STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

Alaska Board of Pharmacy
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, August 20, 2026

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1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
   The meeting was called to order by Chair Schaber at 9:01 AM.

   Roll Call
   Board members present:
   Ashley Schaber, PharmD
   Rebekah Balmes, PharmD
   Sylvain Nouvion, PharmD
   Lillian Okpaleke, PharmD
   Julie McDonald, PharmD (Joined at 9:18 a.m.)
   Dyan Sanders, Pharm Tech
   Sara Rasmussen, Public Member (Joined at 9:30 a.m.)

2. **Ethics Disclosures**
   No ethics disclosures were made by board members.

3. **Consent Agenda**
   Consent agenda items were reviewed and approved by unanimous consent.

4. **Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) Update**
   Lisa Sherrell (PDMP Manager):

   - New Status Letter – a letter template has been created to send to pharmacists so they understand they must register with the PDMP if their pharmacy indicates they are dispensing

   - Third party vendor issue – An issue was identified regarding third party vendors submitting zero reports for pharmacies followed by the pharmacies themselves reporting dispensations. Many vendor accounts were inaccurately set up. The cleanup process has been extensive, with many accounts reporting for inactive or unlicensed pharmacies. So far, about 4,000 accounts have been reviewed, with 500 remaining. The number of delinquent dispensers is very small (about 12 weekly), and most issues are minor, such as missing a day or timestamp errors. No evidence of missing large amounts of data has been found, which is a positive outcome.

   - Additional update: We have recently started data-sharing with Puerto Rico. This

brings our total number of interstate data sharing partners to 28, including our military.

- A concern has been raised regarding discount cards being reported as commercial insurance instead of cash in pharmacy records. Lisa Sherrell explained that there is currently no way for the PDMP to differentiate between discount cards and insurance, as the reporting options are limited by how pharmacies code transactions. She noted that this issue has come up in other states, such as Michigan, which is working on clarifying definitions in their regulations. Julie McDonald and others echoed the difficulty in distinguishing discount cards from insurance programs, especially since the cards can appear similar and pharmacies may not always be aware when a discount card is used. Both agreed that while differentiation would be helpful, it may not significantly impact practice or safety and is a nationwide conversation.

  Action item: Follow up with other states concerning Discount cards.

5. **Division Update**

Glenn Saviers, Deputy Director:

- Division leadership changes – Director Sylvan Robb has left her position with the division. While the Director position is vacant, if there is anything you would need from the Director, you are welcome to contact Director Saviers

- Executive Administrator position – remains vacant; because there is a hiring freeze, special approvals are needed to fill the position. Once approval is received, Chair Schaber will serve on the interview panel for the new EA.

- HB 195 Implementation – HB 195 will go into effect on January 1, 2027. Since Statute overrides regulations, this means that any regulations that conflict with HB 195 will no longer be enforceable, including the regulations under the Medical Board concerning Cooperative Practice Agreements. It will take time to get all the obsolete regulations repealed. The division will put out some FAQs regarding this. A spreadsheet was reviewed highlighting the practice and proposed regulatory changes imposed by HB 195. Changes include the requirement that when a provider prescribes an opioid that meets criteria listed in the statute, the prescriber must prescribe an opioid overdose drug; PDMP registration and new CME requirements for pharmacists who hold DEA registrations.

- Status of AO36 Regulation Projects – Deputy Director Saviers explained that Governor Dunleavy implemented Administrative Order 360, requiring all Alaska state agencies—including professional licensing boards—to engage in regulatory reform. The goal is to reduce redundant, burdensome, or unnecessary regulations, with each board reviewing and mapping their regulations in a detailed spreadsheet to identify areas for improvement or necessary additions for public safety and labeling potentially projects with a priority. The Board of Pharmacy has completed this first task and now may begin submitting prioritized project. The Department of Law, which processes all regulatory projects statewide, is now accepting prioritized

projects, but progress is slow due to a backlog and limited staff.

- Licensing Update / Status of Renewal Cycle - As of last week 6,007 licenses had been renewed and 47 licenses are pending incomplete information. The process went smoothly and was automatic for those without professional fitness concerns. During the peak, processing time reached about three weeks due to document volume, but turnaround has improved to about a week and a half. Currently, individuals with incomplete renewals have until the end of September to submit missing information, thanks to a regulation that extends their licenses. Initial applications are also being processed more efficiently, now averaging about a week and a half.

- Public Meeting packets - public board meeting packets are no longer posted online because federal law requires all documents to be ADA compliant, a process that is too time-consuming for the limited staff. Instead, the packets can be requested via email and will be sent promptly. While these materials remain publicly available, the change ensures compliance and maintains low licensing fees by avoiding additional staffing costs.

6. **Public Comment Period**
   There were no members of the public who requested to provide comments.

