

March 18, 2026

Humayun Chaudhry, DO
Executive Director
Federation of State Medical Boards
400 Fuller Wiser Road
Eules, TX 76039

Dear Dr. Chaudhry:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing with suggestions on how the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) Uniform Application (UA) can be further improved to support physicians' health and wellbeing. The specific recommendations are below, but let me first emphasize several key facts:

- The AMA national campaign to support medical students, residents, and practicing physicians' health and wellbeing has FSMB policy at its foundation. The FSMB landmark [2018 Report and Recommendations of the Workgroup on Physician Wellness and Burnout](#) continues to inform and guide AMA advocacy.
- FSMB leadership and collaboration with the AMA, Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation, American Osteopathic Association, and Federation of State Physician Health Programs has helped drive change in medical licensing applications to the point where 43 medical boards now have applications free of inappropriate, stigmatizing language about mental health and substance use. We look forward to working with you in 2026 to encourage reforms at every medical board.
- The collaborative efforts with the groups named above, along with many others, have helped create national change over the past three years. This change helped more than 2,100 hospitals and health systems adopt credentialing language changes modeled after the FSMB's original recommendations. This collaboration has generated increased support for state physician health programs and other efforts to support physicians' health and wellbeing.

The AMA commends the FSMB for its partnership to achieve this national success.

With respect to the UA, it is important to emphasize that the AMA has supported its use by states given that it asks questions and seeks information that does not require applicants to specifically disclose treatment or diagnosis of a mental illness or substance use disorder when there is no current impairment. In fact, from our vantage point, there are no questions on the Core UA, UA Form 2, or UA Form 3 that are inappropriate or stigmatizing. There is, however, one part of the Core UA and UA Form 2 that may unintentionally cause an applicant to disclose such information.

AMA recommends removing "Health issue" from the Core UA

Relating to the Core UA, under "Chronology of Activities," applicants are required to provide the start and end dates of activities from medical school graduation to the present. One of the options for an applicant to account for non-working time is for a "Health issue." (See *Figure 1* below.) The AMA

understands that a medical board may want to obtain as complete a history as possible for an applicant. It is not clear, however, how disclosure of a past health issue has relevance to a current applicant's fitness to practice medicine. In fact, as the FSMB's 2018 report notes, "Applications must not seek information about impairment that may have occurred in the distant past and state medical boards should limit the time window for such historical questions to two years or less, though a focus on the presence or absence of current impairment is preferred." The AMA agrees and as such, recommends that FSMB strike "Health issue" from the Core UA and replace it with "Other" to provide an open-ended option that does not unintentionally cause a stigmatizing disclosure.

Chronology of Activities	
<i>List all activities from medical school graduation to the present date in this section, except for the postgraduate training already entered. Include locum tenens and military assignments, unless otherwise indicated in the state board instructions. For each period of non-working time, describe the events that were happening and list your home address for that time.</i>	
<i>If you have additional activities to report, copy the next page as needed, then list the information and attach to this application. Do not substitute any other resume or curriculum vitae for this section.</i>	
1.	Start date _____ Description of non-working time _____ End date _____ or Business or School name _____ <input type="checkbox"/> In progress Address _____ Type of Activity <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate Training / Education <input type="checkbox"/> Work <input type="checkbox"/> Military Service <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation <input type="checkbox"/> Health Issue (non-work) PGT and Work only Position _____ Department _____ Clinical time (seeing patients in a clinical setting) ____% Administrative time (paperwork, research, etc.) ____% <input type="checkbox"/> I was considered to be on staff or employed in a non-educational training setting. <input type="checkbox"/> I was granted privileges by this institution to see patients and/or otherwise practice medicine. <input type="checkbox"/> I was a visiting professor, consultant, evaluator, or in a position not considered employment or training.

Figure 1. Core UA.

AMA recommends removing "Health" as an unusual circumstance on UA Form 2

The same issue and use of "Health" also appears on the UA Form 2, albeit in a slightly different presentation. On the UA Form 2, "Health" is listed as an "unusual circumstance" for an interruption or extension of an applicant's graduate medical education. (See Figure 2 below.) One of the primary reasons medical students, residents, and practicing physicians do not seek care for mental health or substance-related conditions is the fear of disclosure to a medical board or future employer. "Health" is one of the options of an "unusual circumstance" to disclose as a reason for an interruption. As noted above, the AMA understands that medical boards need to know whether applicants complete their training, but the AMA is concerned that by including "Health," it may have the unintended consequence of having medical students and residents not seek care due to fear of future disclosure. While an applicant could also interpret "personal or family" as including a health-related issue, removing "Health" makes clear that the FSMB is not encouraging disclosure of past conditions that are not relevant to an applicant's current fitness to practice medicine.

Unusual Circumstances			
The following questions apply to unusual circumstances that occurred during any part of the individual's medical or osteopathic education. Check the appropriate responses and provide dates and requested information. "Yes" responses to any of these questions require a copy of explanatory records or a written explanation attached to this form.			
1. Do the official records for this individual reflect interruptions or extensions in his/her medical/osteopathic education? If yes , indicate the reasons for each interruption or extension, the dates of each interruption or extension, and whether each interruption or extension was approved or unapproved. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal or family	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic remediation	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved
<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in a joint degree program	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved
<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in a non-research special study (e.g., fellowship, intl. experience)	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	From _____ to _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Unapproved

Figure 2. UA Form 2.

Comparison of UA Form 3 with Core UA and UA Form 2

UA Form 3 does not include "Health" as an option to choose if there was a break or interruption in training. (See Figure 3 below.) We believe this is the right approach and urge the FSMB to align the Core UA and UA Form 2 accordingly.

Unusual Circumstances: Check the appropriate responses and explain any "Yes" or omitted response(s) on a separate sheet of paper. Attach pages as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Research	
	1. Did this individual ever take a leave of absence or break from his/her training? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	2. Was this individual ever placed on probation? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	3. Was this individual ever disciplined or placed under investigation? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	4. Were any negative reports for behavioral reasons ever filed by instructors? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	5. Were any limitations or special requirements placed upon this individual because of questions of academic incompetence, disciplinary problems or any other reason? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Figure 3. UA Form 3.

One final recommendation that we encourage across all three applications is for FSMB to include a positive, clarifying statement in each of the applications that follows the purpose and intent of the FSMB's 2018 recommendations, as well as the FSMB's advocacy and guidance since then. We would be happy to discuss details around this final recommendation further.

Thank you again for your consideration of our recommendations, your leadership, and your strong collaboration. We are proud of the work we have accomplished together and about our future opportunities in this critical policy arena.

Should you have any questions or if we can provide further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly at 312-464-5288 or John.Whyte@ama-assn.org.

Sincerely,



John Whyte, MD, MPH