

Memorandum

To: **Members, Division of Licensing** Date: October 19, 1993

From: **Medical Board of California -- Robert del Junco, M.D.**
Chair (former president of the MBC)

Subject: **Status Report: HEALTH POLICY AND RESOURCES TASK FORCE**

Attached are the minutes of the meeting of the Task Force held on October 5, 1993. I and fellow Division member, Dr. Camille Williams participated and Janie Cordray represented staff (Doug Laue is the staff person assigned to this task force but due to a prior commitment, he was unable to attend).

Also attending were representatives from the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD), the **California Medical Association**, the **California Association of Hospitals and Health Systems** and the Department of Health Services.

DRAFT REPORT

Medical Board of California
October 5, 1993

Excerpted from Page 2 of the Minutes: → Increasing size of the medically underserved and uninsured population and the dubious billing practices by physicians who charge for a doctor's office visit even when the patient is cared for by a nurse practitioner and is never seen by the doctor.

“... Between 1980 and 1991, the population [of the state] increased **26%**, physicians increased **29%** and Chiropractors and **Physician Assistants increased 171%**. ... Although California experienced a dramatic increase in health care professionals, this has **not solved or even alleviated the problem of the underserved areas**.

California has more doctors per capita than any other state. As all doctors are given a general license, and we have about 75,000 .. physicians practicing in the state, this number could translate into 1 doctor per 1,000 patients. To put this number in perspective, Orange County HMOs sign up 3,000 patients per 1 primary care physician. Using the Kaiser system as a model, **we have a glut of physician and allied health professionals, and yet the problem of underserved areas persists.**

...the **hiring of additional allied health care professionals has not really done anything to benefit patients.** ...the manner in which they are being hired and used now, **they are really only serving to increase the income of physicians.** Although physicians are hiring more Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners, and often **patients never see the physician, the patients are charged the same amount for an office visit.** This is **income for the physician but there is no cost saving to the patient.**”