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Executive Director

COVID-19 has changed the way we go about our daily lives and especially how we accomplish our work. Under Department of Health (DOH) guidance, the Medical Commission (WMC) has altered their work patterns and those alterations may impact you. We are trying our best to provide world class customer service, but there are steps we have had to take that make it not business as usual. Here is some information that I hope you find helpful as we work through the next few months:

Staffing. All staff who can work from home are doing so. As of March 16 at 10am, that left one staffer in the office with four others rotating in on alternate half-days. Everyone else is teleworking full-time. We have, for the most part, electronic process that allow us to do that. However, not all staff have access to work-provided cell phones, so contacting us is best done through e-mail.

Licensing. Staff are teleworking although our current processes are still very much paper-centric, so this new work environment may impact licensing timelines. We are trying very hard to be as responsive as possible. E-mail is the best option for contacting Licensing during the next few weeks.

Commission meetings. Our April business meeting is cancelled and rules workshops have now become virtual meetings. Our website contains call-in information should you want to attend virtually. We are discussing our May meeting options based upon the Governor’s guidance to limit meetings. We have never held a virtual business meeting, so we are trekking through uncharted territory here and I have no definitive information at this time.

While we work through this, we need your help finding and activating emergency volunteer health practitioners in preparation for health system requests and surging. This will help the state meet emerging demands for healthcare workers.

The DOH can perform this work under the authority of the Uniform Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioner Act (chapter 70.15 RCW), if an emergency proclamation by the Governor is in effect - as is the case in Washington as of Feb. 29, 2020.

If volunteers are registered in the volunteer health practitioner system and verified to be in good standing in all states where they are licensed, they may practice in Washington without obtaining a Washington license once activated and assigned by DOH.

In-state practitioners can become volunteers in two ways:
- Via RCW chapter 70.15 by registering and completing the Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Application which can be found here
- Via registering with their local Medical Reserve Corps; more information can be found here.

Out-of-state practitioners may:
- Become volunteers via RCW chapter 70.15 by registering and completing the Emergency Volunteer Health Practitioners Application which can be found here
- Out of state MDs and DOs that would like an expedited Washington license and to volunteer, may use the Interstate Medical License Compact and become registered under RCW 70.15. At this time, we are limiting our request for health care practitioners to U.S. jurisdictions due to technical issues. We may expand the call to international jurisdictions in the future as needs arise, and if that remains available to us based on federal restrictions.

Applications will be screened by the DOH to ensure the potential volunteer’s health license is in good standing in each state where they are licensed. The DOH will activate, deploy and deactivate approved volunteer health practitioners as needs are identified and requested. Please share this urgent request broadly.

Online Delegation Agreements Are Now Available
Completing the new online form for delegation agreements will allow PAs same-day provisional approval to practice. Access the free online form here.