

# NJAOPS Supports the Health Care Transparency Act Signed by Governor Murphy

*Win for D.O.'s: Law Will Require Advance Practice Nurses, Physicians Assistants Are Now Required to be Properly Identified on Name Tags in Patient Care Settings*

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NJ's citizens deserve clear and accurate information about who is providing their care."

*David Bollard, DO, President of NJAOPS*

sponsored by Senate President Sweeney and Assemblyman Conaway, designated as the "[New Jersey Health Care Transparency Act](#)" was signed on December 14, 2020. The new law is now known as P.L. 2020, c.133, and it will become effective six months from the date of signing in June of 2021.

This was a great legislative victory for the Access to Care Coalition, of which, NJAOPS is an active member.

This bill requires health care providers to affirmatively communicate their licensure type to patients verbally and in writing during all patient encounters, and requires health care professional advertising to be free from deceptive or misleading information. The bill also requires physicians who advertise themselves as "board certified" to have completed robust training and examination requirements.

The New Jersey Association of Osteopathic Physicians (NJAOPS) as well as the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) believes that these truth-in-advertising requirements will help to reduce patient confusion and protect patient safety by preventing fraud and deceptive practices, and enable patients to make informed decisions about who provides their care.

"Patients deserve to know who is providing their care, and are often confused about the differences between various types of health care practitioners", stated David Bollard, DO, NJAOPS President. Ambiguous practitioner terminology and misleading advertisements only exacerbate patient confusion. As a result, patients often think that they are seeing a physician when they are not. A recent national survey found that only 51% of patients believe that it is easy to distinguish a physician from a non-physician clinician.

Patients have an even more difficult time identifying the qualifications of specific professions. For example, 54% of respondents thought that an optometrist was a physician, 41% identified a

psychologist as a physician and 35% thought a doctor of nursing practice was a physician. Moreover, 87% of survey respondents indicated that they would support legislation to require health care advertising materials to clearly designate the level of education, skill and training of all health care practitioners.

These statistics demonstrate that patients need assistance in identifying the credentials of their health care practitioners, and that they overwhelmingly support truth-in-advertising laws. The written disclosure and name tag requirements contained in the new law will provide patients with important information about their health care providers' licensure. In addition, the truth-in-advertising component will protect patients by requiring advertisements which feature health care practitioners to accurately state the practitioners' credentials, and prohibit the use of inaccurate or misleading information. These measures will help patients who consult non-physician clinicians to more easily understand the qualifications of their health care providers and make informed choices about where they seek medical treatment.

"New Jersey's citizens deserve clear and accurate information about who is providing their care. The NJAOPS applauds Governor Murphy and the Legislature for enacting this bi-partisan measure which will protect patient safety and promote transparency for consumers, concluded NJAOPS President, David Bollard, DO.

1 Baseline & Associates conducted a telephone survey among 801 adults nationwide between March 8 and 12, 2012.

2 Id.

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