

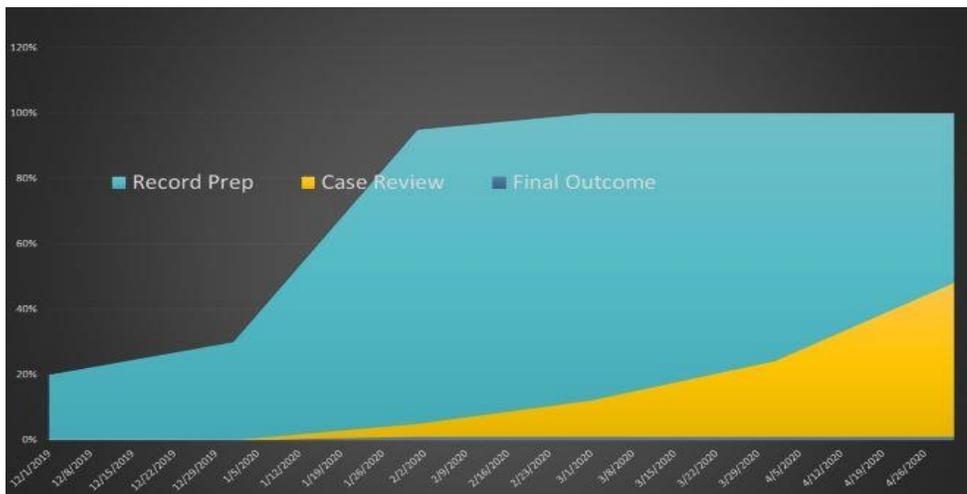


The Governor’s Working Group on Richard Strauss
C/O: Director Thomas J. Stickrath, J.D.
Ohio Department of Public Safety
1970 W Broad St.
Columbus, OH 43223

May 15, 2020

Director Stickrath and Members of the Governor’s Working Group on Richard Strauss:

On behalf of the State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO) members and staff, I have attached the Board’s updated project plan for implementing the Working Group’s suggested changes to SMBO processes and procedures. Progress continues for all identified areas for improvement or implementation. Our work remains at about 75% complete, excluding the historical case review. We should see more items finalized as we wrap up the working group’s recommended audit over the next few months.



Work on the historical case review has increased exponentially over the past few months. We have now reviewed over 50% of the 1200 identified licensees that had sexual misconduct complaints. The licensees were reviewed in priority order, with active licensees with multiple complaints as the highest priority. As work progresses through the prioritized list, the reviews are

less complicated and, consequently, less time consuming.

Once a historical complaint has been reviewed by the external reviewer, the complaint moves to our internal team for next steps. Complaints recommended by the reviewer to remain closed go through one more internal vetting. If the internal vetting confirms the external reviewer’s recommendation to keep a complaint closed, the Executive Director has been delegated the necessary board authority to provide final sign off on keeping the complaint closed. Complaints recommended by the reviewer for reopen will go through the necessary investigative or enforcement steps, some of which may still result in closure dependent on further investigation or legal viability. The team working on the complaints recommended for reopen will work closely with the SMBO’s victim advocate to account for the needs and wishes of the victim. These complaints will be worked throughout the calendar year. We will have better statistics on how many complaints are going to be reopened as we get further into the work.

In other work, the SMBO staff has been actively engaged with the audit team from the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB). Due to the pandemic, the FSMB will conduct all interviews remotely. An extensive document review is underway by the FSMB team. Additionally, interviews with SMBO senior staff, the SMBO president and the SMBO secretary and supervising member have begun and will wrap up next week. We anticipate having a final report from FSMB by the end of the fiscal year. Due to SMBO budget constraints, the FSMB graciously offered a significant discount on their work.

Finally, of note is a training that our Chief of Investigations, James Roach, coordinated with the Ohio Victim Witness Association. This half day training was created by OVWA with an understanding of the SMBO's need to further develop our understanding and work with the victims in our complaints. In attendance from the SMBO were all the investigators, the enforcement attorneys, and board legal staff. Trainings such as this are critical to staff's continued understanding and appreciation of the victim.

Our sexual misconduct committee of the board continues, despite the remote nature of our board meetings. We anticipate the next committee meeting to be held in the morning of June 10, 2020 prior to our regular board meeting. The meeting will be broadcast from a link on the SMBO website. We will let you know the time of the committee meeting when our final board agenda is set.

We appreciate the continued partnership of the Working Group and look forward to meeting with you soon.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MS', is positioned above the typed name.

Michael Schottenstein, M.D.
President, State Medical Board of Ohio