



President's Comment

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DO NOT LET THE SUN SET ON YOU (BAD DOCTOR ET AL) IN TEXAS

In a recent edition of "DOC talk" there was a insightful interview with Dr D Patrick MD, JD Executive Director of the Texas Medical Board. The queries by the editor were very topical and to the point. However, I am troubled by some of his (Dr P's) quoted responses. In this time of great population growth in our state and with a shortage of physicians to provide patient care, we could use a more doctor responsive Texas Medical Board. We Texas physicians can easily find ourselves in the 'bad Doc' sights of the TMB court of justice with any complaint or frivolous lawsuit. It appears that 'good' doctors can make mistakes too and so he states, "we are going to do something (?) about it". Since all alleged offensive reports reach Dr Patrick's TMB desk, his scrutiny of the practice of medicine in Texas may be a bit tainted. He relates that doctors in his view are potentially bad and greedy which has fomented since he began his medical practice. His job number one per the TMB website: PROTECT THE PUBLIC. A most creditable motto for the Texas Rangers but not to reassuring for the majority of hard working (good) Texas Docs. I suggest we need two medical boards: one to process (expedite!) applications for medical license for a reasonable fee and the new "Med Bureau of Special Investigation" to legal down the "bad doc" and/or suspend their license to practice. Please notice, now some insurance companies offer TMB protection policies (more overhead costs) because every issue before TMB requires an attorney (notice all the new attorney adds) to facilitate resolving almost any problem. This also mandates trips, in person, to Austin; lost office time, loss of income and attorney fees. In addition, not to mention the loss of a needed healthcare provider on the Texas-Mexico border while in the Texas capital defending his/her name and reputation. The new doctors that desire to practice in our state because of a more favorable malpractice climate along with the present docs who do not retire early nor move out will

still have to stay ahead of Dr Patrick and the Texas "Ranger" Med Board. .. Stand by to be fingerprinted and subsequently there will be DNA swabs in the name of Protect the Public. The reason that we have malpractice reform is that majority of the people in this state voted (2003) in favor of the "Good Docs" with optimism of accessible healthcare. The greater law enforcement powers to the TMB were a legislative deal, just like the overpriced medical license fee tax! Per the final question in the article, unhappily, I do see eye to eye with him, Texas doctors perceive him as a foe. Now, we understand why.

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