

# The results are in. . .

## Survey results reveal licensee bias against prescribing controlled substances to self/family, provide insight to NCMB Task Force

For some months now, the *Forum* has sought ways to engage readers and solicit direct feedback from licensees of the Board. So when the Board took up the subject of treating self and/or family, we saw it as an opportunity to take those efforts one step further. In the Summer 2011 issue of the *Forum*, Board President Janice E. Huff, MD, asked licensees to participate in an online survey to share their views.

Readers impressed the NCMB with their enthusiastic response to its first-ever licensee survey. More than 1,000 licensees completed the survey on treating self, family and other close associates. That makes the survey the most successful endeavor in Board history to collect feedback directly from licensees. Thank you to everyone who participated!

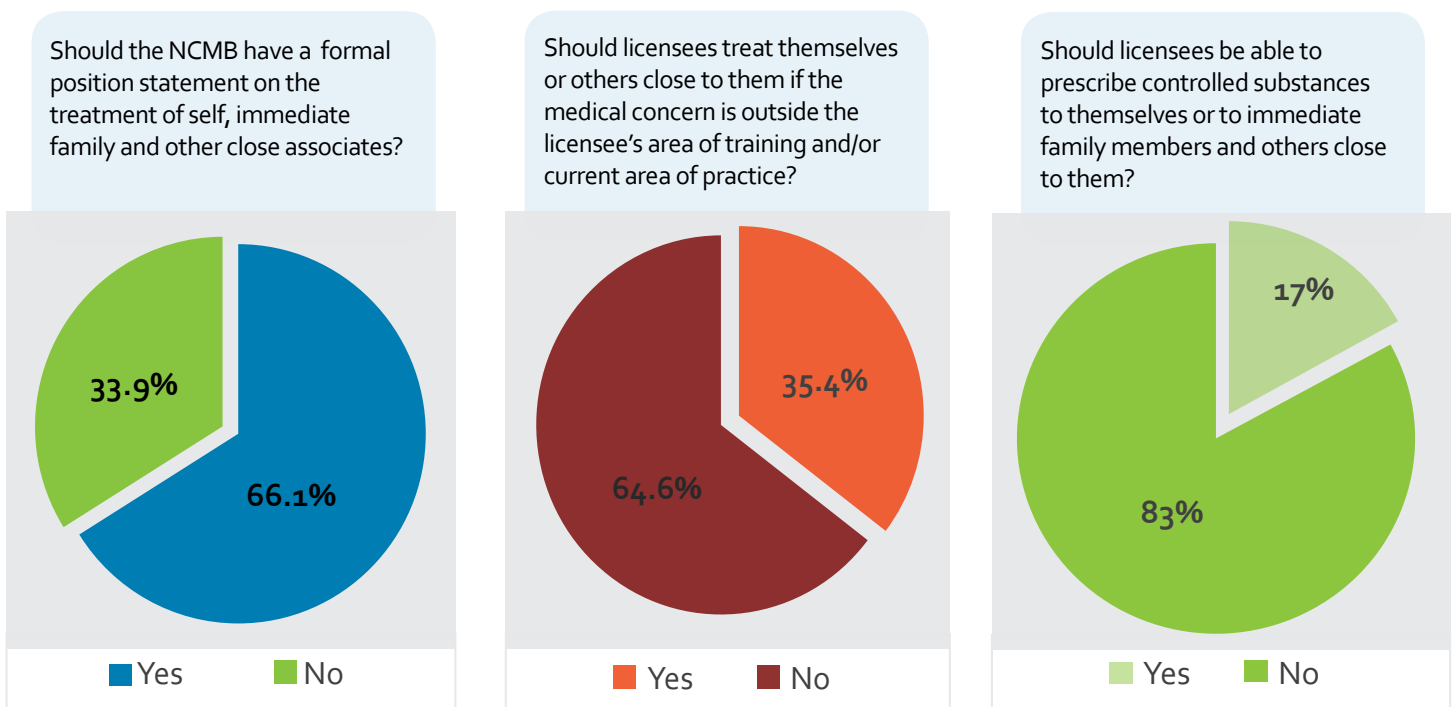
The online survey augmented the NCMB's efforts to solicit licensees' views on its position statement entitled, *Self-treatment and treatment of family members and others with whom significant emotional relationships exist*, which is under review. The survey was live on the NCMB's website for a period of about three weeks beginning in late July. More than 700 respondents took the time to provide optional written comments with their survey responses. Members of the Board's Task Force on Self Treatment read and considered these comments as part of their review of the existing position statement.

In addition, more than 60 *Forum* readers posted comments to the online version of Dr. Huff's President's Message on treating self/family, setting a new record for comments to articles. These comments were also included in the Task Force's review materials.

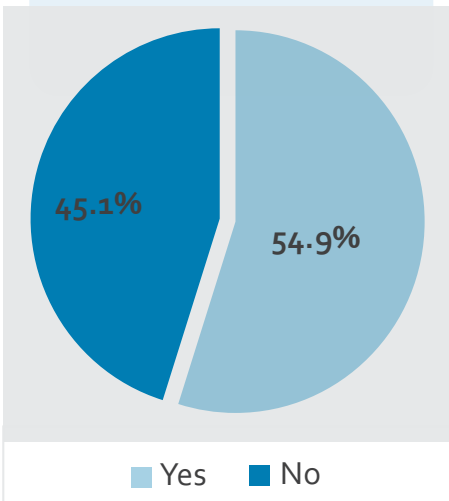
### Position statement update

The Board's Policy Committee reviewed a revised draft of the existing position statement on treatment of self/family at its September meeting. The Board voted to table the matter to allow the Policy Committee to consider additional changes to the position statement. The Policy Committee expects to present an updated version of the statement for consideration by the full Board at the November Board meeting.

