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PAFP applauds legislative, gubernatorial action on International Medical Graduate requirements

(HARRISBURG, Pa. April 20, 2022) The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP), today, applauded Gov. Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania General Assembly for enacting legislation that brings much-needed updates to licensing requirements for graduates of international medical schools.

Act 16 of 2022 brings licensing requirements for international medical graduates in line with those for United States and Canadian medical school graduates by allowing them to apply for an unrestricted license to practice medicine after their second year of residency is complete, rather than waiting until completion of their third year of residency, which was the previous standard.

“International medical graduates play a vital role in our state’s health care delivery system and are held to the same educational standards as those who matriculate from medical schools in the U.S. and Canada,” PAFP President Jason Woloski, MD, said. “It only makes sense to hold them to the same requirements for licensing, as well.”

Prior to starting residency, international medical graduates must pass the same rigorous testing as U.S. and Canadian medical graduates: the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) or the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX). These exams ensure that all medical graduates, no matter where they completed medical school, have the education and competency required to enter a U.S. residency program.

“Pennsylvania is already facing a physician shortage,” explained Dr. Woloski. “Updating these licensing standards is an important step in increasing the number of physicians available to treat patients across the Commonwealth.”

We applaud Gov. Wolf and the General Assembly for recognizing the role international medical graduates play in ensuring access to physician-led health care for all Pennsylvanians.”

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The Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians and its Foundation is a physician-led organization committed to advancing quality health care through advocacy, education, workforce development and commitment to the patients we serve. For over 70 years and with more than 6,000 physician, resident and student members, the Academy and its Foundation’s core values are visionary leadership, integrity, and community.