



Advisory Group on Nursing Education February 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Members Attending: Patricia Sharpnack, Board Member, Chair; Judy Kreye; Camden Seal; Crystal Goods; Suzanne Smith; Kimberly Regis; Katrina Kelley; Connie Bowler; Jennifer Johnson; Judith Brachman; Cecilia Bidigare; Christina Devlin

Members Absent: Tiffany Kennerk

Staff Attending: Lisa Emrich; Anita DiPasquale; Lisa Hashemian; Kristie Oles; Chantelle Sunderman; Tom Dilling

Guests: Debra Lee, Ohio Council of Deans and Directors; Donna Mitchell, Ohio Council of Deans and Directors; Kate Freeman, SpanTran: The Evaluation Company; Jacob Malakoff, SpanTran: The Evaluation Company

Call to Order and Welcome

Patricia Sharpnack, Board member and Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held through audio-visual conferencing in accordance with the Open Meetings Act as amended by HB 404.

Approval of the October 8, 2020. Minutes

The Advisory Group agreed by consensus to approve the minutes as submitted.

Guest: Jacob Malakoff, SpanTran: The Evaluation Company

Lisa Emrich introduced Jacob Malakoff from SpanTran: The Evaluation Company, a company that analyzes and evaluates the equivalency of studies completed outside of the United States. Rule 4723-7-04, OAC requires foreign educated nurse graduates to provide the Board a full education course-by-course report specifically from CGFNS. Jacob Malakoff requested that the Board consider utilizing other evaluation companies including SpanTran: TEC.

Jacob Malakoff provided an overview of the company, which has been a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) since 1996 and provides evaluations to school, employers and the Texas Board of Nursing. Kate Freeman, senior evaluator, discussed the experience and qualifications of the evaluators, provided an overview of other verification services and reviewed a sample evaluation provided to the Advisory Group.

Legislative Report

Tom Dilling provided the following legislative updates:

- ⇒ **SB 310:** SB 310 is effective on December 29, 2020 through May 1, 2021. The bill allows a respiratory care professional (RCP) to direct LPNs. Additionally, the bill allows a nurse whose license has been lapsed or inactive less than five years to be deemed as licensed and authorized to practice until May 1, 2021 without having to reinstate the license.

⇒ **HB 673:** The bill proposed that the Board “recognize any hours” obtained by nurses working on a HB 197 temporary license toward “any outstanding clinical hours” required to take the NCLEX examination; however, nurses who obtained the temporary license are required to complete their “clinical education” prior to being issued a license under HB 197. Language to extend HB 197 licenses until July 1, 2021 was opposed by the Ohio Nurses Association and language was added to the bill specifying that having failed the NCLEX exam makes an individual ineligible to hold a temporary license.

T. Dilling stated the Board testified in Committee as an interested party in opposition to extending the HB 197 licenses. HB 197 was a response to testing centers closing and the concerns about COVID-19 pressures on the health care system. Since July 2020 NCLEX testing sites have been fully operational. L. Emrich added that recently an individual was made exam-eligible one day and had passed the NCLEX two days later.

Debra Lee stated her program has experienced a dip in the program’s NCLEX pass rate and questioned the timeline for applicants receiving their Authorization to Test (ATT). L. Emrich responded that there have been unintended consequences of HB 197 resulting in additional time to process applications. The Board’s implementation of HB 197 temporary licenses significantly increased the volume of work that needed to be completed by a limited number of licensure staff and required manual processes for each application. The number of applications received this year versus last year increased by 35%. The Board has received over 3,500 exam applications from students educated by Florida programs, compared to about 200 applications received during this time period last year. The Board submitted a proposal to hire temporary project staff to assist with the workload, which was necessary due to the state-wide hiring freeze. The proposal was recently approved, and the Board is proceeding with the hiring process.

Cecilia Bidigare, Connie Bowler and Judy Kreye stated their programs have also experienced a decrease in NCLEX pass rates, possibly because of not immediately taking the examination and are not proponents of extending HB 197. Judy Kreye added that hospitals in Stark County have experienced the burden of lengthier orientations and onboarding and are not proponents of HB 197.

Judy Brachman stated that the patient and patient’s family expect the nurse caring for them has the required expertise and minimum skillset. Without the NCLEX examination, the minimum standard and added layer of safety is removed.

Kimberly Regis said the NCLEX examination is baseline and leveler for employers hiring new nurses. Without the NCLEX examination, there is an increase in applicants but no minimum standard of knowledge.

Camden Seal asked for contacts to voice opinions. She said the NLCLEX is the checkpoint that determines that a nurse is prepared and safe for practice, and some students do not want to enter into practice without passing the NCLEX. T. Dilling said he would follow up with the group with contact information.

Chair Sharpnack stated the group is at a consensus in the opposition of an any extension of HB 197 and using post-graduation work hours as pre-license program clinical hours is not possible.

Guests: Donna Mitchell and Debra Lee, Ohio Council of Deans and Directors

Donna Mitchell said OCDD was confused with the language in HB 673 proposing the conversion of work hours to clinical hours; the language is counterintuitive and not supported by OCDD. She

stated OCDD has focused their discussions on alternative experiences for clinicals. Most hospitals have reopened for clinical instruction; however, many long-term care facilities, mental health facilities and labor and delivery units remain unavailable.

Deborah Lee stated national certification organizations for advanced practice registered nurses did not waive any clinical requirements for students to sit for their certification exams and finds the waiver of some requirements in the prelicensure nursing programs to be concerning.

PCL Automated Process

L. Emrich stated the Board continues to work with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to automatically match PCLs with the application, which will decrease manual steps and overall processing time. She said four programs have expressed interest in testing the system and encouraged programs to start naming PCLs using the new format now.

Review Chapter 4723-5, OAC, and Rule 4723-7-04, OAC

Rule 4723-7-04, OAC, lists the requirements for licensure for foreign educated nurse graduates and specifies CGFNS as the acceptable evaluation service. The Advisory Group agreed by general consensus to consider inclusion of other evaluation services that provide the education course-by-course report if feasible. It was suggested that the revision should include minimum standards of an evaluation service, rather than naming specific entities. L. Emrich stated that a review of other states' criteria, similar to that of the Texas Board of Nursing would be helpful.

Kristie Oles and Lisa Hashemian summarized staff recommendations for changes to Chapter 4723-5, OAC. Anita DiPasquale stated the Advisory Group will be provided the proposed rule changes at the May meeting.

Summary of 2020 Education Annual Reports

The Advisory Group reviewed the Summary of Annual Reports and noted that few programs are substituting 100% of OB and Pediatric clinical with mid or moderate fidelity, or high-fidelity simulation. L. Emrich stated that the summary report and data are available on the Board's website.

Other

Discussion ensued regarding programs moving hours between simulation or laboratory experiences and clinical experiences.

Schedule 2021 Meeting Dates

Meetings for 2021 are scheduled for May 6 and October 7.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.