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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY: Gregg Thornton

Greetings to everyone receiving our summer NCSB newsletter. So much has changed since the time our spring newsletter was distributed earlier this year. The COVID-19 pandemic was just beginning to lay bare its enormous impact across our country and throughout the world. At the beginning of this year, the donning of face masks, maintaining social distance, and working from home were still unimagined. I hope this newsletter finds everyone safe and doing well during this unprecedented time.

The NCSB Board of Directors met virtually in late March and held a special meeting in June to assess our plans for moving forward with our 33rd annual conference, which was scheduled for October 22-24, 2020 in Santa Fe, NM. As we communicated in June, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and survey responses from our member states, we decided to cancel the conference. We would like to thank everyone who responded to the survey. It was very clear that we were working against a number of factors outside our control, which we ultimately determined would have greatly impaired our ability to provide a safe and quality conference, e.g., travel restrictions, budget cuts, concerns related to COVID-19, to name just a few.

We are already making plans to hold our annual conference in 2021 in Williamsburg, VA from October 7-9, 2021. We invite you to mark your calendars and save these dates now. We look forward to providing more details about the conference program in early 2021. In the meantime, we are working on an alternative plan to have a few of our conference faculty provide a virtual presentation in the fall on some hot topics. We will send out an e-mail with the complete information and details. Please be sure to visit the NCSB website for information and resources related to COVID-19 at: <http://www.ncsb.info/>.

On behalf of everyone at NCSB, we wish everyone the best in health and staying safe. We look forward to seeing everyone at our conference in 2021.

MISSION

The mission of the NCSB is to promote consumer protection by supporting regulatory boards in speech-language pathology and audiology in fulfilling statutory, professional and ethical obligations.

VISION

The vision of NCSB is to be the pre-eminent resource regarding licensure for the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology.

NCSB CANCELS FALL CONFERENCE

As President Gregg Thornton indicated in his President's Message, the Fall conference was scheduled to be held in Santa Fe. Because of the current problems associated with COVID-19, the Board of Directors made the decision to cancel the conference. The agenda had been determined, and in some cases, the speakers for the topics had committed to a presentation. Because the presentations are relevant to what you do as regulators, many of the topics will be on the agenda when NCSB meets in 2021. If you have issues or ideas that may be of interest to you or your Board, please convey the information to a member of the Board of Directors. In the meantime, the Board of Directors hopes that you will save the dates for the conferences that will hopefully be held in 2021 and in 2022.

October 6-9, 2021 Williamsburg, Virginia
 October 12-15, 2022 Santa Fe, New Mexico

In addition to the Board member training, sessions updating the licensure compact were planned, as were sessions relating to accommodations made by licensure Boards during the pandemic. There was to be an update to certification and accreditation standards as well as information regarding the utilization of assistants in our professions. The ever-popular State Information Exchange was scheduled, and sessions focusing on cultural competency and clinical simulation were also on the agenda. It is hoped that many of these topics can be included for the 2021 Conference, and there are sure to be additional hot topics of interest to regulators.

Information regarding hotels, etc. for the Williamsburg conference will be provided in the next newsletter and can also be accessed on the NCSB web site, www.ncsb.info.

VIRTUAL SESSIONS PLANNED IN LIEU OF 2020 CONFERENCE

During the NCSB special meeting held in June, it was determined that three topics should be provided in a virtual format for our member states:

Topic	Presenter
SLP-IC/Interstate Compact	Dan Logsdon
COVID-19 Impact to Regulatory Boards	Sherry Sancibrian
Cultural Competency and Sensitivity	Jayme Pultro

The sessions will be of short duration (about 20 minutes) and can be viewed individually. NCSB is recommending that Boards include the viewing of these sessions during regularly scheduled meetings so members can engage in discussion following each presentation. Information regarding participation in these sessions is forthcoming, and current plans are to have the sessions recorded during October. The virtual sessions will be available for a limited time, and that information will also be provided.

Continuing Education:

CE approval will not be submitted to ASHA or AAA for these sessions.

Cost:

No cost, but content will only be accessible to member states.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION SHARING

In an effort to maintain its focus on communication among licensure Boards, NCSB is providing information regarding pertinent resources and web sites. It is hoped that member Boards will add to these resources and share information.

