

SB 224 Brings New Hope to Physician Assistants

By Deborah Herron, Vox Public Relations Public Affairs

Thanks to the passage of SB 224, which was signed into law in late June by Gov. John Kitzhaber, the future now looks a lot brighter for graduates and practicing physician assistants. The bill overhauls and modernizes the way that physician assistants are licensed in Oregon, allowing PAs to get licensed before finding employment. It also updates the process for practice agreements to be handled by the OMA. By establishing in statute the components required on the practice agreement, it enables PAs to practice at the top of their licensure.

PAs are health care professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision and collaboration. They play an important role in delivering health care to the state's 3.8 million residents, both the insured and the uninsured. The new law is effective January 1, 2012, and OSPA is currently engaged in the rulemaking process with the Oregon Medical Board to weigh in on the practical rules governing implementation of the new statute.

There may be opportunities for PAs to offer remarks, wherefore OSPA needs individual practicing PAs to comment on proposed rules. Check www.oregonpa.org or your email for alerts and other communications to be part of shaping the administration of the profession in Oregon.