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Georgia physicians must reveal if they don't have malpractice insurance

It's bad enough when a treatment goes so wrong a patient has to sue to get financial compensation for the physician's malpractice, but what if the physician has no liability insurance and the judgment can't be collected? For Georgia residents, this no longer poses a problem, because under a new law that may be the first of its kind in the U.S., physicians must disclose whether or not they are covered by medical liability insurance.

According to the law, which was signed by Georgia Governor Nathan Deal last month, physicians are required to inform the Georgia Composite Medical Board if they are insured. The board will make the

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information available on its website as part of a physician's public profile. In addition, doctors also must disclose whether they are covered by insurance when asked by patients. If the physician declines to inform his patients, the result could be disciplinary action by the board.

"The patient has a right to know if a physician carries malpractice insurance," says Rep. Ben Watson, MD, who sponsored the measure. "This is part of how a patient can judge a physician."

The Medical Association of Georgia, which represents physicians in Georgia, supported the bill. The vast majority of Georgia's nearly 18,000 physicians have liability insurance.

The Georgia law may be the first of its kind to add "insurance coverage" to the list of public disclosures required of physicians. Last month, the Illinois Assembly passed a similar bill, but it has yet to be signed into law.

Source: [American Medical News](#)

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