

FINAL APPROVED

ADVISORY BOARD ON GENETIC COUNSELING

Minutes

October 4, 2021

The Advisory Board on Genetic Counseling met on Monday, October 4, 2021 at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lori Swain - Chair
Tahnee Causey, GC - Vice-Chair
Marilyn Foust, MD
Lydia Higgs, GC

MEMBERS ABSENT: Martha Thomas, GC

STAFF PRESENT: William L. Harp, MD, Executive Director
Michael Sobowale, LLM, Deputy Director, Licensure
Elaine Yeatts, DHP Senior Policy Analyst
Colanthia Opher, Deputy Director, Administration
Delores Cousins, Licensing Specialist

GUESTS PRESENT: None

Call to Order

Lori Swain, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1p.m.

Emergency Egress Procedures

Dr. Harp announced the emergency egress instructions.

Roll Call

Roll was called; a quorum was declared.

Introduction of Members and Staff

Dr. Harp asked Board staff and the Advisory Board members to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Marilyn Foust moved to adopt the minutes of the October 5, 2020 meeting. Tahnee Causey seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, they were approved as presented.

Adoption of Agenda

Tahnee Causey moved to adopt the agenda. Marilyn Foust seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the agenda was adopted.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

None

New Business

1. 2021 Legislative Update and 2022 Proposals

Dr. Harp provided an update on legislative actions from the 2021 General Assembly that held interest to members and spoke to 2022 legislative proposals.

2. Report of Regulatory Actions

Dr. Harp gave the report in Elaine Yeatts' absence. He made special mention of the repeal of the conscience clause for genetic counselors by the 2021 General Assembly. Conforming the regulations to the Code will be an exempt regulatory action.

3. Review of Licensure Requirements

Michael Sobowale said this topic was placed on the Advisory Board's agenda at the request of the Credentials Committee for the Advisory Board to review the licensing requirements and application questions to determine if they can be further streamlined. The Credentials Committee met on September 20, 2021 to review and recommend which documents required in the licensing process should be primary-source verified, which ones may be submitted as copies, and those that are no longer be needed in the licensing process. The Credentials Committee will be making recommendations on how the licensing process for all professions could be streamlined. The Committee asked that any recommendation made by the Advisory Board be reported at its next meeting on November 8th.

Members reviewed current licensure requirements for genetic counselors and it was the consensus of members that digital opportunity for submission of required documents in the licensing process made sense. Members also agreed that the application process could be simplified for applicants while still protecting the public.

After discussion, and upon a motion made by Tahnee Causey, seconded by Lydia Higgs, the Advisory Board voted to recommend that a license applicant should submit primary source verification of the following documents: Professional Education /School Transcripts, American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) or American Board of Medical Genetics (ABMG) Certificate, ABGC Active Candidate status letter for temporary license applicants, National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) self-query report and one state license verification.

Copies of the following documents could be accepted: Other state license verifications, if submitted; a digitally-certified electronic copy of the NPDB report in lieu of a mailed report, and supporting documentation for any question answered 'Yes' on the application form that is deemed non-routine.

It is no longer necessary for applicants to submit a "Form B" employment verification.

4. Correspondence:

a. CE Requirements

Members discussed correspondence received from Martha Thomas regarding whether continuing education credits completed in the previous license renewal cycle should count towards license renewal in the current cycle, even though a certificate of course completion may not yet have been issued or received.

It was the consensus of members that the issue can be addressed by asking the licensee who is the subject of a continuing education audit to provide an explanation that clarifies the status of credit hours earned.

b. Exam Candidate Temporary Licensure

Tahnee Causey brought up the issue of a new graduate who took the national board examination and failed prior to applying for a temporary license with the Board. The Board's regulation states that an exam candidate who has been granted an active candidate status by the American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) could apply for a temporary license with the Board. Ms. Higgs felt that this was a violation of the spirit of the law.

Ms. Causey will contact the ABGC to find out if an exam candidate's active candidate status could be renewed and report her findings back to the Board at the next meeting.

5. Approval of 2022 Meeting Calendar

Marilyn Foust moved to approve the proposed meeting dates for the Advisory Board on the 2022 Board calendar. Lydia Higgs seconded. The schedule of meetings was unanimously approved.

6. Election of Officers

Marilyn Foust moved to nominate Tahnee Causey as Chair and Lydia Higgs as Vice-Chair. Lydia Higgs seconded the motion. Members unanimously approved the slate of officers nominated.

Announcements:

Next Scheduled Meeting:

The next scheduled meeting is Monday January 31, 2022 @ 1pm.

Adjournment

With no other business to conduct, the meeting adjourned @2:46pm.

Lori Swain, Citizen, Chair

William L. Harp, MD, Executive Director

Michael Sobowale, LLM, Deputy Director