless any Commissioner objected, with the goal of approving them for submission to the DOH’s Secretary for review. This meant sending the items out for comments from the Department of Health, the Secretary of Health, and other relevant boards and commissions, with feedback to be considered at a future meeting. He clarified for interested parties that this would not be their last opportunity to review or comment on these items. The earliest possible adoption, assuming timely action from the Secretary’s office, would be in January. Additionally, he acknowledged receiving extensive feedback on the artificial intelligence document and noted that they would be meeting with various associations later in the month to address concerns and refine the language where needed.

**Motion:** The Chair entertained a motion to approve the documents as presented for DOH Secretary review. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

## 8.0 Member Reports

No member reports were provided.

## 9.0 Staff Reports

The report below is in addition to the written reports that were included in the meeting packet.

Jimi Bush, Director of Quality and Engagement, thanked Mr. Lopez and Britta Fisher for their presentation at the Washington Academy of Physician Assistants meeting on the complaint process with the Commission. She reported receiving positive feedback from attendees the following morning and expressed appreciation for their effort in delivering the presentation

## 10.0 AAG Report

Heather Carter, AAG, had nothing to report.

## 11.0 Adjournment

The Chair called the meeting adjourned at 10:36 am.

Submitted by

(signature on file)

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Amelia Boyd, Program Manager

(signature on file)

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Terry Murphy, MD, Chair Elect  
Washington Medical Commission

Approved January 10, 2025

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