- ◇ At its next BOD meeting NCSB will explore the issue of cultural competency and sensitivity to determine whether it would be appropriate to issue a position statement or similar correspondence regarding these issues. If any Boards have issued such a statement or have engaged in sensitivity/diversity training, please share the information with NCSB by contacting a member of the Board of Directors.
- ◇ During the pandemic, it has been necessary for Boards to modify their positions regarding continuing education, supervision, and other related requirements. Whether it has been done through promulgation of emergency rules or modified in some other form, please send a listing of changes made by your Board and the manner in which these changes were accomplished.
- ◇ Service delivery models are constantly undergoing change. Inherent in this change is the provision of services via telehealth, which has taken on a new dimension as states consider adoption of an interstate licensure compact. As of this writing five (5) states have adopted legislation regarding the formation of interstate compacts in audiology and speech-language pathology. A number of other states are currently preparing legislation to have this compact included as part of their enabling statute. According to Susan Pilch, the Progressive Policy Institute and Americans for Prosperity have issued a joint white paper on telehealth. Section 5 lists “other recommendations to increase access” and one of these encourages states to recognize health care licenses from other states. This same section states that states can do this by entering into interstate licensing compacts. For additional information, go to:
<https://www.progressivepolicy.org/publication/the-promise-of-telehealth-beyond-the-emergency/>
- ◇ Susan Adams, ASHA Director of State Legislative and Regulatory Affairs has provided the ASHA compact for your information. Go to:
<https://leader.pubs.asha.org/do/10.1044/2020-0810-interstate-compact-success/full/>

NOTE: NCSB, under the direction of President Gregg Thornton, has prepared a list of federal and state web sites where additional information regarding the Pandemic can be obtained. Go to www.ncsb.info to access those sites.

As Boards wrestle with the impact of COVID-19 on the professions, it is imperative that consumer protection remain at the forefront at all times. The following focuses on hearing aid dispensing, and it is hoped that other areas of the professions can be highlighted in future editions of the newsletter.

CHECKING UNDER THE HOOD: ENSURING YOUR RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR HEARING AID DISPENSING ARE BEING FOLLOWED

As we have seen at NCSB, state licensure boards across the country have been quickly responding to the impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether adopting emergency rules or complying with expedited legislation or executive orders, the regulatory landscape has been adapted to ensure consumers have access to a variety of services, especially those related to healthcare. Most often, this has involved allowing services to be delivered to patients/clients via telehealth and ensuring that those

telehealth services would be covered for reimbursement by third-party insurance providers. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, NCSB would like to remind our member state licensure boards to review their existing laws, rules and regulations, particularly those governing the sale, fitting, and dispensing of hearing aids.

Since its inception, the profession of audiology has evolved with respect to an expanded scope of practice and more employment opportunities for audiologists. Although it was once declared to be unethical for audiologists to dispense hearing aids, hearing aid dispensing has become an integral part of many audiology practices. Hearing aid technology has improved, and as such, the methods of service delivery for hearing aid dispensing have expanded. Many hearing aids are dispensed through hospitals, clinics, universities, and other traditional models, while there is now also an upsurge in the online sales of hearing aids. Additionally, it is anticipated that some audiologists may include dispensing of over-the-counter hearing aids as soon as the FDA finalizes its rules for OTC aids.

All fifty states and the District of Columbia now regulate the practice of audiology and require that the provision of audiological services be accomplished through an audiologist licensed or otherwise regulated to practice in that state. Although there is variation from state to state, there is typically a set of guidelines in the statute and/or in the Rules and Regulations relative to how the regulated audiologist dispenses hearing aids within that state. Most include a comprehensive case history, otoscopic examination, audiological testing, medical clearance when indicated, hearing aid programming and fitting, and hearing aid verification.

Since the regulation of the profession of audiology has as its focus protection of the public, it is incumbent upon members of regulatory boards to safeguard consumers by ensuring that guidelines for hearing aid dispensing are strictly followed. While a relaxation of the hearing aid dispensing guidelines may have been exacerbated by COVID-19, the guidelines comprise an integral part of the enabling statute and should be followed until such time as modification of the guidelines is changed legislatively. Such changes or modifications may be necessary in the future as hearing aid technology and service delivery models are re-evaluated. While the intent of NCSB is not to restrict free trade or otherwise regulate the practice of hearing aid dispensing, NCSB does want to encourage regulatory boards to examine their statute and/or Rules and Regulations to protect consumers by enforcing those aspects of the regulations that pertain to prescribed evaluative and test procedures required for the dispensing and fitting of hearing aids by appropriately credentialed audiologists.

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE BUSINESS MEETING

Each year the minutes of the year's previous corporate meeting are circulated so member Boards can review them and officially adopt them at the next Business Meeting. Following are the minutes from the 2019 meeting in San Antonio. Boards will be provided an opportunity to read, amend, and approve the minutes.

September 27, 2019
Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas

President Kerri Phillips called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 PM, and welcomed attendees to the annual association meeting. President Phillips introduced the current NCSB Board members and officers.

Approval of the Minutes:

President Phillips called for a motion approving the 2018 Corporate Business Meeting Minutes which were distributed to all attendees. Larry Molt, AL moved and Doreen Oyadomari, AL seconded the motion to approve as submitted; the motion passed unanimously.

