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Medical Consumers Urged to Use Licensed Practitioners

The State of Nevada's Department of Health and Human Services advises all medical consumers to use only licensed medical practitioners who are regulated by the state and who perform procedures in a medically licensed facility.

"Don't be afraid to ask your healthcare providers about their licenses. Take control of your health. Asking the right questions, such as 'Does your provider have a Nevada license,' and, 'Is their business licensed in Nevada,' helps you make informed decisions," says Governor Brian Sandoval.

Healthcare that is unlicensed and unregulated includes the providers of healthcare, medications, the medical instruments, and the facility itself. As with other types of complaints received by the Department of Health and Human Services, all unlicensed activity allegations are investigated and referred to law enforcement, business licensing and professional licensing boards.

"Because we have to rely on consumer complaints or tragic outcomes to inform us of illegal practices, the volume of unregulated healthcare is unknown. Consumers need to be aware and be willing to ask questions about the legitimacy of their healthcare services," said Tracey D. Green, MD, State Health Officer.

Healthcare consumers are encouraged to take an active role in evaluating their provider's credentials and experience. "If something seems too good to be true, it usually is," said Mike Willden, Director, Department of Health and Human Services. "Don't pick a medical provider based on the lowest price, it's too risky for your health."

The Department of Health and Human Services works in conjunction with law enforcement, the medical licensing board, and the Office of the Attorney General, to prosecute individuals practicing without a license. In many instances, unlicensed activity is a felony level criminal offense. More importantly, receiving healthcare from unlicensed people is dangerous and could result in further injury, disease or death.

To check the status of a medical provider's license, or to file a complaint or review the formal complaints against a medical provider, consumers can visit the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiner's website at www.medboard.nv.gov, or, call in-state, toll free, 1-888-890-8210 extension 0. Both the website and the phone number have multiple language capabilities.

To receive additional information about questions to ask your medical provider, or, to file a complaint against a medical facility, please call the state Health Division's Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance at 1-800-225-3414. This phone number has multiple language capabilities and individuals filing a complaint can remain anonymous.

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