

September 21, 2023

Department of Labor & Industry
Business Standards Division
Board of Medical Examiners

Re: Montana Administrative Register Notice 24-156-94; Physician Assistants

Director Swanson and Mr. O'Connor,

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in drafting rules to implement HB 313 to allow for independent practice of physician assistants. Removing the requirement of chart review as determined by the Board of Medical Examiners Rule 24.156.1623 occurred because of acknowledging that "chart review for a physician assistant shall occur, with frequency and amount to be determined at the practice level and as described in the collaboration agreement."

In contrast to the acknowledgment of practice level control is rule 24.156.1622, which will require "A physician or physician assistant who has never previously acted as a collaborating provider in Montana must complete the online training for physician assistant collaboration and provide the certificate of completion upon request."

Collaboration is an integral part of medicine. All providers collaborate daily. Any trained provider already practices collaboration. To require training to collaborate with other providers oversteps the intent and express direction in HB 313 under Section 5 subsection 4(a) "**shall: (a) practice under written policies and procedures established at a practice level that...**"

Think of a medical practice specialty group with multiple providers within a large hospital. A collaboration rule they have set at the practice level is that the physician assistant with less than 8000 hours speaks with the on-call provider of the day for any questions or the provider who is familiar with a particular patient. The facility may allow for collaboration with providers outside of the specialty of the physician assistant. Would this rule necessitate that all providers at a large hospital group undergo the training if they were to "collaborate"? These types of collaborations already occur daily to provide high quality care for patients.

For proper and consistent implementation of HB 313 and to reflect the legislative intent, not only do chart review requirements occur at the practice level but so do collaboration policies and procedures as per section 5 subsection 4(a).

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Respectfully,

Representative Jodee Etchart
HB313 Bill Sponsor