

comprehensive standard health benefit plan; devises a payment system for health care services; and fosters development of practice parameters. The Commission also facilitates public disclosure of medical claims data for the development of public policy; maintains and analyzes a medical care data base on health care provided by health care practitioners; and ensures the use of that data base as a primary means to compile data and annually report on trends, variances, and comparisons regarding fees for service, cost of care, and malpractice. Additionally, the Commission encourages the development of clinical resource management systems that permit cost comparisons between various treatment settings and the availability of information to consumers, providers, and purchasers of health care; sets standards for the operation and licensing of medical care electronic claims clearinghouses; and reduces the costs of submitting and administering claims for health care practitioners and payors.

With Senate advice and consent, the Governor appoints the Commission's seven members to four-year terms. The Governor also designates the chairperson (Code Health—General Article, secs. 19-1501 through 19-1516).

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PRACTICE PARAMETERS

(410) 764-3460

The Advisory Committee on Practice Parameters was established in 1993 (Chapter 9, Acts of 1993). The Committee is to study the development of practice parameters for medical specialties and advise the Maryland Health Care Access and Cost Commission on the adoption and use of practice parameters. These parameters are intended to define appropriate clinical indications and methods of treatment for individual procedures or diseases that are subject to medical malpractice litigation. The parameters are meant to discourage inappropriate use; conform with standards of care; and meet certification, licensure or accreditation standards.

The Committee's fifteen members are appointed to four-year terms by the Governor, who designates the chairperson (Code Health—General Article, secs. 19-1601 through 19-1606).

#### HEALTH PROFESSIONALS BOARDS & COMMISSIONS PROGRAM

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The Division of Boards and Commissions was reorganized in 1986 as the Office of Boards and Commission Programs and, in 1993, as the Health

Professionals Boards and Commissions Program. The Program is responsible for the examination, licensing, regulation, and surveillance of health professionals in Maryland.

Under the Program are fifteen licensing and regulatory boards and one commission:

State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, & Speech-Language Pathologists  
State Board of Chiropractic Examiners  
State Board of Dental Examiners  
State Board of Dietetic Practice  
State Board of Electrologists  
State Commission on Kidney Disease  
State Board of Morticians  
State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators  
State Board of Occupational Therapy Practice  
State Board of Examiners in Optometry  
State Board of Pharmacy  
State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners  
State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners  
State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors  
State Board of Examiners of Psychologists  
State Board of Social Work Examiners

#### STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR AUDIOLOGISTS, HEARING AID DISPENSERS, & SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS

John M. Sloan, *Chairperson*, 1995  
Barbara A. Curtis, *Administrator*

4201 Patterson Ave.  
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The State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers, and Speech-Language Pathologists originated from three separate boards. The first was the Board of Examiners for Hearing Aid Dealers, formed in 1969 and placed within the Department of Licensing and Regulation in 1970 (Chapter 634, Acts of 1969; Chapter 402, Acts of 1970). The other two boards—the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, and the Board of Examiners for Speech Pathologists—both were formed in 1972 within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Chapter 547, Acts of 1972). In 1987, the speech pathologists' board was renamed the State Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathologists (Chapter 478, Acts of 1987). All three boards merged in 1992 to become the State Board of Examiners for Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dealers, and Speech-Language Pathologists within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Chapter 326, Acts of 1992). In 1993, the Board received its present name (Chapter 448, Acts of 1993). The Board licenses audiologists, hearing aid dispensers, and speech-language pathologists.