

<< FINAL APPROVED >>

ADVISORY BOARD ON SURGICAL ASSISTING

Minutes

October 12, 2021

The Advisory Board on Surgical Assisting met on Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, Virginia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deborah Redmond, LSA - Chair
Jessica Wilhelm, LSA - Vice-Chair
Srikanth Mahavadi, MD
Nicole Meredith, RN

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thomas Gochenour, LSA

STAFF PRESENT: William L. Harp, MD, Executive Director
Michael Sobowale, LLM, Deputy Director, Licensure
Delores Cousins, Licensure Specialist

GUESTS PRESENT: David B. Jennette, NSAA
Kelsey Wilkinson, Medical Society of Virginia

Call to Order

Deborah Redmond called meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Emergency Egress Procedures

Dr. Harp announced the emergency egress procedures.

Roll Call

Delores Cousins called the roll, and a quorum was declared.

Approval of Minutes

Nicole Meredith moved to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2021 meeting as presented. Dr. Mahavadi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Adoption of Agenda

Jessica Wilhelm moved to approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Mahavadi seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Public Comment

David Jennette, Chief Administrative Officer for the National Surgical Assistant Association (NSSA), provided brief comments on NSSA's licensed surgical assistant renewal process. He mentioned that surgical assistants can obtain National Commission for the Certification of Surgical Assistants (NCCSA) credits through its recertification process. The Board can validate continuing education units or courses taken, as verified by the NCCSA. He also expressed NSSA's support of the National Center for Competency Testing's (NCCT) request to add it as a credentialing pathway for surgical technologists, in addition to the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting.

New Business

1. 2021 Legislative Update and 2022 Proposals

Dr. Harp provided an update on legislative actions from the 2021 General Assembly that were of interest to members and briefly mentioned several 2022 DHP legislative proposals.

2. Regulatory Report

Dr. Harp gave a brief report of the regulatory actions for the Board of Medicine from the 2021 General Assembly. He made special mention of the action voted upon by the Advisory Board at the June meeting to amend regulations to conform its regulation to the 2021 legislation for certification of surgical technologists and approve an amendment for surgical assistants consistent with other licensed professions.

3. Correspondence re: NCCT Credential, Renewal Application & Licensure/Certification

Ms. Redmond led the discussion. The correspondence received by the Board pertaining to renewal application for surgical assistants have been addressed to her satisfaction prior to the meeting. It was discussed that NCCT could have sought to be added as a credentialing organization prior to the passage of the legislation and approval of regulations for surgical technologists.

4. Review of Licensure/Certification 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 surgical assistants and certification of surgical technologists. It was the consensus of members that the application process could be simplified for applicants while still protecting the public. The Board approved licensure requirements as follows:

A license applicant as a surgical assistant should submit primary-source verification of the following evidence of one of three credentialing pathways: 1. a current credential as a surgical assistant or surgical first assistant issued by the NBSTSA or NCCSA or their successors; 2. successful completion of a surgical assistant training program during the applicant's service as a member of any branch of the armed forces of the United States; or 3. practice as a surgical assistant in the Commonwealth at any time in the six months immediately prior to July 1, 2020.

An applicant registering with the Board for certification as a surgical technologist should submit primary-source verification of the following evidence of one of three credentialing pathways: 1. a current credential as a surgical technologist issued by the NBSTSA or its successor; 2. successful completion of a training program for surgical technology during the applicant's service as a member of any branch of the armed forces of the United States; or 3. practice as a surgical technologist at any time in the six months immediately prior to July 1, 2021.

For these professions, copies of the following documents could be accepted: a notarized copy of the NBSTSA or NCCSA credential, if mailed by the applicant, 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.

5. Approval of 2022 Meeting Calendar

Nicole Meredith moved to approve the proposed meeting dates for the Advisory Board for 2022. Dr. Mahavadi seconded the motion. The schedule of meetings in 2022 was unanimously approved.

6. Election of Officers

Jessica Wilhelm moved to nominate Deborah Redmond to continue as Chair. The motion was seconded by Dr. Mahavadi. Ms. Redmond moved to nominate Jessica

Wilhelm as Vice-Chair. Dr. Mahavadi seconded the motion. The slate of officers was unanimously approved.

Announcements:

Delores Cousins provided licensing statistics as follows: there are currently 395 licensed surgical assistants total with 337 current active in Virginia and 58 out-of-state. There are currently 269 registered surgical technologists in total, with 259 current active in Virginia and 10 out-of-state.

Next Scheduled Meeting:

The next scheduled meeting will be February 7, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Deborah Redmond LSA, Chair

William L. Harp, MD, Executive Director

Delores Cousins, Licensing Specialist