

STATE OF MARYLAND

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

BOARD OF PHARMACY



FISCAL YEAR 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2019

through

June 30, 2020

Vision:

Setting a standard for pharmaceutical service which ensures safety and quality healthcare for the citizens of Maryland.

Mission:

To protect Maryland consumers and to promote quality health care in the field of pharmacy, through licensing pharmacists, registering pharmacy technicians and student interns, issuing permits to pharmacies and distributors, setting standards for the practice of pharmacy through regulations and legislation, receiving and resolving complaints, and educating consumers.

FY 2020 BOARD COMMISSIONERS

President

Kevin Morgan

Chain Drug Store Representative

Secretary

Rhonda Toney

Chain Store Representative

Treasurer

Neil B. Leikach

Independent Representative

Dan Ashby

Acute Care Hospital Representative

Efstratios (Steve) Bouyoukas

Chain Drug Store Representative

Karla Evans

Acute Care Hospital Representative

Brenda Oliver

Consumer Representative

Peggy Geigher

Consumer Representative

Ellen H. Yankellow

At Large Representative

Alford Laws, Jr.

Consumer Representative

Kristen Fink

At Large Representative

BOARD COUNSEL

Linda Bethman, AAG

Brett Felter, Staff Attorney

Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 BOARD STAFF 410-764-4755

EXECUTIVE

<i>Speights-Napata, Deena</i> - Executive Director	Board Operations, Board Units, Board Members and Board Minutes, PIA requests
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DATA INTEGRITY PROCESSING AND ASSESSMENT

<i>Jordan, Nakia</i> – Manager of Program Intake, Assessment, and Evaluation Chew, Christine -Management Associate Goodman, Rhonda – Customer Service Lead Specialist Jackson, Leroy - Customer Service Specialist Lane, Joy - Customer Service Specialist Tates, Lawrence – Customer Service Specialist Gray, Leo -Public Affairs Specialist	Scans all documents into licensee files. Answers Incoming Calls and Emails
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COMPLIANCE

Leak, Trina -Director of Compliance Goldberg, Donna -Compliance Pharmacist Wang Roehen -Investigations Supervisor Jada Collins – Investigator Goodman, Kimberly - Investigator McLaughlin, Heather - Compliance Coordinator West, Shiela – Investigator Pasay, Jered -Laboratory Scientist	Complaints, Pharmacy Practice, Disciplinary, Investigations and Pharmacists Rehabilitation
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INSPECTION

<i>Richard, Nancy</i> – Inspection Supervisor Barefield, Amanda - Pharmacy Inspector Taylor, Michelle -Pharmacy Inspector Stokes, Shelton - Pharmacist Inspector Weigley, Kerri - Pharmacy Inspector Young, Shanelle - Pharmacy Inspector	Inspections, Pharmacy Practice
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LEGISLATION & REGULATIONS AND LICENSING

<i>James, Doris</i> – Licensing Manager Lanteon-Edmonds, Darchelle - Licensing Specialist Valerio, Lauren -Licensing Specialist Wise, Keisha - Licensing Specialist	Licensing, Permits, and Registration, Reciprocity, and Scores
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MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

<i>Fields, Edward</i> – Deputy Director and Operations Manager Green, Jacqueline - Database Specialist Partin, Janey – Computer Specialist	Computer, Database and Website and On-line Renewals
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Executive Director's Report	1
Operations Report	4
Public Relations Report	6
Licensing Unit Report	8
Compliance Unit Report	11
Legislation Report	19
Management and Information Systems Unit Report	23
Customer Service	24
Data Information Processing and Assessment	25

Maryland Board of Pharmacy

FY 20 Year in Review



DEENA SPEIGHTS-NAPATA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Board Year In Review Summary

Information/Technology Development

- An electronic Distributor application was developed to ensure an easy distributor application process.
- An electronic inspection form was developed which cut by 50% the time needed to conduct and document an inspection
- Development of Fraud Detection protocol to increase efforts at protecting personal identifier information of licensees

Board of Pharmacy Collaborations

- Maryland Governor's Opioid Operational Command Center member

- UMES and Howard University pharmacy student presentations
- Internship/preceptor agreement with UMES established University of Baltimore Law School internship agreement in progress
- Maryland Society of Health-System Pharmacy member
- Maryland Office of Controlled Substances Administration
- Maryland Medicaid
- MDH Career Day
- MDH Office of Infectious Disease in promotion of syringe sales in pharmacies
- DEA Annual Drug Take Back Day promotion
- Regional Opioid 7 Substance Abuse Summit—Meeting with Washington DC, Virginia, and MD opioid epidemic strategists
- National boards of pharmacy annual regional and national meetings
- Maryland chain pharmacies
- USP 800 Director of Compliance certification
- Maryland Hospital Association—Naloxone Prescribing and Dispensing and Hospital Role in Addressing The Opioid Crises, Overdose Survivors Outreach Project, and Alcohol and Drug Use Screening webinar series
- Pharmacists Prescribing Contraceptives Workgroup
- Maryland Behavioral Health Administration, Prescription Drug Monitoring Program
- East Coast Regional Controlled Substances Coalition
- FDA Annual meeting

Procurements

- Software engineering contract to develop and monitor digital inspection form
- New Rehabilitation Committee contract developed and posted for bid. The new contract expands the scope of work, increases funding, and extends the term of service to up to 5 years.