Report of the President-Elect:

NCSB President-Elect Gregg Thornton presented the 2019 Conference report. There are approximately 70 people attending the full conference representing 20 states, with 20 participants at the pre-conference Board Training. Gregg recognized the Ohio Board as a platinum sponsor, the West Virginia Board as a diamond sponsor, and the North Carolina Board as a gold sponsor. He also thanked breakfast, lunch and break sponsors and expressed appreciation for exhibitors EBS, AAA, ASHA, Audiology.com, SPPath.com and ETS, and encouraged attendees to visit their exhibits.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Doreen Oyadomari presented the financial report and the proposed, balanced 2020 operating budget. Doreen provided a brief history of conference expenses, and explained why the proposed budget for conference expense was increased. Questions regarding board member travel expense raised by member Adam Mehlenbacher (NC) were answered. Erin Haag (OR) complimented NCSB on increasing income from exhibits and sponsors. Erin Haag (OR) moved and Jayme Pultro (MS) seconded the motion to approve and the 2020 proposed budget was unanimously adopted.

Secretary's Report:

Secretary Amy Goldman reminded members to purchase tickets for the 50-50; this source of funds enables NCSB to bring in high-quality speakers to talk on issues of significant concern to the membership. Secretary Goldman recognized "first-timers" to the NCSB conference. Attendees were reminded to update their entry in the NCSB directory. Goldman encouraged members to "like" NCSB on Facebook and visit the association's website, www.ncsb.info.

Editor's Report:

Editor Glenn Waguespack provided a report on our online newsletter. Prior years' issues are archived on the website. He asked members to contact him with ideas for content and with any other comments.

Report of the Past President:

Past-President Pullins reviewed the nominations and elections process and timeline and announced results of the 2019 elections. Congratulations were extended to incoming President-Elect Rachel Thompson (WY), as well as Larry Molt (AL), Doreen Oyadomari (AL), and Vickie Pullins (WV) who are returning to the NCSB Board.

Old Business:

President Phillips, who along with Nahale Kalfas (NC) serves as NCSB liaison to the committee working on the Speech Pathology and Audiology interstate compact, referred to the conference program regarding progress on the compact.

Awards and Recognitions:

Past-President Pullins thanked the Honors Committee members (Pultro, Waguespack) and reviewed the criteria for the NCSB awards. NCSB Special Recognition Honors were awarded to Philip David Blalock (NC) and Wyoming State Senator Stephen Pappas for their contributions.

Announcements:

Glenn announced the time and date of the NCSB poster session at ASHA 2019 and its receipt of a “Meritorious Poster” designation. The dates and location of the 2020 annual conference was announced – Drury Plaza, Santa Fe, New Mexico, October 22-24, 2019. Finally, NCSB leadership transitioned from out-going President Phillips to incoming President Gregg Thornton.

Jayne Pultro (WY) moved and Amy Goldman (PA) seconded the motion to adjourn; the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM.

JOIN NCSB ON FACEBOOK

Keep up to date on the latest news and information from NCSB. Join Facebook and have access to early announcements of conference locations, accommodations, and programs. Get “social” with NCSB. Membership in the Facebook group is open to anyone who is a past or present member of your state’s licensure board in speech-language pathology or audiology, state and national association leaders - or if you are interested in trending information and hot topics related to the regulation of the communication profession. Invite your friends to “like” and “follow” us. Connect with your colleagues about timely issues in the professions and share news about what is happening in your state.

Search under “NCSB” or go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/201684259941209/?fref=ts>

NCSB POSTER ACCEPTED FOR PRESENTATION AT ASHA

Prior to the cancellation of the ASHA conference, ASHA was notified that its poster was accepted for presentation at the conference. The poster was intended to provide survey results regarding the changes made by licensure Boards during the Pandemic. In addition, the poster was designed to include an update on the audiology and speech-language pathology compact. The poster is scheduled to be revised and submitted for presentation at the 2011 ASHA Conference. Updates on the status of this submission will be forthcoming in the next newsletter edition.

BYLAWS REVISIONS PROPOSED

The last revision of the NCSB Bylaws was adopted in 2015. The Bylaws are periodically reviewed as licensure laws change to ensure that they provide members with the most current information. Although no major changes have been proposed since the 2015 revision, the COVID-19 crisis has necessitated some changes to the document. Minor changes are being proposed in addition to the additional language.

Article IV, Section 1**Current**

The annual meeting of the Council shall be held each year at a time and place to be determined by the Board of Directors.

Proposed Addition

Virtual meeting formats may be considered when face-to-face membership meetings become impossible due to acts of God, terrorism, civil disorder, disaster (including but not limited to fire, flood, severe weather, and earthquake), strikes or work stoppages, curtailment of transportation facilities or any other situation making it illegal, impossible, unsafe, or commercially impracticable to hold a face-to-face meeting. Minutes taken during the annual membership meeting will be circulated via the newsletter, and the minutes will be voted upon at the next face-to-face membership meeting. If a face-to-face meeting is deemed unfeasible, voting to approve the corporate minutes will be circulated electronically.