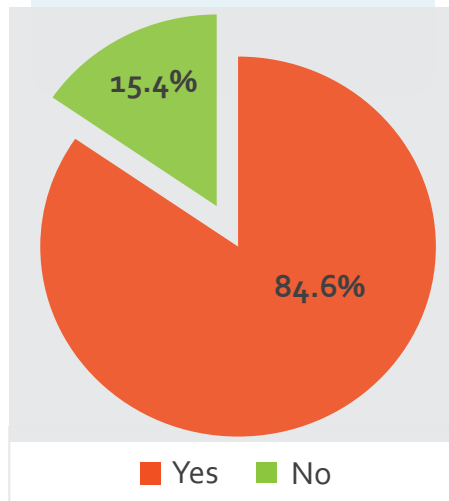
On a related note, the Board voted in September to pursue an administrative rule that would prohibit licensees from writing prescriptions for controlled substances for themselves, immediate family members and certain others. This decision was based on feedback from licensees and other interested parties, who made clear in comments to the Board that they consider prescribing controlled substances to self and/or family to be inappropriate.



Have you self-treated or prescribed for yourself?



Have you treated/prescribed for an immediate family member, a significant other, close friend, etc?



## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

More than 700 licensees provided written comments to the survey, which asked: *What steps can the NCMB take to improve its position statement on treatment of self/family?*

Most written comments focused on the following:

**Controlled Substances:** Physicians should not prescribe controlled substances to self and/or family.

**Treating Family Members:** Physicians should be able to treat themselves and/or family for minor acute illnesses.

**Scope of Practice:** Treatment of self and/or family should be allowed if it is within the physician's scope of practice.

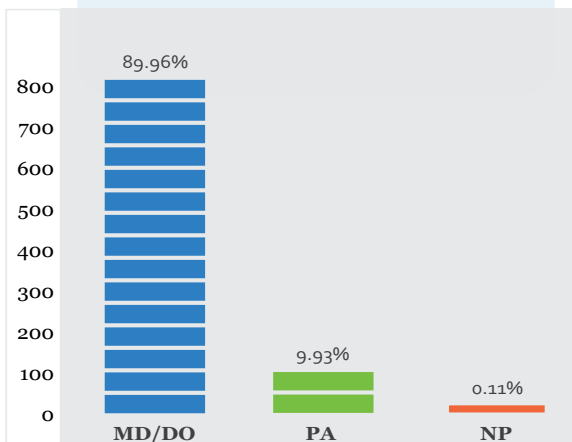
A majority of respondents felt that the Board's current position statement on self treatment was both too strict and too vague. Many agreed that physicians are capable of using good judgment in treating all patients, even self and family.

All written comments received were considered as part of the Board's review and revision of the current position statement.

*\*The term 'family' encompasses family members and others with whom a significant emotional relationship exists.*

## Who took the survey?

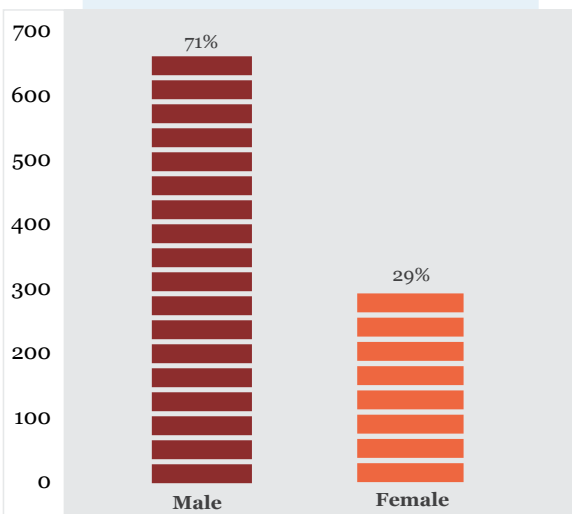
License type: MD/DO, PA and NP



Age Ranges

Age Range	Total
20-29	1.10%
30-39	19.08%
40-49	25.77%
50-59	33.88%
60-69	16.45%
70-79	3.29%
80-89	0.43%

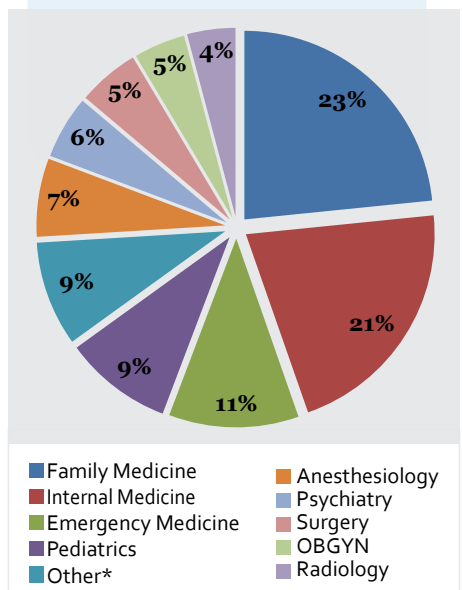
Gender: Male and Female



Practice Setting

Practice Setting	Total
Academic	4%
Both Rural and Urban	2%
Hospital	2%
Private Practice	3%
Retired	1%
Rural	26%
Suburban	7%
Urban	55%

Top 10 Areas of Practice



*\*Includes misc. areas of practice with less than '5' response rate (i.e. Geriatrics, Pain Medicine, Pulmonology, etc.)*