

Georgia Occupational Regulation Review Council
Meeting Minutes: June 2, 2021

Introduction

Chair, Anna Miller, gave updates on meeting process

House 811

Matthew Couper presents Overview and state-by-state comparison of HB 811 to council

- This bill would amend Chapter 24B of Title 43 to establish Georgia Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board
- Board would consist of 7 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by Senate
- Criteria for the board and being a member
- Power of the board are detailed
- After January 1, 2025 only licensed individuals may perform medical imaging or radiation
- Criteria to obtain a license is detailed

Anna Miller opens the floor for presentations by applicant group

- Chris Turner, President of the Georgia Society of the Radiologic Technologists, speaks on behalf of HB 811
 - o The purpose of our Society is to advance the science of radiologic technology, to assist in establishing and maintaining high standards of education and training, to elevate the quality of patient care, and to improve the socioeconomic welfare of radiologic technologists.
 - o Georgia is one of only five remaining states without a comprehensive statute, code and board for individuals who perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures.
- James Reeves a practicing Radiologic Technologist representing the Georgia Society of Radiologic Technologists, speaks
 - o Our purpose for requesting HB 811 is simply this for Radiologic Technologists:
 - Appropriate education prior to exposing patients to radiation and continuing education throughout one's professional healthcare career in this highly technical and ever-changing scientific field.
 - o Current regulations require six hours of radiation safety education. Other than 6 hours of radiation safety education, Georgia does not require those performing X-ray, fluoroscopy, computed tomography, nuclear medicine, or radiation therapy to have any other education prior to exposing patients to ionizing radiation

- Georgia licenses imaging equipment; but does not license personnel who operate this equipment.
 - Current standards require no continuing education in a healthcare field that is changing significantly every year.
 - No statutes or accreditation standards exist that specify education, training, and certification for all individuals operating medical imaging or radiation therapy equipment and performing medical imaging or radiation therapy procedures.
 - The Georgia Society of Radiologic Technologists supports the establishment of appropriate education, training, examination and certification for individuals operating medical imaging or radiation therapy equipment and performing medical imaging or radiation therapy procedures. Lifelong learning and continued education are essential elements of practice and service for those who work in an area that impacts the public's health and well-being. Continuing education is a vehicle for spreading best practices about methods to improve patient outcomes. In short, continuing education is a way to keep health care teams abreast of current research in the fields in which they practice.
 - HB 811 establishes a licensure program for Georgia that sets educational standards for those who perform medical imaging examinations using ionizing radiation. The bill provides for full certification as well as limited certification, which allows for body specific radiographic imaging. Persons moving to Georgia with national certification may work without delay, as their application for Georgia license is being processed.
 - HB 811 includes a grandfather clause which allows those currently working in radiography to continue to do so with a requirement for continuing education to maintain their certification.
 - HB 811 recognizes certifications and registrations from the American Chiropractic Registry of Radiologic Technologists and certifications from the American Society of Podiatric Medical Assistants
 - HB 811 allows the board to issue a temporary license to those serving in underserved rural areas of our state. An advisory committee made of imaging experts and communities of interests would be established to provide advice for regulations in this ever-changing field.
 - HB 811 sets standards similar to those in 46 other states that have either established or, are in the process of establishing licensing programs.
- Dawn Moore presents an overview
1. Education requirements have not been changed for 30 years
 - a. Law only requires 6 hours of education within 90 days of employment
 - b. Law does not require examination to competency
 - c. No requirement for continuing education
 2. Lack of training can cause patient over exposure, misdiagnoses or poor patient outcome
 - a. Higher than needed doses of radiation or repeated doses of radiation can cause harm as a result of its cumulative effect over time.

