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[00:00:01] **Speaker 1** Ah, And so give me a little bit of background on what the roundtable was about and what what your your goal, your approach was for this.

[00:00:09] **Speaker 2** Sure. So we were meeting with Secretary Dean and Assistant Secretary Jennifer just to talk about Wisconsin license for our physicians, Apex Group one providers getting their license through the state of Wisconsin and just what the improvements that they have made over the last year and then just what the future holds and what their goals are to continue to improve upon the Wisconsin license process for our physicians and APEX.

[00:00:33] **Speaker 1** So obviously, licensing has been in the news for the past few years and with a lot of negative stories during COVID about the delays and the backlogs and the problems, what were you experiencing or what were your employees experiencing?

[00:00:44] **Speaker 2** Yeah, definitely. We were experiencing delays, you know, about a year ago that were at least taking six months to 12, 12 months before they were taking their Wisconsin license. And then also just being able to contact somebody or follow up of where they were at in the process or what specific documentation was missing. So that was kind of our experience. And then over the last year, more transparency with having the online application. And then just in the last few months, we as employers are able to see a checklist of what is still missing in their Wisconsin license process. So it's been really nice to have that transparency over the last year.

[00:01:21] **Speaker 1** Does it feel like the state was listening because of all the outcry? I mean, is it did it take 100 negative stories about individual people to get them to move or was it do you think they were going in this way anyway?

[00:01:35] **Speaker 2** I think once Dan was appointed in his secretary position, he really took that seriously. We met with him over a year and a half ago. He's been in touch with us, I probably say, every six months since that point and really heard and listened to our feedback. So, yes, I think it has really improved just meeting with people that is directly impacting providers as well as the health care organizations.

[00:01:57] **Speaker 1** Can you give me an example of something moved from today or something from your last meeting that you would say this is something that we would like to see that would really make a big difference.

[00:02:06] **Speaker 2** I think the biggest is the transparency for us to see what that checklist, like I had said before, as providers would tell us that they have submitted everything and we couldn't check to verify if they have or have not submitted that. So now having that transparency where we're able to see that was something that was really important to us to verify that they should be receiving their license more timely.

[00:02:27] **Speaker 1** One of the things I've heard from other employers or groups is that there was a with the turnover that's been in health care, especially since COVID, that it became, and especially with the number of baby boomers leaving and the turmoil that's been happening in the industry overall just made everything worse. Would you agree that like it was a perfect storm of all these things kind of coming together to create this size of problem?

[00:02:48] **Speaker 2** Yeah, it definitely. I think with COVID, we had more people coming in here that we needed them to have license yesterday. So I think that definitely impacted why it took a longer process for Wisconsin license. I also feel like we had an old application system in the state of Wisconsin where it was all paper and fax and we just needed to get to the future of where it's all online and having that transparency with both the providers and the health care organizations.

[00:03:12] **Speaker 1** So where are we now? Do you think that there's still room for a lot of improvement or is it just more smaller details in terms of what you're looking for?

[00:03:22] **Speaker 2** I think we can always seek improvement. I think, you know, deadlines we talked about now, it takes about ten days to process documentation. So I think it's always just trying to improve. What can we get to have that fast, this transparency time of issuing that Wisconsin license? We definitely are at a good spot right now, but there's always ways to improve upon the process.

[00:03:43] **Speaker 1** What percent of your employees here need a license through DSPs?

[00:03:48] **Speaker 2** It just depends. It ebbs and flows. Obviously, our summer months are the largest that we have Wisconsin license. We onboard about 160 providers, which are mostly physicians or APEX every year. So they all need a Wisconsin license. But then we also have residency programs. We have our ends that are not part of that fix. So it really just ebbs and flows throughout the year of when they need to get their Wisconsin license, with the summer months being the largest because they finish their programs and providers have moved to Wisconsin. So July, August, September are our busiest months.

[00:04:22] **Speaker 1** And are more or more of the people understanding what they need to do. Because one of the things that I heard from the state is that in the past, especially, there were people who had submitted things and say, Oh, I did it all. And it's like, Well, no, you missed this step, this step, this step. Do you think people are more aware at all ends of what our needs to be included?

[00:04:40] **Speaker 2** Yeah, I think that transparency, again, that checklist I think is really helped them out like they thought they submitted everything, but then they can see, you know, within the next three days of when they submitted that or the ten days that they haven't or have not received that documentation. So again, it's very transparent for the providers as well as for those organizations.

[00:04:57] **Speaker 1** I mean, how does it feel just to have the. Designee coming into your facility, driving up here and stopping and taking time for this.