Staffing

- National certification for staff inspectors and investigators
- National certification in sterile compounding inspections

Legislation and Regulation

- Implementation of Maryland Contraception prescribing legislation
- Investigational Drugs, Biological Products, and Devices - Right to Try Act
- Licensed Pharmacists - Risks of Opioid Addiction - Notifications
- State Board of Pharmacy - Registered Pharmacy Technicians - Exemption for Pharmacy Students

- Oncologists – Dispensing and Insurance Coverage of Orally Administered Cancer Chemotherapy
- Health Care Providers - Opioid Prescriptions - Limitations and Requirements
- Pharmacists - Administration of the Influenza Vaccination - Age Requirement
- Pharmacists - Substitution and Dispensing of Biological Products
- Courts - Criminal and Civil Immunity - Prescribing, Dispensing, and Administering Opioid Antagonists
- Public Health - Expedited Partner Therapy - Trichomoniasis and Pharmacist Dispensing
- Health Insurance - Specialty Drugs - Authority to Dispense
- Health Insurance - Prescription Drugs - Dispensing Synchronization

Events

- Annual Continuing Education Breakfast—Record number of over 300 pharmacists receiving continuing education credits
- Annual reception for departing board commissioners
- Annual staff appreciation luncheon

OPERATIONS UNIT REPORT

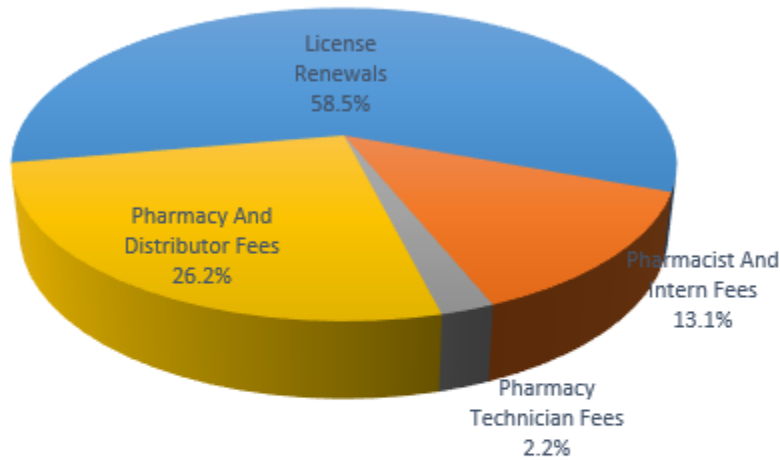
Overview

The Operations Unit (OU) of the Maryland Board of Pharmacy (Board) is responsible for managing the fiscal and procurement key administrative functions at the Board. OU also makes recommendations regarding the Board's annual budget and audit functions. The Board derives its revenue through payments for licenses, permits and other applicable fees. Expenditures are made based on submission of an annual budget request that must be approved by the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health, the Governor's office and subsequently by the State Legislature. Funding to support new program areas, personnel, purchases and/or purchases contract procurements are routinely included in the Board's budget request.

The unit's fiscal functions include management of revenue, expenses and budget reconciliation activities. Also, the OU unit is responsible for procuring equipment and supplies, paying invoices and travel requests, processing expense reports and vehicle mileage reports, and inventorying and archiving documents for the Board. Administration activities include reviewing proposed legislation and preparing fiscal notes. All approved training requests for Board employees are processed by the unit.

Board Revenue

FY 2020 Board of Pharmacy Revenue



Revenue	Amount	Percent
License Renewals	2,049,043.00	58.5%
Pharmacist And Intern Fees	460,631.11	13.1%
Pharmacy Technician Fees	77,421.00	2.2%
Pharmacy And Distributor Fees	916,754.00	26.2%
Revenue 2020	3,503,849.11	100.0%

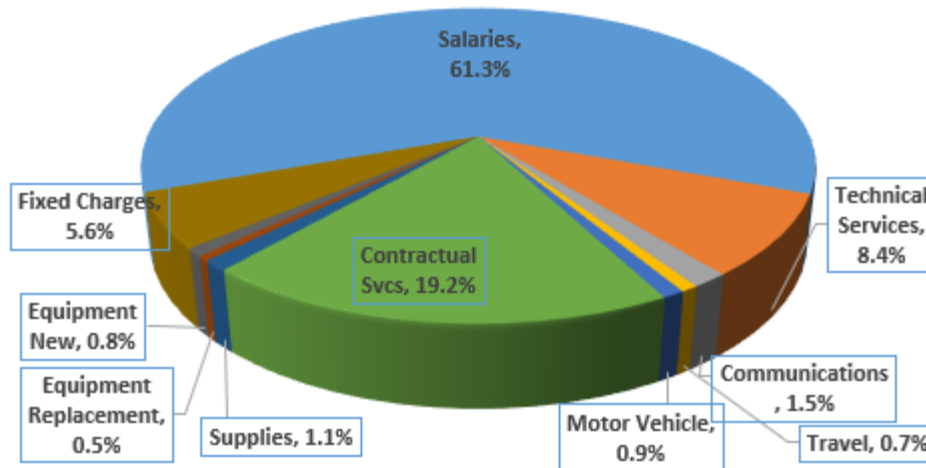
Board Revenue

The above chart reflects the revenue collected for license renewals for: Distributors, Pharmacies Pharmacists and Technicians. The majority of the revenue is derived from either Distributors or Pharmacies which renew biannually. In FY 2020, the Pharmacies renewed their licenses during the March through May renewal period.

The Board collected \$186,725 of fines related to inspections that are transferred directly to the State of Maryland General Fund and not utilized for operation of the Board. The Board also transferred \$146,302 related to the Pharmacists license renewal fee to the Maryland Health Care Commission, which represented \$36 of the \$261 license renewal fee.

Board Expenses

FY 2020 Board of Pharmacy Expense Activity



Expense Category	Percent	Amount
Salaries	61.3%	2,318,531.47
Technical Services	8.4%	316,928.98
Communications	1.5%	57,257.64
Travel	0.7%	26,058.88
Motor Vehicle	0.9%	33,053.56
Contractual Svcs	19.2%	724,361.18
Supplies	1.1%	42,358.61
Equipment Replacement	0.5%	20,321.26
Equipment New	0.8%	32,051.13
Fixed Charges	5.6%	208,809.01
Totals	100.0%	3,779,731.72

Board Expenses

The above chart reflects the ten (10) expense categories for expenditures by the Board in FY 2018. Most of the categories of expense are self-explanatory but we would be providing additional information related to some of the major expenses incurred by the Board:

- **Technical Services** - Contractual employees costs and Per Diem payments to Board Members
- **Contractual Services** - Attorney General legal cost share from the Maryland Department of Health for legal expertise related to Board decisions, Bank account charges for Lockbox activity related to

license payments, Software Maintenance contract for licensing software, Indirect costs from the Maryland Department of Health for centralized costs, Printing costs for Maryland Pharmacy Law Book, Software updates for Licensing application.