Rationale

Although the Bylaws provide for special meetings, the current situation regarding the Pandemic has made it necessary to revise the current language so that there are no misunderstandings.

Article V, Section 1

Current

Member Boards shall be entitled to participate in the election process via electronic voting for the election of Directors to the NCSB Board of Directors.

Proposed Addition

The position of President-Elect must be filled by a sitting member of the Board of Directors, while nomination for members of the Board of Directors can be submitted by any member in accordance with Article VII.

Rationale

The Bylaws were not specific with regard to the position of President-Elect.

Article VIII, Section 4

Current & Rationale

Current Bylaws are not specific with regard to all of the duties of the Secretary.

Proposed Addition

The Secretary is responsible for keeping current a directory of member boards and shall make this publication available to member boards and individual members within 90 days of the deadline for payment of dues.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

By now Boards and individual members have received electronic correspondence regarding the nomination of individuals for the NCSB Board of Directors. Please participate in the election process by nominating individuals to serve on the NCSB BOD. The current call is for a President-Elect, and that person must be elected from the current sitting BOD members.

Members eligible for this nomination are:

Amy Goldman (Pennsylvania)
Glenn Waguespack (Louisiana)
Doreen Oyadomari (Alabama)
Larry Molt (Alabama)

Nahale Kalfas (North Carolina)
Vickie Pullins (West Virginia)
Jayme Pultro (Mississippi)

In addition, nominations are open for three (3) members of the BOD. Two of the individuals will fill three (3) year terms, while one (1) individual will complete a one-year term.

Please submit your nominations to info@ncsb.info. Bio information for each candidate will be circulated once the nomination procedure has been completed.

NCSB AWARDS

Since there is no face-to-face NCSB conference this year, NCSB has not submitted a call for awards, However, NCSB reminds members to consider submitting nominations at any time so that deserving individuals can be recognized at the Fall Conference in 2021. For information on awards, go to www.ncsb.info.

SPOTLIGHT ON REGULATORY BOARDS

Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies

Executive Director – Patty Salazar

Division of Professions & Occupations Director – Ronne Hines

Office of Audiology Licensure Program Director – Zen Mayhugh

Office of Speech-Language Pathology Certification Program Director – Ofelia Duran

Office of Speech-Language Pathology Certification: Program Information

Ofelia Duran, Program Director

The Colorado Office of Speech-Language Pathology Certification regulates individual certificate holders in the State of Colorado. Office activities include certification, investigating complaints, and enforcing disciplinary actions against violators of the Speech-Language Pathology Practice Act and Director's rules and regulations.

The Office's mission is consumer protection through licensing and enforcement. The Office regulates individuals who are representing or holding themselves out as speech-language pathologists or who are performing services that constitute speech-language pathology. School speech-language pathologists who are paid solely by a school district, board of cooperative services, or state charter school providing services to exceptional children are excluded from regulation by this Office.

Meetings

Meetings and rulemaking hearings are normally held at 1560 Broadway, Denver, Colorado. For specific dates, times and locations, please refer to the calendar below. Please note that meeting dates are subject to change and/or cancellation.

Frequently Asked Questions

[Professional and Consumer General FAQs](#)

Calendar of Events

[Office of Speech-Language Pathology Certification Calendar](#)

Contact Information

Office of Speech-Language Pathology Certification; 1560 Broadway, Suite 1350; Denver, CO 80202
Phone: 303-894-7800 | Fax: 303-894-7764 | Email: dora_speechlanguagepathology@state.co.us

Office of Audiology Licensure: Program Information

Zen Mayhugh, Program Director

The Colorado Office of Audiology and Hearing Aid Provider Licensure (Office) regulates individual licensed audiologists, hearing aid providers, hearing aid associates, and hearing aid trainees in the State of Colorado.

The mission of the Office is to maintain the profession's integrity and protect its consumers. The Office's activities include licensing audiologists and hearing aid providers, investigating complaints, and enforcing disciplinary actions against those who violate the Audiologist and Hearing Aid Providers Practice Act and the Director's Rules and Regulations.

The Office works in conjunction with the National Board for Certification Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS), the Colorado Speech-Language Hearing Association (CSHA), the Colorado Academy of Audiology (CAA), and the Colorado Hearing Society.

Frequently Asked Questions

[Professional and Consumer General FAQs](#)

Calendar of Events

[Office of Audiology and Hearing Aid Provider Licensure Calendar](#)

Contact Information

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Denver, CO 80202

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View online at <http://www.ncsb.info/board-members>

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