



June 2017

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS), and the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association (MHA), we are writing to request your continued partnership in the Commonwealth's multi-faceted strategy to curb the current opioid epidemic.

We recognize the pivotal role that trainees play on the front lines of the Commonwealth's prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support services each and every day. It has never been more important that new physicians coming into the field have a strong knowledge base and skillset that prepares them for the challenging situations they will encounter.

Over the past year, Governor Baker, in collaboration with institutions of higher education and professional societies, has convened four working groups – medical, dental, advanced practice nursing, and physician assistant – representing all of the Commonwealth's prescriber education programs and professional societies for these professions. Each school has committed to the establishment of curricular interventions and innovations to ensure that the competencies are being addressed for all students, allowing schools to tailor these competencies to their own curriculum development.

Recently, MHA, MMS, and DPH issued Guidelines for Prescription Opioid Management within Hospitals. To date, every hospital in the Commonwealth, including your facility, signed a commitment letter to implement the guidelines that included residency program best practices. For your review, a copy of the MHA guidelines is available at: <http://www.mhalink.org/sudpttf>.

As Designated Institutional Officials (DIOs) and faculty, we know you are committed to addressing this critical issue. As the core competencies are integrated into undergraduate medical education in Massachusetts, we are also requesting your assistance to ensure that core competencies are integrated into the graduate medical education and training of your institution's residents and fellows. We also want to make sure you have up to date information on the education and training that is available for residents and fellows.

We have put together a compilation of free and readily accessible education modules, which have been selected to assist DIOs in integrating these competencies into their respective programs. The modules are available online and may be accessed at [www.massmed.org/corecomp/](http://www.massmed.org/corecomp/).

You are encouraged to request that all residents and fellows complete these modules – or your own program adaptations – to both strengthen their practice and help lead Massachusetts in its efforts to prevent and treat substance use disorders. If you have any questions regarding the competencies or the education modules, please direct them to: [dph@mms.org](mailto:dph@mms.org).

Your ongoing efforts to meet the ever-changing challenges of this epidemic are critical, and your collaboration is very much appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Monica Bharel, MD, MPH  
Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Public Health



Henry L. Dorkin, MD, FAAP  
President, Massachusetts Medical Society



Steven M. Defossez, MD, EMHL, CPE  
Vice President, Clinical Integration, Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association

Reference:

Academic Medicine article: “Developing Core Competencies for the Prevention and Management of Prescription Drug Misuse: A Medical Education Collaboration in Massachusetts”

[http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Citation/2016/10000/Developing\\_Core\\_Competencies\\_for\\_the\\_Prevention.13.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Citation/2016/10000/Developing_Core_Competencies_for_the_Prevention.13.aspx)

CC: Hospital CEO/President  
CMO  
Massachusetts Medical School Deans