- **Fixed Charges** – Rental costs for Board of Pharmacy space

MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS UNIT REPORT

Overview

The MIS Unit is responsible for implementing and maintaining automated systems that enhance Board operations and help accomplish its mandate to protect pharmacy patients and assure quality pharmacy health care in the State of Maryland. The unit is comprised of full-time staff members, including a Computer Network Specialist and Database Specialist.

Current Year Accomplishments

The Board upgraded its servers from Windows Server 2012 to 2019 and replaced the aging hardware with 2 servers. The Board worked with Systems Automation to upgrade the Pharmacy Application to simplify the renewal process that occurs biannually for this license type.

During the beginning of the pandemic software was purchased which enabled staff to continuing processing new and renewal license requests. Remote computing resources were provided to allow staff to telework and access the documents and files necessary to complete daily activities.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Overview

The Staff implemented the Public Relations Unit (PR) of the Maryland Board of Pharmacy (Board), it is driven by the Board's Public Relations Committee. This Unit is responsible for managing four key functions at the Board, which include public relations; education; communication; and training. PR represents the Board at professional and community events throughout the state. This unit makes recommendations regarding the Board's marketing, media, educational, and awareness campaign endeavors.

PR staff promotes the Board by consistently focusing on the Board's mission statement.

Accomplishments

Unit personnel were assigned to staff the Emergency Preparedness and Public Relations Committees, as well as coordinate Board training and Public Relation events around the state. These functions were necessary to encourage patient safety, to keep the communities informed of how the Board works to protect Maryland's consumers, and to ensure continuous communications between the Board, its licensees, other governmental agencies, and the public.

Quarterly newsletters continued throughout FY 20. Below are some of the topics that were discussed:

- Remote Processing
- Pharmacy Closings
- Development of Covid-19 Vaccines
- How To Cope With Stress During Covid-19

FY 2020 Summary of Pharmacist Training & Education

- CE Breakfast, Sunday October 20, 2019 Towson Sheraton Towson, MD
- MPhA conferences: Sunday February 16, 2020, College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center Hyattsville, MD

Next Year at a Glance

PR will continue previously assigned responsibilities and tasks as well as incorporate others that may be established.

- Continuing to offer support to the Public Relations Committee;
- Continuing to provide Emergency Preparedness Task Force support;
- Creating written publications, brochures, and notifications;
- Providing e-mail blasts to licensees, staff, and constituents;
- Suggesting educational trainings or staff to attend;

- Partner with more Maryland agencies that could benefit from pharmaceutical legislation;
- Attending and planning on-going conferences and trainings.

FY 2020 Summary of Emergency Preparedness Activities

- Pod exercises Notre Dame Maryland University Tuesday November 5, 2019
- May 2020 Emergency Preparedness Meeting- Discussion for RSS set-up due to Covid-19

LICENSING UNIT REPORT

Overview

The Licensing Unit is responsible for all activities related to the issuance of new, renewal, and reinstatement of licenses, registrations, and permits to qualify pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, pharmacy interns, pharmacies and wholesale distributors (WSD) that operate in Maryland. The Unit also processes applications for the Prescription Drug Repository and Drop-Off Programs, pharmacy technician training programs, and pharmacist vaccine certifications for those pharmacists who wish to administer Influenza, Herpes Zoster, Pneumococcal Pneumonia, and other vaccines.

The Unit staff consists of a manager, three (3) licensing specialists and one (1) office secretary. They perform the following functions:

- process, analyze, and review applications
- contact applicants for any missing information
- refer certain applications to the Licensing Committee for review
- approve and issue licenses/registrations/permits
- update applications, forms and the content of the Board's website

The Licensing Unit works closely with the Licensing Committee. The Licensing Committee is responsible for reviewing applications that may not meet certain licensure requirements or that indicate an applicant/licensee has had problems with their license/permit/registration in another state. The Committee also reviews requests from applicants/licensees to waive requirements or fees due to special circumstances. Another important responsibility of the Committee is the review and development of licensure requirements and procedures resulting from the promulgation of new laws or regulations or changes to the existing laws or regulations.

The Licensing Unit staff responded to applicants within one (1) day of receipt of application more than 95% of the time. In instances where applications were complete, licenses/permits/registrations were issued on the same day. Additionally, the Licensing Unit replaced several forms, made significant improvements in applications and forms, and updated the content of the Board's website to ensure accurate information.

Licensing Processing Statistics (see Figure 1)

In FY2020, the Licensing Unit processed 16,152 licenses, permits, and registrations for pharmacists, pharmacy interns, pharmacy technicians, pharmacies, prescription drug drop-offs and repositories and

WSDs. This number includes new applications, renewals and reinstatements, and represents an increase of approximately 40% over the previous fiscal year.

In FY2020, the Licensing Unit processed 161 new distributor permits, an increase of 36% from FY2019. Additionally, the Unit processed 42 distributor renewals during the renewal period which occurred in FY2018/FY2019.

In FY2020, the Licensing Unit processed 6,600 pharmacist licenses (initial and renewal, including vaccine certifications), a 45% increase compared to FY2019.

In FY2020, the Licensing Unit issued 41 Pharmacy Intern Graduate and 397 Pharmacy Intern Student registrations (initial and renewal), an increase from the previous fiscal year.