[00:05:04] **Speaker 2** It means a lot. It definitely means that he cares. He really wants to get it. Providers here wants the best for Wisconsin, and he's willing to listen and take the feedback and, you know, come up with new solutions. So it means a lot.

[00:05:18] **Speaker 1** There was a lot of political sniping around this issue the last couple of years, some of it motivated by trying to win elections, some of it blaming different sides for whose fault it is for things taking long. How did that impact things from your end? Because I'm sure you worry about who won the political argument, but about who actually getting this stuff done. But do you think the politics interrupted in trying to fix some of the problems?

[00:05:41] **Speaker 2** I don't know if they interrupted the issue. I feel like they did bring it up a lot. So it was a hot topic and now we're finding resolution with it. So if them try to see who won gets us to the results that we're seeing now, I'm glad it was a political issue, but I don't know if it got in the way of things or not.

[00:05:59] **Speaker 1** And right now, we're in the middle of the budget, which obviously is part of this consideration as well. Do you do you have a hope for what happens in the budget? Do you hope that the request gets filled? Or do you think that's someone else's problem?

[00:06:14] **Speaker 2** Well, I definitely think that they need the help, so I would definitely be supportive of that. I don't have any political involvement whatsoever of what one side says over the other, but there are still ways to improve it. And I do think that their request for having additional staff will help improve the process for everybody.

[00:06:34] **Speaker 1** Do you think that we are kind of at a plateau? I mean, you said there's still room for improvement, but I know that talking with them, they said there were specific groups like nurses, for example, where they were prioritizing that, but maybe some other groups were not a priority or they were still looking at the processes of the boards that reviewed them. Do you think maybe there's more light that needs to be shined in some other areas that didn't get as much attention before?

[00:06:58] **Speaker 2** Yeah, I mean, they did talk about, you know, our ends as both are first and then our physicians and some behavioral health. So I think as they continue on, they'll just get to all of the other areas that need their support. So they're kind of hitting the highest licensure groups and then, you know, going from there. So, yes, I don't think it's a plateau. I think it's just we got through one area and we just got to continue to improve upon until we get through all the lessons.

[00:07:21] **Speaker 1** All right. I don't know if you know these numbers, but the number of employees that are here.

[00:07:28] **Speaker 2** I don't.

[00:07:29] **Speaker 1** Okay, that's fine.

[00:07:30] **Speaker 2** That's like specifically just to Beaver Dam or Marshall Clinic Health system as a whole either is.

[00:07:36] **Speaker 1** I mean, I.

[00:07:38] **Speaker 2** I don't.

[00:07:39] **Speaker 1** Okay, that's fine. I will.

[00:07:40] **Speaker 2** 13 and then 1200 physicians.

[00:07:44] **Speaker 1** Okay. Yeah. And so is it is it safe to say that the vast majority or all the employees would need to have a license of some sort or that they're like maybe some front end or back end people that don't have have a license need?

[00:07:58] **Speaker 2** I wouldn't say it was even half. It's less than half. Okay. Yeah.

[00:08:02] **Speaker 1** Okay. No, I was just trying to get an idea of the percentages of people that need to go through this process. Yeah. So I think we can all list two. There is just. Yeah.

[00:08:11] **Speaker 2** Right.

[00:08:12] **Speaker 1** Yeah, That's still a significant number of people.

[00:08:14] **Speaker 2** It is?

[00:08:15] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Through this agency. Yeah. To make sure that they can then work. And that's renewals as well. Correct.

[00:08:20] **Speaker 2** Yep. And they get renewed every two years. So they touch upon that every two years too. So it's not just even new applicants, it's also the renewals every year. So.

[00:08:29] **Speaker 1** Okay. Anything else that you'd like to add?

[00:08:32] **Speaker 2** No, I just appreciate their partnership and that they do listen and have been making great improvements and looking forward to the future.

[00:08:39] **Speaker 1** Great. Can I get you to say and spell your name and give your title?

[00:08:42] **Speaker 2** Jennifer Waters Penman, the assistant manager of physician and APC recruitment spelled G and I, f, e, r, And then it's a t. E r. S hyphen e. M01.

[00:08:56] **Speaker 1** Okay. And what is APC.

[00:08:58] **Speaker 2** Advanced practice clinician?

[00:09:00] **Speaker 1** Okay. So want to make sure I have everything on camera. And every later on when I go back, I can write that down first, correct?

[00:09:06] **Speaker 2** Yeah. All these acronyms we have in health care.

[00:09:08] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Well, I just, I sometimes I think I know what that is and then it's like, No, I'd rather just ask a dumb question. All right, That's all we need from you. Okay. I wasn't too bad, right?

[00:09:18] **Speaker 2** No, it wasn't too painful. All right.

[00:09:20] **Speaker 1** Thank you so much.