

Texas Medical Board Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 21, 2020

Media contact: Jarrett Schneider, 512-305-7018
Customer service: 512-305-7030 or 800-248-4062

TMB President Zaafran Provides COVID-19 Update at August Board Meeting

Texas Medical Board President Dr. Sherif Z. Zaafran, M.D., provided an update on the Board's ongoing COVID-19 response at today's August board meeting.

President Zaafran outlined ongoing agency efforts, reiterating the Board's commitment in carrying out its vital mission of protecting the public health during the pandemic.

To date, TMB has issued over 2,700 emergency licenses and re-activated licenses for 55 retired licensees.

"Our incredible staff has managed to issue or reactivate these licenses in a mere 1 to 3 business days, said President Zaafran. "Importantly, this work is being done concurrently with the Board's existing, steady workload of processing thousands of other health care professionals to work in our state during this critical time."

In addition to increasing the number of available health care professionals through expediting emergency licensing, the Board has also worked with the Governor's Office to help expand the use of telemedicine and relieve administrative requirements of licensees by extending deadlines for licensure renewals and in-person continuing medical education.

During his board meeting update, President Zaafran also addressed misinformation regarding the Board's [previous statement](#) on COVID-19 treatments.

"The Texas Medical Board has never prohibited the use of Hydroxychloroquine alone, or in conjunction with other drugs, for the treatment of COVID-19. In fact, the TMB does not prohibit any drug or treatment," clarified Zaafran. "The off-label use of Hydroxychloroquine as an alternative therapy for COVID-19 patients is completely permissible. As is the case with any alternative therapy, physicians must ensure they comply with [Board Rule 200](#) which requires physicians to provide full disclosure of treatment options, side effects, and obtain informed consent."

"Licensees should not fear disciplinary action from the TMB simply for expressing their support of specific COVID-19 treatments like Hydroxychloroquine," added Zaafran. "What providers should keep in mind is because there is no definitive cure, claims of a cure may constitute false, misleading or deceptive advertising, which is prohibited by law and may prompt an inquiry from the TMB."

"We at the TMB are very grateful for the incredible work performed by over one-hundred fifty thousand TMB licensees to take care of our families, our neighbors, our fellow Texans, and us," said Zaafran. "For as long as this pandemic persists and well beyond COVID-19, TMB staff and Board members will continue to efficiently and fairly serve our licensees and the citizens of Texas."

TMB will continue to provide any updates on COVID-19 issues on the TMB website at www.tmb.state.tx.us/page/coronavirus.

For the latest COVID-19 information for health providers and the public, visit the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) COVID-19 web page at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/.

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