

MINUTES OF THE VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING
NEBRASKA CENTER FOR NURSING
May 1, 2020

Call to Order

The meeting of the Nebraska Center for Nursing (CFN) Board was called to order by Lisa Walters, Chair, on May 1, 2020, at 9:50 a.m. The central meeting location was at the Licensure Unit Conference Room, Nebraska State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, 1st Floor, Lincoln NE 68508. Members participated via videoconference. Copies of the agenda were distributed in advance to the Board members, posted outside the Licensure Unit within the Nebraska State Office Building, and posted on the Department of Health and Human Services website. Staff announced the location of a current copy of the Open Meetings Act within the room.

Roll Call

The following Board members answered roll call:

- Tamara Allen
- Sheila Bjerrum
- Lina Bostwick
- Suzanne Deyke
- Kayleen Dudley
- Charity Ebert
- Christi Glesmann
- Joan Nelson
- Dorothy Scrivner
- Lisa Walters
- Laura Weber

The following Board members joined the meeting after roll call: Kathy Bowman, Beth Burbach, and Ronda Ehly.

The following Board member was absent: Kathy Harrison.

The following staff were also in attendance during all or part of the meeting:

- Ann Oertwich, *Program Manager*
- Kathy Hoebelheinrich, *Nursing Practice Consultant*
- Jacci Reznicek, *Nursing Education Consultant*
- Sherri Joyner, *Health Licensing Coordinator*
- Juan Ramirez, PhD, *Independent Consultant*

Adoption of the Agenda

Motion: Bostwick made the motion, seconded by Scrivner, to adopt the agenda for the May 1, 2020, meeting of the Nebraska Center for Nursing Board.

Voting Yes: Allen, Bjerrum, Bostwick, Deyke, Dudley, Ebert, Glesmann, Nelson, Scrivner, Walters, and Weber. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Bowman, Burbach, Ehly, and Harrison. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion: Allen made the motion, seconded by Deyke, to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2020, meeting of the Center for Nursing Board.

Voting Yes: Allen, Bjerrum, Bostwick, Deyke, Dudley, Ebert, Glesmann, Nelson, Scrivner, Walters, and Weber. Voting No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Bowman, Burbach, Ehly, and Harrison. Motion carried.

These minutes were approved by the Nebraska
Center for Nursing Board on July 24, 2020.

Impact of COVID-19 on Nursing Licensure

Oertwich reported on barriers to licensure caused by COVID-19. Pearson VUE, the company that administers the NCLEX-RN and NCLEX-PN licensure exams, closed down its testing Centers in March and are reopening at reduced capacity. The Nebraska State Patrol will not do fingerprints for nursing license applicants until late May. Waivers to the exam and fingerprinting requirements were made available through Executive Order 20-10, which was signed by the Governor on March 27, 2020. Under this Executive Order, nursing licensure applicants who have not yet completed a fingerprint-based background check can receive a temporary license, and new graduates can be issued a provisional license before they take NCLEX.

Oertwich reported that the Licensure Unit can issue a provisional license to a new graduate once it has received a completed application, final transcripts, and verification that the applicant was registered with Pearson VUE. The provisional license is only available to first-time test takers. If the applicant fails NCLEX, the provisional becomes expired. Oertwich said the provisional license is similar to the Nurse Graduate License that was once issued to graduates while they waited to take their board exams. Because it has been approximately 30 years since Nurse Graduate Licenses were issued, people saw a need to provide guidance for employers. The Nebraska Assembly of Nursing Deans and Directors (NANDD) drafted a document, which is now posted on the Nursing Licensure website and the Center for Nursing website, with recommendations on the use of provisional nurses.

Glesmann asked if the timeframe for new graduates to become licensed has changed. Oertwich said that new graduates might actually receive their licenses a bit more quickly this year because there are fewer endorsement applications.

Oertwich explained that Executive Order 20-10 also waived the continuing competency requirement for persons wishing to reinstate a nursing license. Allen reported that she has reinstated her RN license under this exemption. She said that the reinstatement has allowed to serve as an extra pair of hands at her workplace, which is experiencing a staff shortage due to COVID-19.

Oertwich reported that Dr. Thomas Safranek, the State Epidemiologist, contacted NANDD for assistance on the staffing of nursing homes during the epidemic. The discussions have led to the posting on COVID-19 resources on the Center for Nursing's website. The COVID-19 page includes links to job and volunteer opportunities. Walters reported that DHHS is using the Center for Nursing's website during its weekly webinars for acute care hospitals.

