



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY,
NY 12234

TO: The Professional Practice Committee
FROM: Douglas E. Lentivech
SUBJECT: Changes in Healthcare
DATE: December 2, 2011
AUTHORIZATION(S):

Summary

Issue for Discussion

A variety of emerging issues in healthcare are having, or will have, a pronounced impact upon the licensed professions. A number of such issues have already been the subject of Regents discussion, but primarily as a result of their tangential impact upon the implementation of regulations. At this meeting we will present a variety of concerns for the purpose of discussing systematic strategies that may be utilized in the future.

Discussion

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) licenses 49 individual professions. Forty-one of the licensed professions provide healthcare services, representing over 700,000 licensed practitioners. The entirety of professional healthcare services is provided by individuals licensed or otherwise authorized by the NYSED. Accordingly, the NYSED, as overseen by the Board of Regents, has a major role in the delivery of healthcare services within New York State. However, a number of changes are occurring within the healthcare delivery system that impact the professions and the role played by the Department.

Healthcare and Medicaid reform initiatives, both nationally and within New York, have resulted in proposals that could affect Regents oversight and/or redefine tasks that licensed professionals perform. Additionally, some of those proposals have suggested that unlicensed individuals should be permitted to perform a number of tasks that are now restricted to licensed healthcare professionals.

A variety of state and federal initiatives are currently being considered in various venues. Further, the roles of private, non-professional providers, insurers, and facilities are evolving rapidly as well. The evolution of healthcare technology also makes

regulatory oversight much more difficult. All in all, there are number of issues to be considered that will drive the future of healthcare.

Generally, the department has expressed concern about some of the recent proposals and initiatives as a matter of public safety. Additional concerns have arisen due to the nature of the process through which some of these strategies have been developed. While various stakeholders have an interest in fiscal savings, access to services, and/or the growth of the professions, NYSED and the Board of Regents, with the advice of 29 neutrally appointed state professional boards and committees, are in a unique position to assess proposed reforms.

Historically, the Department has brought individual issues to the Board of Regents for consideration as they arose. However, it has been suggested that, given the scope and magnitude of issues in this area, it may be appropriate to develop an ongoing strategy for research and advice that can inform the Department and the Board prospectively.

For discussion today is whether an ongoing healthcare advisory initiative, such as a panel to provide background and guidance on prospective Regents policies, should be established.