California physicians now required to notify their patients that they are licensed by the Medical Board of California

SACRAMENTO — Effective June 27, 2010, physicians practicing in California must inform their patients that they are licensed by the Medical Board of California, and include the Board's contact information. The information must read as follows.

NOTICE TO CONSUMERS
Medical doctors are licensed and regulated by the Medical Board of California
(800) 633-2322
www.mbc.ca.gov

This requirement is the result of a regulation (Title 16, California Code of Regulations section 1355.4) approved by the Medical Board, as mandated by Business and Professions Code section 138. The purpose of this new regulation is to inform consumers where to go for information or with a complaint about California medical doctors.

"The Medical Board's mandate is public protection, and this new requirement will assist patients by directing them to our Web site and our call center, where they can access very basic yet important information about our public services," said Medical Board President Barbara Yaroslavsky. "And it will take very little effort for physicians to comply."

Physicians may provide this notice by one of three methods:

- Prominently posting a sign in an area of their offices conspicuous to patients, in specified type.
- Including the notice in a written statement, signed and dated by the patient or patient's representative, and kept in that patient's file.
- Including the notice in a statement on letterhead, discharge instructions, or other document given to a patient or the patient's representative, where the notice is placed immediately above the signature line for the patient in specified type.

The three options are designed to serve a multitude of practice settings, including emergency departments, skilled nursing facilities, and surgical settings.

The Medical Board is an agency within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). At least nine of DCA's other agencies have similar disclosure requirements, including the Pharmacy Board, the Contractors State License Board, the Bureau of Automotive Repair, and the Board of Optometry.

The mission of the Medical Board is to protect health care consumers through the proper licensing and regulation of physicians and surgeons and certain allied health care professions and through the vigorous, objective enforcement of the Medical Practice Act, and, to promote access to quality medical care through the Board's licensing and regulatory functions.