

Date of Hearing: March 20, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS

Evan Low, Chair

AB 2457 (Irwin) – As Introduced February 14, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Podiatry: Podiatric Medical Board of California.

**SUMMARY:** Changes the name of the California Board of Podiatric Medicine to the “Podiatric Medical Board of California” and makes numerous conforming changes.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the Board of Podiatric Medicine (BPM) within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) until January 1, 2021, and vests the BPM with regulation of podiatric medicine. (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §§ 2460-2499.8)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown. This bill is keyed fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

**COMMENTS:**

**Purpose.** This bill is sponsored by the **Board of Podiatric Medicine**. According to the author, it “simply makes sense that the all of the independent medical licensing boards (Medical Board of California, Osteopathic Medical Board of California, and the Podiatric Medical Board of California (if this name change is approved) should be referred to in the same way. Podiatrists provide podiatric medical care and should be referred to as such.”

**Background.** The BPM is one of several licensing entities under the DCA. The BPM regulates practitioners of podiatric medicine (podiatrists) and administers and enforces the laws relating to licensure. Podiatric medicine is a branch of medicine that focuses on the foot and ankle. In California, it is defined as “the diagnosis, medical, surgical, mechanical, manipulative, and electrical treatment of the human foot, including the ankle and tendons that insert into the foot and the nonsurgical treatment of the muscles and tendons of the leg governing the functions of the foot” (BPC § 2472(b)).

It is unlawful to practice podiatric medicine without a license. Licensed podiatrists are known as Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs). According to the DCA’s *2017 Annual Report*, the BPM licenses approximately 2,000 DPMs. Each year, the BPM issues approximately 100 new licenses and renews approximately 1,000 licenses.

*Necessity.* The name change under this bill is primarily symbolic. It is unclear whether this change will improve consumer protection. Other than the costs associated with updating the BPM’s name on its publications and information technology systems, the change will have little impact on the BPM’s operations.

**Prior Related Legislation.** SB 798 (Hill), Chapter 775, Statutes of 2017, among other things, extended the sunset date for the MBC, clarified that the BPM was not within the jurisdiction of the MBC, clarified that the MBC does not issue DPM licenses, and made numerous conforming changes.

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT:**

The **California Podiatric Medical Association (CPMA)** writes in support, the BPM “regulates licensees who perform treatment for ailments of the foot, including surgical procedures on the foot and wound care on the lower limb. Licensees treat patients in hospitals, clinics, and surgical centers in California. The [BPM’s] relationship with all stakeholders will be enhanced where the title of the [BPM] is consistent with similarly situated Medical boards in California.

Should a member of the public have reason to contact the state’s regulatory board with questions or complaints, the regulatory title should reflect the board as that of a “medical” board regulating licensees performing medical care and surgical care. By identifying the regulatory board with the proposed title, the transparency needed to protect the public will be enhanced.”

**ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION:**

None on file.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT:**

California Podiatric Medical Association

**REGISTERED OPPOSITION:**

None on file.

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