7. **Industry Updates**
   Brandy Seignmartin, PharmD, Executive Director, Alaska Pharmacy Association (AKPhA), highlighted the enactment of the prescriptive authority bill, which became law via veto override on June 19th and will take effect in January 2027. She emphasized the importance of following statutory guardrails and standards of care, ensuring pharmacists operate within their education, training, and competence, and referring patients when necessary. The board was encouraged to avoid overly prescriptive regulations and instead focus broadly on accountability, quality improvement, and safety. Additional highlights included:

   - Recent statewide symposium, where industry leaders discussed operationalizing new services, such as test-and-treat, minor ailment management, preventive care, smoking cessation, women's health, and collaborative practice opportunities. She expressed excitement about increased access to care, especially in rural areas, and noted the high level of pharmacist training in Alaska.

   - The use of collaborative practice agreements in areas like specialty care and opioid use disorder. Seignemartin discussed ongoing challenges with ordering limits for buprenorphine-containing products, confusion about regulatory authority, and the need to involve the state Attorney General due to restrictions stemming from opioid litigation agreements. She invited continued engagement and collaboration to address these dispensing challenges.

   - Key developments and challenges within the pharmacy ecosystem in Alaska. There is a focus on better utilizing pharmacy technicians through enhanced education and training, which is expected to positively impact pharmacy operations. Community pharmacies are expanding service lines, such as medication-assisted therapy, resulting

in improved access and inspiring others to consider similar models. Recent visits from national pharmacy associations and leaders provided valuable insights into Alaska's unique healthcare landscape, including rural and tribal operations, which informed policy advocacy efforts.

- Several pharmacy projects are planned to receive funding through the Rural Healthcare Transformation Program (RHTP) to improve facilities and services, including after-hours medication access and innovative programs like drone transportation for medical supplies.

- The conversation also addressed new proposed compounding regulations, emphasizing the importance of safety but cautioning about potential unintended consequences, such as reduced access for rural and smaller pharmacies due to strict USP standards. There were concerns about compounded GLP-1 products from non-regulated sources and the need for transparency and oversight, especially for out-of-state pharmacies. Suggestions were made to consider scientifically accepted alternatives and independent accreditation to maintain safety without limiting patient access.

- An invitation to the upcoming Health System Pharmacy and Leadership Conference and an openness to further discussion on regulatory language and models.

8. **Controlled Substances Advisory Committee**
   Ms. Rasmussen reported that the committee has not met but is planning to get a meeting calendared for the Fall. Julie McDonald advised that Jerry Short with the DEA is willing to participate in this committee, not as an active participant, but to provide information as needed.

9. **Rural Health Transformation Program Update**
   Chair Schaber reported that as of this week there have been two sets of projects released for $34.5 million announced and there is still $237 million left to be announced in the next few weeks. Several projects impacting pharmacies around the state have already been selected.

10. **Collaboration with Medical Board Update**
    Julie McDonald reported that she met with the Executive Administrator for the Alaska State Medical Board and offered to open the lines of communication, to start relationship building, and to be a point of contact when issues arise between the boards.

11. **Division Investigations Update**
    - Holly Handly, Investigator presented the Investigative Report
      - Reporting period: May 12, 2026 to August 5, 2026
      - 33 cases opened, 26 closed.

    - Case Reviews:
      - Board members confirmed review of case materials.

On a motion duly made by Dr. Schaber, seconded by Ms. Rasmussen and approved by a roll call vote, the Board approved the Orders for the Voluntary Surrender of License in Case Numbers 2026-000395, 2026-000098-Prb and 2025-000982-Prb.

Roll Call: Yeas, Dr. Balmes, Dr. Okpaleke, Dr. Nouvion, Dr. McDonald, Mr. Sanders, Dr. Schaber, Ms. Rasmussen

12. **Board Business**

A. **Compounding Inspection Form Work Group Update and Regulation Proposal**

Billy Homestead, Senior Investigator, explained that the work group was formed to review and revise inspection sheets.. The workgroup reviewed other states' compounding inspection programs and used that information to aid in drafting inspection forms regarding compounding for Alaska. During that process, the group identified the need for updates to regulation prior to finalization and implementation of the inspection forms to ensure clear expectations for Licensees and enforceability by the Board.

In addition to Mr. Homestead, work group members include Rebekah Balmes, Dylan Sanders and Holly Handley. The group examined and is recommending changing Alaska's regulations to mirror those of Washington and mirroring Washington's inspection worksheets. The draft regulations changes were presented and discussed.

Concerns were raised by board members about implementing USP standards and the challenge of regulating compounded medications entering Alaska from out-of-state pharmacies. Sending investigators to other states is costly and time-consuming, so the group considered holding other states responsible for their own inspections and possibly leveraging NABP programs for oversight.

The discussion touched on the distinction between self-inspections and regulatory oversight, the importance of board member involvement in inspections, and the potential downstream effects of strict USP regulation. There was agreement on updating outdated compounding practice guides and possibly conducting mock self-inspections for baseline data. Additionally, the discussion briefly addressed whether oversight should extend to med spas and IV hydration clinics, concluding that facilities requiring pharmacy licenses would fall under the board's jurisdiction, but broader regulatory changes should avoid unintended consequences and involve other boards as appropriate.

Action Item: Follow up regarding the status of the department's Medical Spa Work group, FAQs.