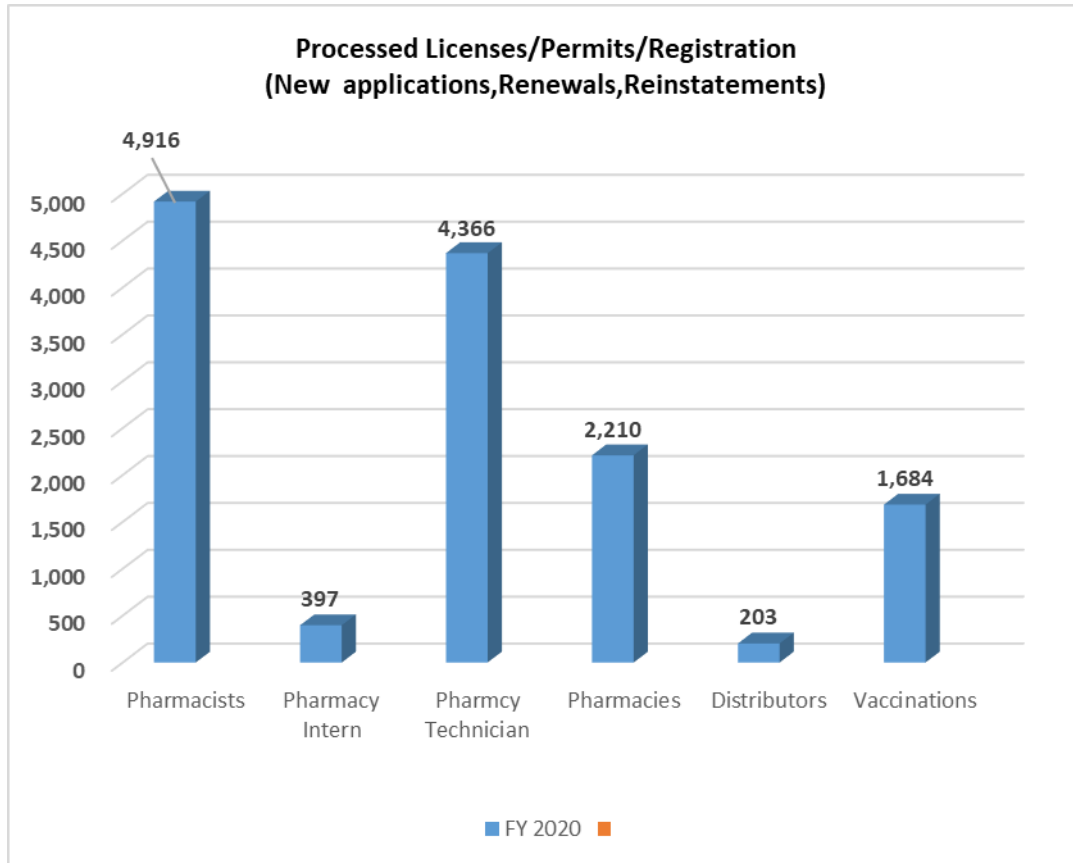
In FY2020, the Licensing Unit processed 203 WSD permits (161 new permits and 42 renewals) compared to 401 permits in FY2019 (203 new permits and 198 renewals). The large disparity in renewals is attributable to the WSD renewal period which occurred in FY2019.

In FY2020, as in previous years, the Licensing Unit processed more technician renewal applications than initial applications. The Licensing Unit issued 2,207 technician registrations (initial, renewal, and reinstatement), a decrease of almost 45% from the previous fiscal year.

Figure 1. Licenses/Permits/Registrations (New applications, Renewals, Reinstatements) Processed

	FY 2020
Pharmacists	4,916
Pharmacy Intern	397
Pharmacy Technician	4,366
Pharmacies	2,210
Distributors	203
Vaccinations	1,684

2020			
New	Renewals	Reinstatements	Totals
712	4,204		4,916
263	134		397
1,269	3,082	15	4,366
155	2,054	1	2,210
161	42		203
394	1,290		1,684



COMPLIANCE UNIT REPORT

Fiscal Year 2020

Overview

The Compliance Unit goal is to make sure that all licensees conduct operations and activities in an ethical, honest manner and with the highest level of integrity. The team operates as an effective oversight regulatory unit that ensures all regulations and standards are being followed on a day by day basis. We are able to obtain and review pertinent documents and prepare investigative reports for committee and Board review. A collaborative effect of duties are performed by the following positions:

- Compliance Director
- Compliance Pharmacist
- Two Supervisors: Inspector and Investigation
- Laboratory Scientist Surveyors
- Four Investigators

- Five Inspectors

The Unit continues to work closely with the Office of Controlled Substances Administration (OCSA), formerly known as the Division of Drug Control (DDC), in performing referral inspections and other sister agencies especially DEA, FBI, Police Departments and etc.

Complaints

The Compliance Unit receives complaints from a variety of sources and is charged with addressing each complaint. Individuals may obtain a complaint form by mail or from the Board of Pharmacy's website at www.health.maryland.gov/pharmacy and submit the completed form via fax, mail, email, or in person. All information related to each complaint is investigated and the results presented to the Board's Disciplinary Committee for review and recommended action for follow-up by Compliance Unit staff and/or to the full Board for further review and vote. If the nature of the complaint is outside the Board's purview, it is referred to the appropriate authority

Please fill out a Complaint Form in order to provide the information needed for the Board to begin an investigation. The Complaint Form is available on our website, or you can simply click on the link below:

<https://health.maryland.gov/pharmacy/docs/All%20BOP%20Forms/Compliance%20Forms/complaint%20form%20revised%203.16.2020.pdf>

Once you return the form to the Board (by mail, fax, or email), we will assign your complaint to an investigator.

We will investigate the situation you described; this process may take up to six months to complete. An investigator will be assigned to your case within 48 hours, and they will contact you for any additional information needed. We appreciate your bringing this matter to our attention.

Figure 1, below, provides the number of complaints received in the past eight fiscal years. Complaints received by the Board may include, but are not limited to, an actual complaint made by the public, referrals from other state or federal agencies, or deficiencies found during inspections. There were 491 complaints filed in FY20, compared to 406 complaints in FY19. The complaints for FY20 increased by 83% compared to FY19. Most of the complaints to the Board were from consumers, NABP and Board inspections.