- b. Using inadequate/lower radiation doses may increase the risk of misdiagnosis, delayed treatment, or repeat testing with the patient exposed to even more radiation.
3. Without minimum standards for education, competency and continuing education, the public cannot be assured that the individual performing their medical imaging or radiation therapy procedures has been educated, proven competent and continues to stay informed about the practice of medical imaging and radiation therapy.
4. This legislation establishes:
 - a. minimum standards for education,
 - b. examination requirements to measure retention of knowledge and competency, and
 - c. continuing education requirements for continued competency.
5. Licensure program incorporates:
 - a. Use of existing educational and certification programs
 - b. Extended timeline for individuals who currently perform medical imaging or radiation therapy procedures to become compliant
 - c. Board authority to establish rules specifically for health care professionals working in rural areas of the state
 - d. Establishment of a fee structure that will cover associated costs to administer the program

Chairman Sharon Cooper speaks on behalf of HB811.

Anna Miller begins question and answer segment:

Anna Miller asks are there specific cases where harm may have been inflicted?

James Reeves gives data about high risk patients

Dawn Moore gives examples of radiation effects

Anna Miller asks are there insists of individuals hired without proper training.

- Dawn Moore answers Yes and there is no way to track individuals being hired and not having adequate training to perform medical imaging
- Rep. Cooper explains how rural areas can go undetected, buying subpar equipment and hiring individuals that lack proper training

Anna Miller asks about how the bill will affect customer insurance billing?

- Dawn Moore and James Reeves answer No, explain tech does not bill the institution does
- Rep Cooper clarifies that it does if imaging is not clear and new images are needed, insurance companies may not pay for second set causing undue financial hardship or misdiagnosis in patients

Anna asks about whether dental hygienist would need to get licensed also?

No... Their curriculum programs cover the education

Sam Teasley, SOS - How does someone become a radiologic tech currently?

- Dawn Moore answers, there are several paths and programs to include Technical college (18-24 months) and 4 yr baccalaureate programs, National Boards are taken for license. There are about 30 programs.
- Reeves, Once licensed, after 10 years refresher coursework is required. Does not include those taking 6 hour program to become technologist.
- Rep. Sharon Cooper clarifies 6-hour course students can be classified as technologist and no law to prohibit being classified as technologist or perform medical imaging and radiology
- Dawn Moore can be hired after completing 6-hour course

Sam Teasley - What is authorization of 6-hour training (GA Code, etc...), who provides certification after completion?

- Dawn Moore - Not sure... last updated in 1988. Group that sponsored course provided certificate and individual must have certificate on displayed at employment location.

Sam Teasley would like more information about the law surrounding education entities keeping curriculum up-to-date also and may need to be addressed separately.

- Dawn Moore – the 6-hour course is grossly inadequate for curriculum needed for licensure

Sam Teasley does HB 811 fall under Georgia Medical Composite Board or Professional Licensing Board jurisdiction?

Gabriel Sterling, PLB – Potential 3 analysts, 140k

Set up fee 75k

Require 2 yr fees

Board should not choose meeting Location

Should meet more regularly than once in 18 months

Encourage a late renewal period

Nonrefundable fees not recommended unless initial processing fee

2 yr Fee amount

Rep. Cooper asks for recommendations in writing from PLB

Anna Miller will take public comment in two weeks on HB 811

HB305

Matthew Couper gives a brief overview and Statewide Comparison of the HB 305

Bill would amend Chapter 24A of Title 43 to revise the definition and practice of massage therapy in Georgia.

Anna Miller introduces Stan Jones and Vivian Davis to speak on HB 305

Stan Jones speaks and explains the change to the bill

- To enable compliance with some constitutional delegation issues, if the board uses an outside entity this specific statutory authorization should be included and has sufficient protections against some the trust issues from other states.
- Allows a national certifying entity to help with certifying continuing education courses and instructors.

Vivian Davis speaks on owning a massage therapy facility in SouthWest Georgia since 1992

Craig Knowles explains HB 305

- Bill will allow legitimate licensees get to work quickly

Gabriel Sterling, speaks on cost of HB 305

Anna opens up for questions from council There are none

Anna opens up for comments ... There are none

Anna Miller provides wrap up comments and the flow of the next meeting, HB 430 will be reviewed during next meeting.