

Missouri State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts



In 1872, the Missouri State Medical Association lobbied unsuccessfully for a state board of censors to test medical school graduates for competence before allowing them to practice medicine. Two years later, the state legislature required all persons entering the medical profession to register with the state.

In 1893, the legislature passed the state's first Medical Practice Act, which required physicians who did not have a medical diploma or certificate to pass an examination administered by the State Board of Health. The act also dealt with medical school curriculum and credentialing of instructors in lieu of requiring medical school graduates to pass a board-administered exam. In 1907, a new Medical Practice Act was passed that required applicants taking the board examination to be graduates of a reputable four-year medical school. The [Missouri State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts](#) was created in 1939. Until 1959, Missouri had separate boards regulating medical doctors and osteopathic doctors. Today, the board regulates medical doctors, osteopathic doctors, physician's assistants, physical therapists, speech language pathologists, audiologists, perfusionists, athletic trainers and anesthesiology assistants among others. The board is comprised of eight physicians and one voting public member.

Also of note in Missouri medical history, Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., D.O., founded the American School of Osteopathy in Kirksville, Mo., in 1892. When osteopathic medicine was developing in rural Missouri, traditional surgery and therapeutic regimens often were seen to cause more harm than good. Arsenic, castor oil, whiskey and opium were among the common medicines at that time. Unsanitary conditions often caused death from surgical procedures. Mark Twain was an early supporter of osteopathic medicine, but it wasn't until the late 1960s that osteopathic physicians were admitted to the American Medical Association. The A.T. Still University College of Osteopathic Medicine operates today in Kirksville, Mo.