

DRAFT MINUTES
of the First Meeting of the
Art Therapy Technical Review Committee

October 29, 2019
1:00 a.m. to 3:00
Lower Level Conference Room “A”
The Nebraska State Office Building, Lincoln, NE

Members Present

Kevin Low, DDS (Chair)
Su Eells
Karen Jones
Wendy McCarty, Ed.D.
Michael J. O’Hara

Members Absent

Ben Greenfield, Perfusionist
Marcy Wyrens, RRT

Staff Present

Matt Gelvin
Ron Briel
Marla Scheer

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Approval of the Agenda

Dr. Low called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. The roll was called; a quorum was present. Dr. Low welcomed all attendees and asked the committee members to introduce themselves. The agenda and Open Meetings Law were posted and the meeting was advertised online at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Licensure/Pages/Credentialing-Review.aspx> . The committee members unanimously approved the agenda for the first meeting.

II. Scheduling Additional Meetings

The committee members selected the following dates and times for their meetings:

- Tuesday November 19, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. for their second meeting.
- Tuesday January 7, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. for their third meeting.
- Tuesday February 4, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. for their fourth meeting.
- Tuesday March 3, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. for their fifth meeting, if necessary.

III. Discussion on the Credentialing Review Process

Credentialing Review Program staff provided a brief overview of the credentialing review process including the sequence of meetings, the role of the statutory criteria, and the focus on the public interest in this program at all stages of the review process.

IV. Initial Questions and Discussion on the Proposal

Janelle Hallaert, Masters Degree Art Therapist, and Jessica Stallings, Ph.D., a clinical mental health practitioner, came forward to present the proposal to the committee members. Dr. Stallings stated that the Art Therapy applicant group want to model the credentialing path to be established for their profession to be modelled after that of Nebraska’s LMHP credential. Dr. Stallings went on to say that harm to the public can come from inappropriate or fraudulent application of art therapy practices and techniques. Trained art therapy professionals are schooled to be aware of possible

allergic reactions to certain products and materials utilized in the creation of art, whereas untrained or fraudulent practitioners are not. Trained art therapy professionals are schooled in human growth and development concepts and factor in this knowledge for each client they are serving, whereas untrained or fraudulent practitioners are not. The potential for fraud is always “there.” Licensure would go a long ways towards addressing these kinds of problems.

Dr. Low asked the applicants whether or not there the proposal would create a regulatory board if it were to pass. Program staff persons Matt Gelvin commented that there are options for newly credentialed professions other than creating a board. For example, there is the option of establishing a committee under an existing board. Dr. Low asked if there is any opposition to the proposal. Dr. Stallings replied that some members of the social work and professional counseling professions and some recreational therapists have expressed concerns about the proposal based on turf concerns. She went on to state that these concerns arise when there is a practitioner who utilizes art therapy as one of their modalities when the practitioner in question has only a minimal amount of training in art therapy and is concerned that they might be barred from using this modality anymore if licensure for art therapists were to become law.

Su Eells asked the applicants why they believe they need licensure. Dr. Stallings responded by stating that currently there is a move within the professional counseling profession to no longer recognize art therapy as being part of LMHP services or modalities. Licensure of Art Therapy represents one way of countering this kind of movement. She added that some professional counselors argue that art therapy is not a profession, only a modality. At this juncture, Clara Keane with the American Art Therapy Association in Alexandria, Virginia commented that eight states have recognized art therapy as a profession by licensing art therapists as health professionals, one being the state of Connecticut, for example.

Karen Jones commented that the applicants need to remember that the reason for credentialing a health profession is to protect the public not to protect a profession. Wendy McCarty asked the applicants if they can document instances of harm to the public stemming from inappropriate or incompetent art therapy practice. Dr. Stallings responded that there is a documented case of harm from England associated with a negative reaction to a graven image.

Wendy McCarty expressed concern about the apparent narrowness of the kind of therapy the applicants seek to credential, and asked the applicants if art therapy ever branches out beyond what she referred to as “studio art.” Clara Keane responded by stating that there are other art-related professions that provide therapeutic services such as music therapy, for example. She went on to say that music therapy is a very different profession with very different education, training, and modalities, and it would be very difficult to find a practical way to merge art therapy and music therapy, for example.

Michael O’Hara asked the applicants about their argument that licensing art therapists would provide a boost to employment in Nebraska. Janelle Hallaert responded that there are art therapy practitioners originally from Nebraska who currently practice in other states who would be glad to return home to Nebraska and practice here if Nebraska were to license their profession.

At this juncture Karen Jones commented that it seems to her that the applicants’ argument seems to be in reverse order, arguing that it is flawed logic to assume that licensure, per se, creates employment. She continued by stating that the applicants seem to forget that art therapists can practice in Nebraska right now regardless of whether or not their profession is licensed. Michael O’Hara asked the applicants if there is any evidence that licensure would increase the income of those persons who are already providing art therapy services in Nebraska. He then asked the applicants how many art therapists are currently practicing in Nebraska. Janelle Hallaert replied

that currently there are about 23 art therapists in Nebraska.

V. Public Comments

Clara Keane and Yasmin Tucker expressed their appreciation to the committee members for their helpful and thoughtful comments.

VI. Other Business and Adjournment

There being no further business, the committee members unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m.