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State Licensing Boards Fail to Protect the Public from Dangerous Health Care Providers

Without a license to practice medicine or surgery or nursing or whatever, no health care practitioner can touch a patient. So the state licensing boards that issue -- and are authorized by law to take away -- licenses are important watchdogs for patient safety and accountability.

Which is why a year-long investigation by reporter William Heisel makes you want to cry.

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He found ... well, let's borrow the introduction to his new article:

Medical boards from coast to coast are inconsistent, inefficient and ill equipped to monitor the hundreds of thousands of doctors licensed under their watch, Antidote's investigation of every state board has found. There are some standouts, but, overall, they do a terrible job protecting patients and informing the public.

It bears repeating that most doctors do a great job and are focused on one thing: helping their patients heal and lead healthier lives. The mission of this tour was to explore what happens to that minority of doctors who don't follow the rules.

One example in the story: Licensing boards that think they're doing a good thing when they restrict a doctor convicted of sexual molestation from seeing a certain age group of patients, naively failing to realize that the doctor will just "pivot his practice" to prey on a different age group.

Another issue: So many malpracticing doctors getting shunted to places where the patients are already vulnerable: poor towns, prisons, and addiction treatment centers.

Read the rest of [his piece here](#).

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