Figure 1 Complaints Processed from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

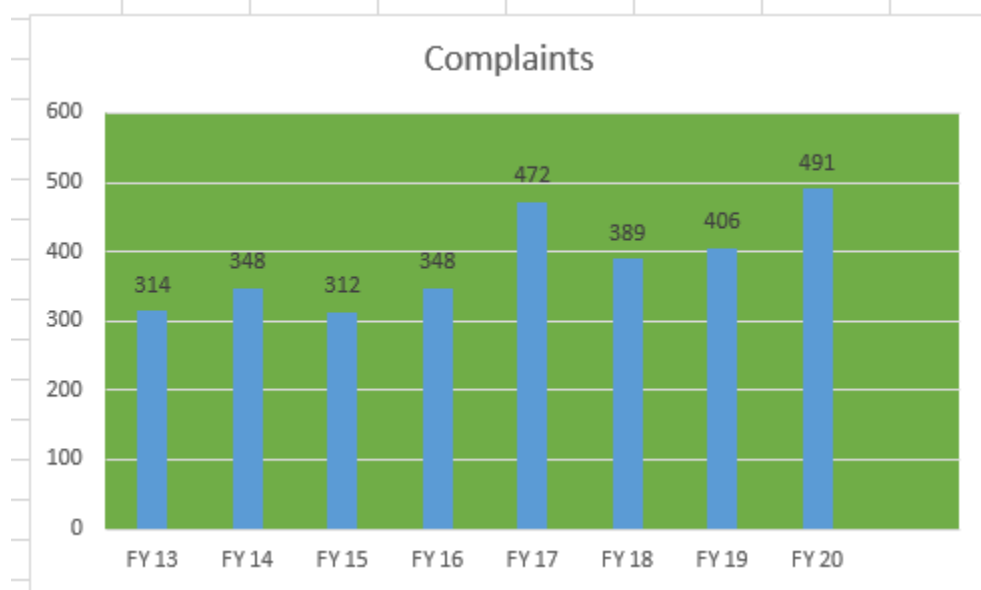
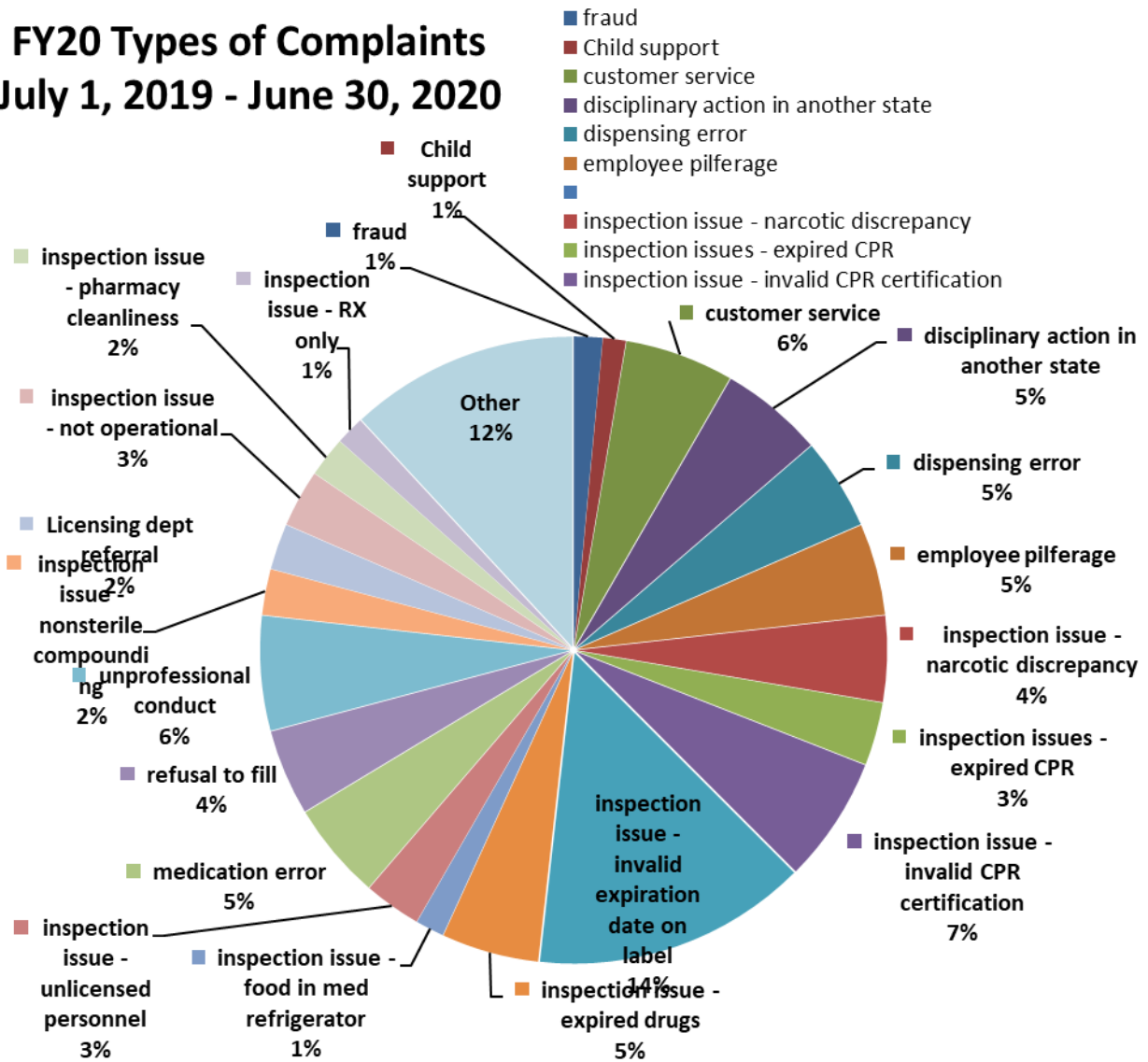


Figure 2 Types of Complaints

For FY20, the types of violations most commonly seen on inspections are related to invalid expiration date on label (14%) and vaccinating pharmacists not having valid CPR certification (7%). Other examples of inspection violations noted in FY20 are expired medications (5%), CII discrepancies (4%), unlicensed personnel working in the pharmacy (3%), and pharmacists having expired CPR certificate (3%), food in the medication refrigerator (1%). Other types of complaints from consumers commonly seen are unprofessional conducts (6%), communication/customer service complaints (6%), dispensing errors (5%), employee pilferage (5%), medication errors (5%), refusal to fill (4%), non-operational pharmacy (3%), and pharmacy cleanliness (2%).

FY20 Types of Complaints

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



Disciplinary Cases

All complaints are investigated by Board staff members. For the current fiscal year, the Board has taken formal or informal action on complaint cases including the opened complaints that were carried over from the previous fiscal year.