The need for clear, enforceable standards was highlighted, as current regulations are seen as vague and difficult to enforce. It was suggested that a special work meeting for the board be scheduled to include licensees who do compounding, representatives from the Alaska

Pharmacy Association, NABP, and other relevant partners to ensure broad perspectives.

On a motion duly made by Dr. Schaber, seconded by Dr. Balmes and approved by a roll call vote, the Board approved holding a special meeting to gather more information from stakeholders related to the proposal to change regulations related to compounding oversight.

Roll Call: Yeas, Dr. Balmes, Dr. Okpaleke, Dr. Nouvion, Dr. McDonald, Mr. Sanders, Dr. Schaber, Ms. Rasmussen

B. **NABP Member Forum**
Administrative Order 358, restricting travel for the executive branch, remains in place, requiring special approval for all out-of-state travel. Chair Schaber reported that the request for travel approval for a member of the Board to attend this forum was denied.

C. **NABP Annual Meeting Approved Resolutions**
Chair Schaber provided a brief overview of the four resolutions approved at the NABP Annual Meeting:
- Public Access to Vaccination Services by Pharmacy Personnel
- Virtual Facilities
- Review of the Multistate Inspection Blueprint Program
- Community Health Workers

D. **Safeguarding Americans from Fraudulent and Experimental (SAFE) Drugs Act (S. 3794 / H.R. 6509)**
Board members briefly discussed this proposed federal legislation and determined they needed more information before drafting a letter of support.

Action Item: Add this legislation to the watchlist for Statutes and Regulations Committee, and have staff pull some history on the bill, to allow for better deliberation.

E. **Regulations**
- **HB 195:** Proposed regulations to conform with new requirements imposed by HB195 related to new CME opioid education, registering with the PDMP and offering opioid overdose medications were reviewed and discussed. A question was raised regarding whether any changes are needed to address pharmacist authority to practice through telemedicine.

  Action Item: Explore in state law whether pharmacists are included in the telemedicine exemptions for prescribing controlled substances for Opioid Use Disorder without a physical exam.

  On a motion duly made by Dr. Schaber, seconded by Ms. Rasmussen and approved by a roll call vote, the Board approved the initiation of a regulations project for public comment unless substantive changes are made by the regulation's specialist or Department of Law to make the changes as presented

in sections 12 AC 52.070, 52.095, 52.320. 52.240, 52.855 as well as a new section to comply with HB 195 related to opioid continuing education and PDMP registration requirements.

Roll Call:
Yeas, Dr. Balmes, Dr. Okpaleke, Dr. Nouvion, Mr. Sanders, Dr. Schaber, Ms. Rasmussen.
Nays, McDonald

The board recessed for lunch at 12:05p.m. and returned on the record at 12:37 p.m.

Roll Call
Board members present:

Ashley Schaber, PharmD
Rebekah Balmes, PharmD
Sylvain Nouvion, PharmD
Lillian Okpaleke, PharmD
Julie McDonald, PharmD
Dyan Sanders, Pharm Tech
Sara Rasmussen, Public Member

- **AO 360:** The Board reviewed and discussed its spreadsheet containing proposed regulation changes related to the AO 360 initiative, noting those changes determined as having the highest priority.

  On a motion duly made by Dr. Schaber, seconded by Dr. McDonald and approved by a roll call vote, the Board decided to the initiate a regulation project in accordance with AO 360 priority-one projects by approving the changes as presented to the following regulations for public comment unless substantive changes are made by the regulations specialist or department of law: 12 AAC 52.200, 2 AAC 52.400, 12 AAC 52.410, 12 AAC 52.420, 12 AAC 52.443, 12 AAC 52.444, 12 AAC 52.445, 12 AAC 52.446, 12 AAC 52.595, 12 AAC 52.992 and 12 AAC 52.995 and regulations project PHA112 as previously presented.

  Roll Call: Yeas, Dr. Balmes, Dr. Okpaleke, Dr. Nouvion, Dr. McDonald, Mr. Sanders, Dr. Schaber, Ms. Rasmussen

F. **Wholesale Drug Distributions, 3rd party Logistics providers, and deliveries**
Sylvain Nouvion introduced this topic, noting that while having a discussion with Investigations it was discovered that there is a loophole in regulations regarding wholesale drug distributors and third-party logistics providers (3PLs). Currently, common couriers can deliver medications without oversight, as statutes exist for 3PLs but not for these couriers. Lost or stolen medications have resulted from this gap, and board members agreed it needs to be addressed. It was agreed to create a task to investigate how

other states handle courier oversight and to check the NABP Survey of Pharmacy Law for relevant information.

13. **Task List Review**
    Outstanding and new tasks were reviewed and assigned

14. **Chair Final Comments**
    - Chair Schaber thanked board members and staff for their participation, noting that as a board with just seven members she appreciates everyone's commitment and hard work and believes that together the board is making really good changes to help increase access to care and improve safety in Alaska.
    - Next quarterly meeting: November 19.
    - Special meeting for Compounding Inspections and AO 360 Workgroup meetings to be scheduled before the November meeting

15. **Adjournment**
    Meeting adjourned at 1:35 PM by unanimous consent.