

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**STATE BOARD OF MEDICINE ACTS ON PATIENT SAFETY  
Patient Care Assessment Unit to Implement Recommendations**

**BOSTON:** At its meeting today, the State Board of Registration in Medicine discussed the early identification of patient safety issues associated with weight loss surgery made by its Patient Care Assessment program, and the findings of the recent report on weight loss surgery issued by an expert panel convened by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety and Medical Error Reduction (Lehman Center).

Following the discussion, the Board voted to direct its Patient Care Assessment Committee to monitor and oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in the DPH/Lehman Center weight loss surgery report. Dr. Martin Crane, M.D., Chair of the Board and of its Patient Care Assessment Committee, said that such a role, "is well within the PCA Committee's oversight of health care institutions' systems of quality control, risk management, peer review and credentialing."

Among those in attendance at today's Board meeting were DPH Commissioner Christine C. Ferguson and Dr. George L. Blackburn, M.D., Ph.D., of the Center for the Study of Nutrition Medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, and vice chair of the expert panel. Dr. Crane was also a member of the expert panel.

Noting the common mission and close relationship between DPH and the Board, Dr. Crane said, "Commissioner Ferguson has done the citizens of the Commonwealth a great service by convening the expert panel. Implementing these recommendations is crucial to any efforts to protect the safety of patients, who are seeking weight loss surgery in greater numbers every year."

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine licenses more than 30,000 physicians, osteopaths and acupuncturists. The Board was created in 1894 to protect the

public health and safety by setting standards for the practice of medicine and ensuring that doctors who practice in the Commonwealth are appropriately qualified and competent. More information about the Board is available at [www.massmedboard.org](http://www.massmedboard.org).

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