

Attachment number One

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Cooper, Kelly (DOH)" <Kelly.Cooper@DOH.WA.GOV>
Date: April 3, 2020 at 11:18:30 AM PDT
To: "Becker, Sen. Randi" <Randi.Becker@leg.wa.gov>
Cc: "Black, Ryan (DOH)" <Ryan.Black@DOH.WA.GOV>
Subject: follow-up from call

Dear Senator Becker,

I want follow back up on our conversation from earlier this week. I have not received a response specific to your questions around treatment for kidney stones. However, I wanted to share this information from the Washington Medical Commission's website. I've highlighted some guidance around non-urgent medical procedures that I found there.

<https://wmc.wa.gov/news/wmc-pandemic-regulatory-intent>

WMC Pandemic Regulatory Intent

The mission of the WMC begins with the statement "We promote patient safety and enhance the integrity of the profession ..." In this time of crisis, it is the intent of the WMC to support the practice of medicine in the face of extreme conditions.

To support the public, regulatory agencies must support the front-line practitioners. We recognize there are shortages of equipment and that difficult to impossible decisions must be made. Physicians and physician assistants (PA's) are being asked to work long hours, under unusually stressful conditions and may be called upon to serve in areas outside their usual scope of practice.

Washington citizens are safer because of our physicians, PA's, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who extend themselves to address needs resulting from the pandemic. Under these conditions, practitioners need support, not fear of regulatory action. The WMC is working with other state agencies and the Governor's Office, to remove regulatory hurdles to patient care and licensing, so practitioners may respond during this emergency.

The WMC also wants to provide clarity around the Governor's Proclamation 20-05 regarding Non-Urgent Medical Procedures. Focus of practitioners should be on the health and wellbeing of patients. Practitioners who feel holding-off on a surgery would be a detriment to the

patient's quality of life, or would result in a patient's condition worsening, should not fear disciplinary action for performing the surgery.

Under these circumstances, practitioners deserve and have the support of the WMC. Practitioners should not fear for their well-intentioned actions. During this crisis, the WMC will focus on the intent of the practitioner and the realistic availability or non-availability of possible alternatives. Put another way, when assessing complaints related to practitioner's work we will consider the difficult circumstances and choices they are facing. The WMC wants you to focus on treating the patient in front of you to the best of your ability.

Practitioners can be reassured that the single greatest priority of the WMC is getting the best care possible delivered to Washington patients. We understand that in crisis circumstances your options, as a practitioner, may be limited. We are hopeful this statement clarifies our support and encouragement of practitioners in whatever treatment situation they may find themselves.

I will continue trying to get more clarity for your specific questions, but hope this is helpful in the meantime. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Best Regards,

Kelly Cooper, Director

Policy & Legislative Relations

Washington State Department of Health

kelly.cooper@doh.wa.gov

360-688-0857 | www.doh.wa.gov

