

Work continues on eliminating the prescription co-signature portion of Chapter Med 8. Now is the time we need help from all PA's in Wisconsin. We need you to talk to your supervising physicians and urge them to express their support for this rule change by contacting the Medical Examining Board.

There has been an ongoing effort to change Chapter Med 8 and drop the prescription co-signature. WAPA's position on this is that it does nothing to ensure PA quality of care, and that compliance with the rule can be difficult in some settings. To that end, members of the WAPA Legislative and Government Affairs (LGA) committee recently met with the Wisconsin Medical Society (WMS) Council on Legislation to propose a rule change. This is a necessary first step since physician support is essential if the process is going to move forward.

The idea of eliminating the prescription co-signature requirement was generally met with a positive response from the Council, but it became clear that WMS Council on Legislation members were interested in retaining some sort of physician chart review requirement retained in Chapter Med 8 to ensure physician oversight of PA practice. This type of requirement, unlike prescription co-signature, is quite common in other states. The Council asked the LGA Committee to submit a formal proposal for amending Chapter Med 8. With the help of WAPA board members, the LGA committee submitted a draft of new language for Chapter Med 8 to the WMS Council on Legislation members. The initial response has been positive, but final approval was still pending as this went to press. If the Council approves the proposal, it then goes to the Medical Examining Board.

Dick Faust and Lou Falligant attended the Medical Examining Board meeting on July 19th to speak to a separate issue, but were asked to comment on the proposed rule changes. Lou Falligant had presented the proposal to the Council on Physician Assistants for their review in April, and the Board was aware that something was in the works. There was some very good discussion, and the Board is expecting to receive the suggested changes in the near future.

We strongly encourage you to speak with other PAs and your supervising physicians to generate support for this rule change. Physician support is critical to success. This is a change that will make physician's practice and supervision of PAs more efficient. The chart review that we are proposing calls for physician and PA collaboration to establish a chart review practice. It is flexible enough to fit all practice situations, but at the same time provides for more meaningful supervision than the current prescription co-signature requirement.

A copy of the WAPA proposal is included in this issue of the Spectator along with a sample letter to the Medical Examining Board. We encourage you and your physicians to write in support of this bill.

We are excited about the recent progress on this issue and are working to continue to make Wisconsin a great place to be a PA!