

FINAL APPROVED

ADVISORY BOARD ON RESPIRATORY THERAPY

Minutes

October 5, 2021

The Advisory Board on Respiratory Therapy met on Tuesday, October 5th, 2021 at 1:00 pm in the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Gochenour, RRT, Chair
Santiera Brown-Yearling RRT, Vice-Chair
Shari Toomey, RRT

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bruce K. Rubin, MD
Denver Supinger, Citizen

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

GUESTS PRESENT: None

Call to Order

Daniel Gochenour, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

Emergency Egress Procedures

Dr. Harp announced the emergency egress instructions.

Roll Call

The roll was called, and a quorum was declared.

Approval of the January 26, 2021 Minutes

Santiera Brown-Yearling moved to approve the minutes. Shari Toomey seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the minutes were approved as presented.

Adoption of Agenda

Santiera Brown-Yearling moved to adopt the agenda. Shari Toomey seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the agenda was approved as presented.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

None

New Business

1. 2021 Legislative Update and 2022 Proposals

Elaine Yeatts provided an update on legislation from the 2021 General Assembly that was of interest to members, as well as legislative proposals for the 2022 Session. No action was required.

2. Update on VSRC's Request for Advanced Practice RT New Profession Assessment

Elaine Yeatts discussed the response from the Director of the Department of Health Professions on behalf of the agency to the request received from the Virginia Society for Respiratory Care (VSRC) for Advanced Practice Respiratory Therapist assessment as a new profession. She asked members to refer to the criteria listed in the Agency's policies and procedures for the determination of the need to regulate health occupations and professions. As there are so few APRT's, it is premature to have the Board of Health Professions conduct a study. Further, Ms. Yeatts said that studies conducted by the agency from 2015 to 2019 showed that there was only a 1% growth in the number of RT's practicing in Virginia.

3. Respiratory Therapy Workforce and Staffing

Mr. Gochenour led the discussion. He shared the concern of hospital managers who participated in an informal survey on respiratory therapist staffing in Virginia. The results of the survey showed that employers are facing some challenges filling respiratory therapist positions in their facilities due to an insufficient applicant pool.

The Advisory Board members were in agreement that there was a need to bring awareness of the profession to the public; this has generally been the responsibility of the professional association. It was proposed that DHP's Healthcare Workforce Study report could be disseminated to high schools, and the information could also be sent to the Virginia Society for Respiratory Care to be used as a sort of healthcare occupational roadmap with various groups. It was also suggested that the profession could find a patron to sponsor a bill to authorize the Board to issue a six-month temporary license to new graduates prior to passing the National Board of Respiratory Care exam, similar to the Occupational Therapy License Applicant authorization.

4. 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.

The Credentials Committee had recommended at the September 20th meeting that a respiratory therapist license applicant should submit primary source verification of the following documents: professional education/ school transcripts, National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) Certificate, 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.

Members concurred that the recommendations made by the Committee pertaining to the application process for respiratory therapist license applicants could simplify the application process for them while still protecting the public.

5. Approval of 2022 Meeting Calendar

Shari Toomey moved to approve the proposed meeting dates for the Advisory Board on the 2022 calendar. Santiera Brown-Yearling seconded the motion. The schedule was unanimously approved.

6. Election of Officers - Daniel Gochenour

Daniel Gochenour nominated Santiera Brown-Yearling as Chair, and Shari Toomey seconded the motion. Santiera Brown-Yearling nominated Shari Toomey as Vice-Chair, and Daniel Gochenour seconded. By unanimous vote, the Advisory Board approved the slate of officers as nominated.

Announcements:

Delores Cousins provided the licensing statistics report. There are 3,9777 current active respiratory therapists and 119 current inactive.

Next Scheduled Meeting:

The next scheduled meeting will be February 1, 2022 @ 1pm.

Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:39 pm.

Daniel Gochenour, RRT, Chair
Director

William L. Harp, MD, Executive

Delores Cousins, Licensing Specialist