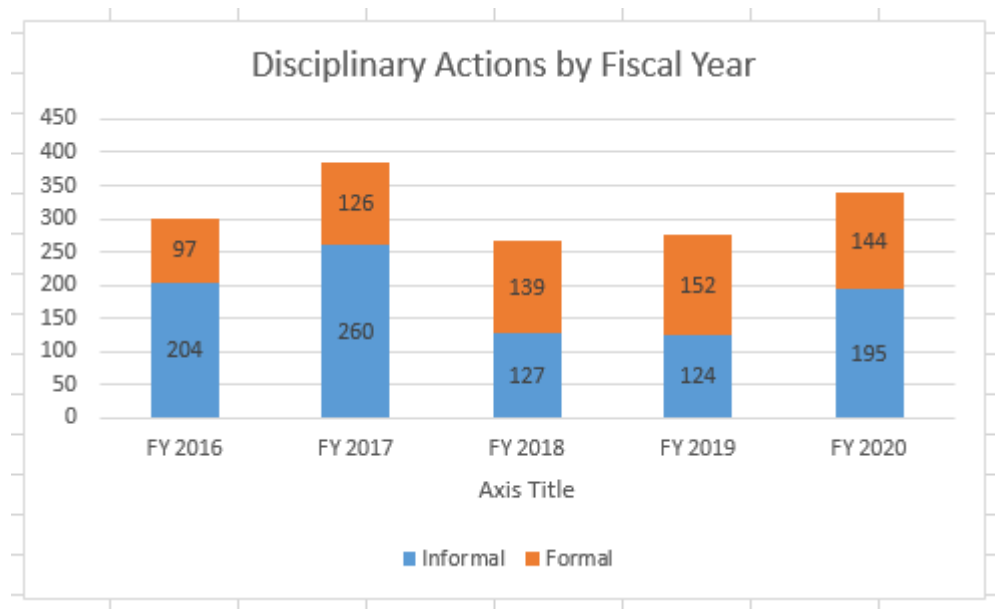


Figure 3 (shown above) represents a categorical description of the various types of formal and informal actions taken against pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and establishments in the most recent fiscal year. The data shows 144 formal and 195 informal disciplinary actions by fiscal year.

Informal Disposition (Non-Public)

- Letter of Education
- Letter of Admonishment
- Inspection Deficiency Letter

Formal Sanctions (Public)

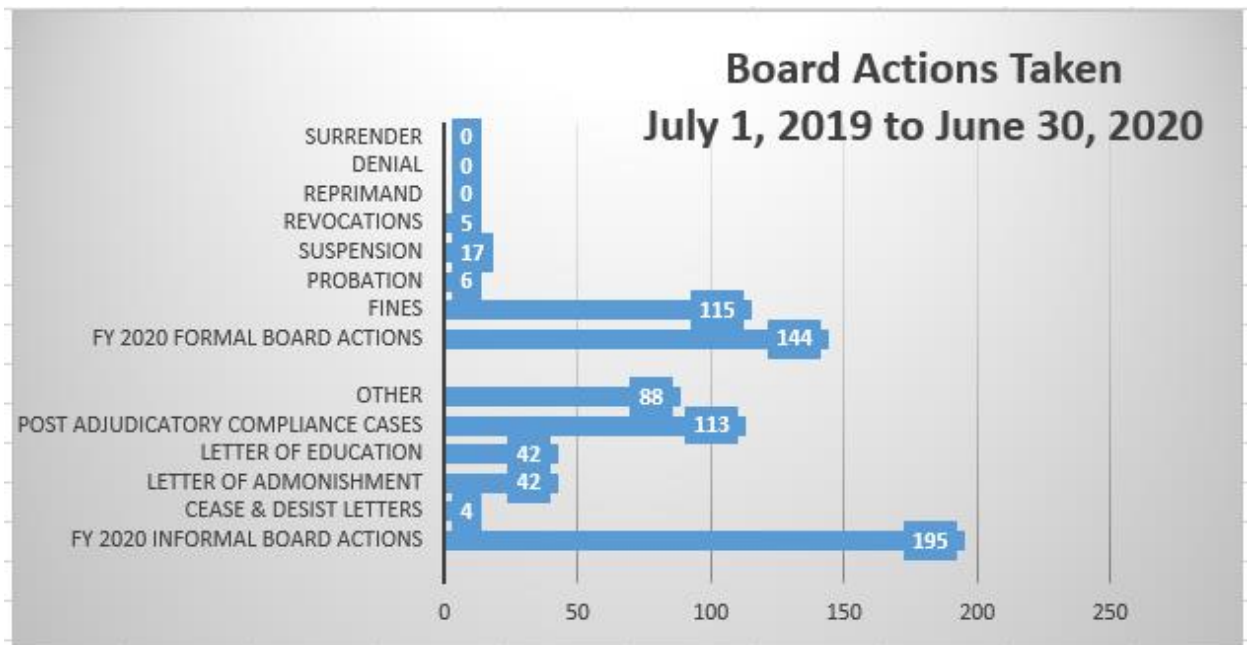
- Reprimand
- Probation
- Suspension
- Revocation
- Fine
- Summary Suspension

Figure 4 Board Action taken from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021



Figure 4, above, reflects the formal actions taken against pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in Fiscal Year 2020. Formal actions, including deficiency fines, issued are published in the Board of Pharmacy newsletter along with name of the licensee, registrant, and permit holder as well as posted on the Board of Pharmacy website. Most of the Board's actions were closed, pending and informal.

Figure 5 Formal Board Actions Taken from July 1, 2020 -June 30, 2021



Majority of the actions were Informal resulting from Letter of Education, Admonishment and Inspection Deficiencies. Very few cases were not made cases, closed administratively and referred to other agencies. Compared to fiscal year 2019, there were more formal actions.

Inspections

Inspectors and Laboratory Surveyor conducts opening, closing, remodels, relocation, change of ownership, and annual inspections of in-state pharmacies. The Board has a goal of inspecting all in-state pharmacies annually. Due to COVID-19 that caused a State of Emergency. Inspections were conducted Virtually and on site. Pamphlets provided to the inspectors to be distributed to all facilities during inspections.

