

# Message from the Chair



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

## Leveraging Lessons Learned

**Jimmy Chung, MD**

It has been a great honor and privilege to serve as the chair of the WMC this past year. While every year brings new issues and changes, the past year has been uniquely challenging for the commission. This was the year of coming out of COVID-19 and transitioning back to in-person meetings, while leveraging lessons learned as opportunities to overhaul the commission's methods and processes to be more efficient. My biggest fear as we emerged from the pandemic was losing the identity and purpose we had worked so hard to build over decades. I'm thrilled that those fears never came to life and in fact, I believe we have emerged better and stronger than ever. The WMC has stepped up to become more effective and efficient, utilizing current technologies to improve workflow, access of information and meeting attendance for the public.

in our society. With diligence, we have removed many sources of implicit bias in our licensing and case investigation processes in order to reduce variability and inequity. In addition, we have recognized the value of diverse backgrounds and experiences within the WMC itself that helps our panels have much more thorough and broadened discussions and perspectives. An unusually high turnover cycle of commission seats this past year gave us the opportunity to closely examine how the WMC could become more effective by strengthening the diversity of our members.

We have also reinvigorated our focus on medical errors, error reduction, and process improvement. While sunseting the ROME (Reduction of Medical Errors)

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This past year, the WMC also faced difficult novel cases addressing COVID-19 misinformation, and complaints from both extremes that were unprecedented. As the public health emergency recedes, those cases seem to be decreasing, but we now must brace for the next wave of controversial trends such as medical legislations surrounding reproductive health and gender affirming care, criminalizing medical errors, and the rapid rise of AI and social media that pose even bigger threats of misinformation.

The WMC also has had very exciting transformations. Through a very intentional focus, we as a commission recognized the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion not just as a social responsibility and the "right thing to do" but as a critical component of removing bias that could harm both provider and patient and delivering safe care past the disparities and injustice that are inherent

committee, we launched the High Reliability Organization (HiRO) workgroup to focus on medical error reduction and applying high reliability principles both internally and externally. By supporting a Just Culture environment, we continue to steer the commission toward protecting the public by focusing on education and rehabilitation of physicians and PAs to be the best they can be rather than handing out punishments for errors made by practitioners with good intentions.

With these changes, today's commission is barely recognizable compared to what it looked like even just a year ago. We embrace change and thinking outside the box as we constantly seek opportunities to improve. I am very proud to know that even as I step down as chair, the WMC will continue to remain nimble and progressive to best serve the next generations of Washingtonians.

