

State Board of Medicine
IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING ACT 13 of March 20, 2002

On March 20, 2002, Governor Schweiker signed into law the Medical Care Availability and Reduction of Error Act. The new law creates certain new obligations for physicians.

The new law creates, among other requirements, a mandatory self-reporting obligation on physicians. Physicians are obligated to self-report to the Board within 60 days of the occurrence of any of the following: notice of a civil malpractice lawsuit, notice of a disciplinary action by another jurisdiction, any controlled substance conviction, and any arrests for criminal offenses such as homicide, assault, sexual offenses, and controlled substance violations.

Reports must be sent to the following address and must include the following information and documents:

**STATE BOARD OF MEDICINE
ATTN: MCARE REPORTS
P O BOX 2649
HARRISBURG PA 17105-2649**

- 1. The court where the case was filed,**
- 2. Docket number,**
- 3. A description of the allegations and**
- 4. A complete copy of the civil complaint (DO NOT SUBMIT WRIT OF SUMMONS) or court documents relating to disciplinary action, conviction or arrest.**

Failure to report may result in disciplinary action against the physician's license. Physicians, other health care workers, and medical facilities also have responsibilities to report any event involving the clinical care of a patient that results in an unanticipated death or patient injury.

The new law obligates medical doctors to complete 100 hours of continuing medical education for each biennial renewal period. Physicians will need to begin obtaining continuing medical education credits January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2004 to renew their license for the next biennial period. The Board is in the process of promulgating regulations that will identify acceptable continuing education within the structure established by the new law. While that process will take time to complete, it can be expected that American Medical Association approved courses and providers will be included in the list of acceptable continuing medical education.

The new law also obligates the Board to review, for the first time, allegations of single acts of simple negligence. Current caseload between the State Board of Medicine and the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine is approximately 1000 cases per year. It is anticipated that there will be an additional 8000-10000 complaints filed against physicians licensed by both Boards. In order to be able to manage its share of these cases as required under the new law, the Board must increase its resources. Accordingly, the Board has determined to increase the biennial renewal fee. The previous fee was one of the least expensive in the nation. The new fee of \$360.00 biennially is comparable to our surrounding sister states and states of comparable size and population.