The chart in Figure 5 reflects the total number of annual, opening inspections, closing inspections, miscellaneous inspections (relocation, change of ownership, investigative inspections), performed in Fiscal Year 2021. The Board completed 47% of annual inspections for all the facilities permitted in Maryland. Virtual Annual Inspections 1800, Opening Inspection 112, Closing Inspection 38, Change of Ownership/Renovations 27, Board Special Investigations 7. Total inspections of 2007. The inspection team also completed On Site Distributors 122, follow-up inspections for onsite narcotic audits 478 and virtual & on site COVID-19 vaccine storage inspections 331. All inspections were performed virtually. We started COVID vaccine storage inspections to confirm that vaccines were being stored properly at the correct temperature and monitored for security.

Figure 5 Different Types of Inspections Completed by Board’s Inspectors and Laboratory Scientist Surveyors.

	<u>FY2019</u>	<u>FY2020</u>
Annual Inspections	1599	1505
Opening Inspections	73	85
Closing Inspections	71	33
Change of Ownership/Renovations	22	27
Board Special	0	14

Investigations		
Total Inspections	1805	1654

Over the past year, the compliance team completed 1654. Inspections were down slightly from FY19 due to the start of the COVID pandemic. The inspection team implemented policies and procedures regarding virtual inspections seamlessly. Virtual inspections started in March 2020.

Sterile Inspections:

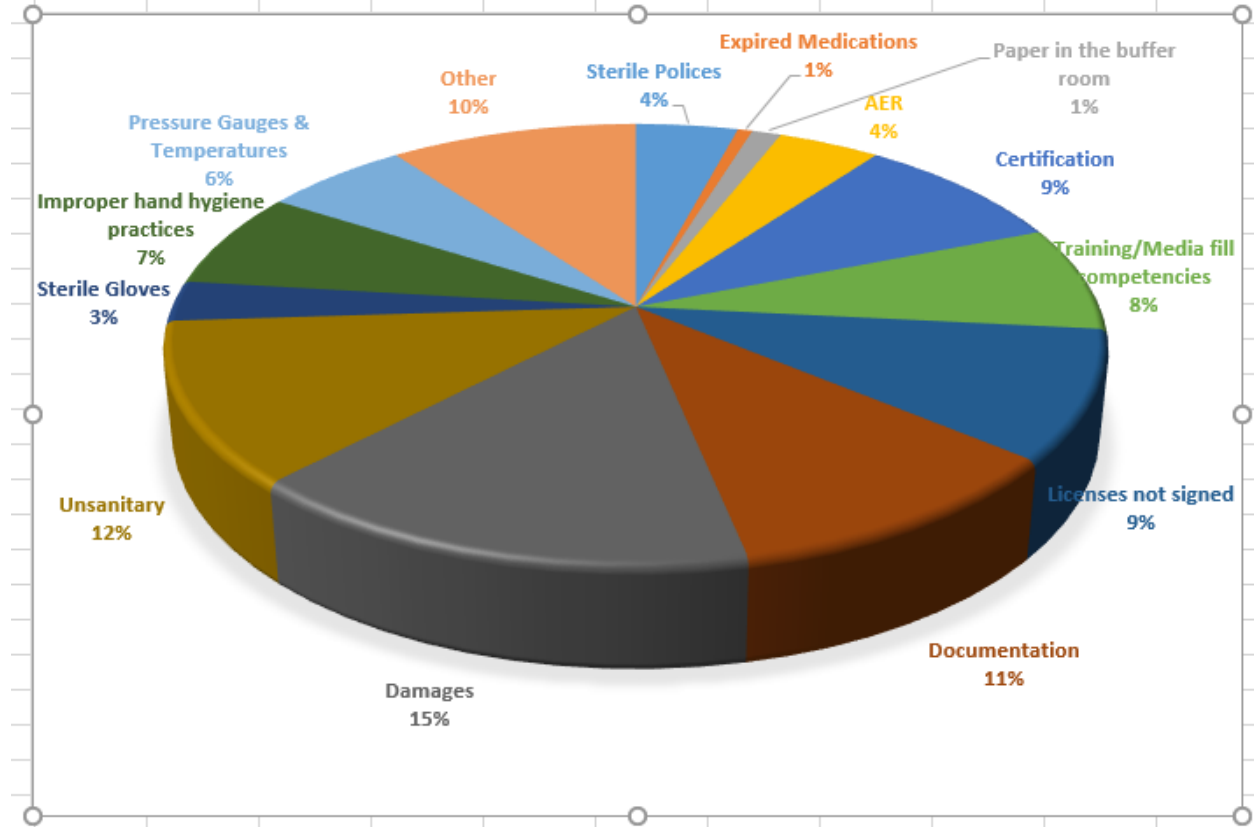
- 126 annual sterile inspections
- 22 sterile opening/renovation inspections
- No sterile pharmacy closings

There were a total of 148 sterile inspections completed over the year.

Observations of Concern:

- Sterile policies not reviewed annually-7
- Out of Date medication-1
- Paper in the buffer room-2
- Environmental excursion not reported to the Board-7
- Room improperly certified/CFU not identified/no smoke study-15
- Training/Media fill competencies not provided-13
- Licenses not signed-16
- Documentation not provided-18
- Damage to floors/wall/ceiling/no Line of Demarcation-26
- General dirtiness (floor/wall/ceiling/door/equipment) – 20
- Sterile gloves not used over the CAI gloves-5
- Improper hand hygiene practices (no finger picks for hand washing/sink with no hot water)-12
- Room pressure/temperature not recorded/out of range/no gauges-10
- Other (garb, QA, CPR, food) – 17

Figure 6



Rehab Monitoring

Chemical dependence among health care professionals has been observed over the years to be at least as prevalent as with the plague in society. In addressing disciplinary actions, the Maryland Board of Pharmacy may opt to mandate substance abuse treatment. If treatment is so ordered, Compliance Unit staff is assigned to monitor the mandated licensees to ensure compliance with the terms of their orders. Public Orders may require routine reports to be submitted from the various programs that provide services to the monitored licensee. Services directly monitored may include, but are not limited to, referrals for the following: · random drug testing · substance abuse treatment or psychotherapy · participation in local NA/AA programs · psychiatric evaluations · employer reports · continued education (CE) requirements · any exams or courses as deemed necessary by the Board

Over the course of the past year, the Board monitored approximately 12 licensees. Eight of whom were pharmacist and four technicians. The number fluctuates as participants no longer needs monitoring and new participants enter the program. The Board's designated rehabilitation committee also monitors anonymous participants. The Board strongly believes in assisting licensees with substance use issue.

Contract was updated and reviewed to be comprehensive.

Conclusion

The Board hired one Investigators Supervisor to assist in overseeing the investigation staff. Over the year, we were able provide additional training to staff in sterile compounding and other specialty pharmacy practices, reduced the number of investigation cases carried over into the next fiscal year, have more uniform review and better defined categories for the different types of complaints and updated the policies and procedures for the investigative unit.

Next Year at a Glance

For Fiscal Year 2021, the Compliance Unit plans to:

- Keep investigation cases under 180 days
- Hire new staff members to join our team i.e. Investigator, Administrator and Laboratory Scientist.
- Create additional Standard Operation Procedures for the investigation department
- Analyze the DEA 106 Data submitted to the Board
- Go Live with the Compliance Enforcement Module
- Update all the templates used
- Have no cases greater than 90 days with Office of Attorney General Office
- Continue to Rehabilitate Pharmacist and Technicians

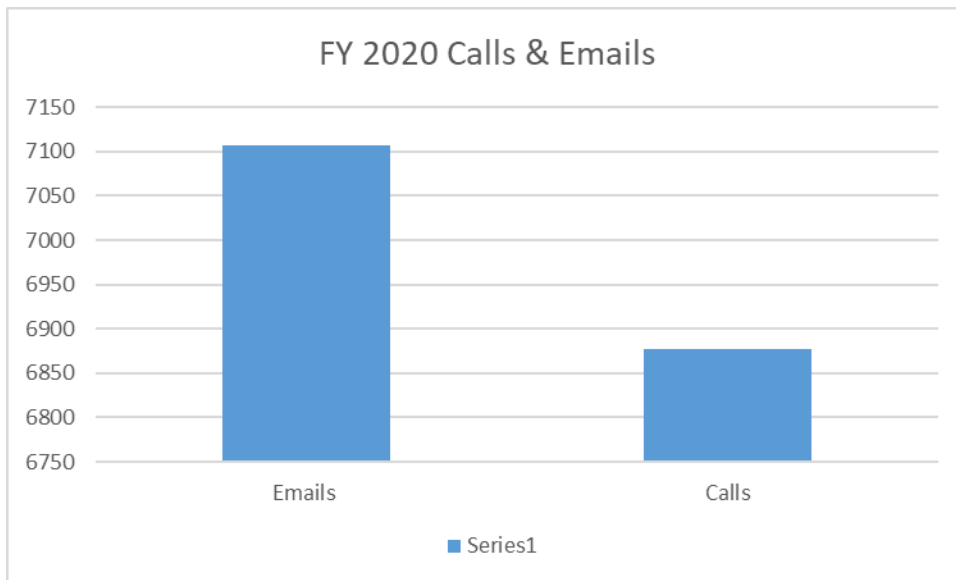
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Overview

The Customer Service Unit of the Maryland Board of Pharmacy (Board) is constantly a work in progress. Responding to concerns from the licensees and the public, the Board created a call center to address the phone concerns. The consensus was that questions were not being responded to in a timely manner and/or that the answers were not correct.

As a result, of the Board hiring staff that they considered to be highly qualified to start a call center. The call center has been a success. Perceptions among the licensees and committee members have changed.

It has become evident, that the call center is an asset. In FY20, we answered 7,107 calls and processed 6,877 emails. It continues to serves as a one-stop shop for the public when they cannot get questions answered by viewing the website or online FAQ.



Next Year at a Glance

This unit is only going to continue to get more efficient by participating in the following:

- Obtaining more training; specific to call center operations
- Learning more about the operation of other units via quarterly cross training
- Responding accurately to clients; and communicating with applicants when necessary.

PROGRAM INTAKE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Overview

The data entry section of the Program Intake Assessment and Evaluation unit of the Maryland Board of Pharmacy (Board) was created to provide a smoother transition for licenses needing to be processed. Rather than licenses coming directly into the Board, a new system has been created whereby the licenses are processed through a lock-box system and then sent to the Board. This alleviates the Board handling large sums of money.

The Board now only accepts credit card transactions; all other transactions (checks and money orders) have to be sent to the lock-box address. This makes for a smoother operation here at the Board office.

The mail goes through the Department of Health mailroom at 4201 Patterson Avenue, then comes up to the 5th floor Board office where it is separated for input into individual files by the staff in the data entry section.. All documents are scanned into licensee files and forwarded to the Licensing unit for processing.

The Board has devoted a significant amount of time and energy this year to systems improvement, personnel training, and productivity. In order to fulfill our mission to serve the public we realized the importance of also improving services to our stakeholder community, so that they would be empowered to better serve the citizens of Maryland. Achievements have resulted in improved response times, a better-informed stakeholder population, and improved relationships with stakeholders, and more effective customer service.

Systems Improvements

- ✓ **Call Center and Data Entry staff have been cross-trained** creating a more knowledgeable staff to be able to respond to the areas needing increased resources
- ✓ **Weekly staff customer service trainings** using a nationally recognized on line library of training modules has produces a well-trained staff focused on providing quality customer service. Call center in person and phone surveys administered to callers have indicated customer satisfaction rates with Board of Pharmacy customer service at excellent or good levels 99% of the time.

Public Relations/Communications

- ✓ **Improved quarterly newsletter** that includes NABP articles, new Frequently Asked Questions column, and increased pharmacy articles of interest
- ✓ **3rd Continuing Education event offered in person and by web access**
- ✓ **Increased use of surveys**
- ✓ **Increased involvement in pharmacy conferences and events**

STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF PHARMACY



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