Foundation Report

Walters briefly described the history of previous discussions between the Nebraska Action Coalition (NAC) and the Center for Nursing Foundation to enter into some type of partnership or formal association. Walters reported that the NAC's director, Victoria Vinton, is planning to retire early next year and has again approached the Foundation with a proposal to place NAC within the Foundation's organizational structure.

Bostwick reported that if the plan currently under discussion is approved, the Foundation would become the home of NAC, and the Foundation would be able to hire a staff person to coordinate NAC activities. NAC's current funds would be transferred to the Foundation. NAC currently receives a \$25,000 annual grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, but that amount needs to be matched. Paperwork for the grant is due in June, and Vinton is asking for a decision on the proposal

so that she can decide whether to proceed with filing the paperwork. If NAC becomes part of the Foundation, Bostwick said that the Foundation would need to raise the additional \$25,000 to match the grant. Bostwick noted that NAC has several active board members who want to continue working on NAC's mission. NAC has also requested that a NAC member be appointed to the Center for Nursing Board. Oertwich said that they cannot guarantee that a NAC member will be appointed to the Center's Board because the appointments are made by the Board of Health and the Governor. Oertwich also said that she thought that it should be the Foundation's decision on whether or not to approve having NAC become part of the Foundation.

Bostwick also reported that she has received several responses to the media packet she distributed to help publicize the Center's license plates.

Social Media Reports

Glesmann reported that the Center's Facebook page has a little over 1,000 followers. New content is being posted 3-4 times a week. Recent posts include items publicizing the Center's specialty license plates. Christi asked members to email her or message her on Facebook if they come across content that they would like to have posted.

Walters suggested making information about the specialty license plates appear more prominently on the Center's website. Glesmann thought that a full-color picture of the plate would attract more attention.

Board Reappointments and Vacancies

Six board members have terms that expire on June 21, 2020. Allen, Deyke, and Harrison are currently serving their first terms and are eligible to apply for appointments to a second term. Dudley is finishing a full second term, and cannot be reappointed to the Board. Bowman and Walters are also finishing their second terms, but they served partial first terms because they replaced members who resigned prior to completing a full-term. Joyner reported that she contacted the Board of Health staff person who coordinates board appointments and was told that Bowman and Walters were eligible for appointment to another term.

Candidates need to be found for the position that Dudley is vacating along with the vacant position for an LPN member. Allen said that she knew an RN who was interested in applying for the Board. Joyner said she would email Allen additional information on how to apply. Board members asked that a handout be developed that includes application instructions and bullet points on the benefits of participating on the Board. Members could then distribute the handout to potential applicants.

Budget Report

Oertwich and Walters will meet at a later date to put together a proposal for the Center's budget for fiscal year 2020/21. The proposal will go to the Board of Nursing in June.

Purchases reflected in the current budget report include table cloths and promotion items to be used at the Center's display table during conferences. Promotional items that have been purchased include notebooks, pens, and sunglasses.

Walter's asked about the Center's biennial report. Juan reported that he is finishing up the report and may have it ready to show Oertwich and Walters in approximately three weeks.

COVID-19 Environmental Scan

Scrivner reported that the facility where she works has not been as profoundly affected by the epidemic compared to other parts of the state. They did create an incident command system in March and have developed new flows to help caregivers make decisions, such as when to place patients in negative pressure room and when to use full personal protective equipment (PPE). They have also done a significant amount of testing of employees for COVID-19.

Nelson reported that she was deployed to Travis Air Force Base in February where she assisted in the collection of nasopharyngeal swabs from cruise ship passengers for processing by the CDC in Atlanta. At the facility where she is employed, they are transferring pediatric patients to another facility in order to have more beds available for rehabilitation of COVID-19 patients. Hospital patients need to have two consecutive negative results from COVID-19 testing before they can be transferred to her facility. They are finding that the test results fluctuate more than expected. A patient might test negative on the first test, positive on the second test, and then negative on the third test.

Ebert reported that her facility has faced challenges obtaining PPE, especially for home health care. They are, however, able to use more telehealth because of waivers issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS is also allowing nurse practitioners to order home health care services, but this provision has not yet been approved on the state level. With assisted living facilities restricting visitors, some home health workers have not been able to provide services such as bathing and therapy to residents in these facilities. They are more likely to be allowed in for things such as complex wound care. In long term care, prohibiting visitors has created stress among residents. Ebert also noted that her organization employs many college students, and because many of these students have moved back to their home towns, they are currently experiencing an employee shortage.

Bjerrum reported that she has observed declines in the well-being of long term care residents due to reduced social interactions.

Bowman, who works as an occupational health nurse at a meat processing facility, reported on the steps her employer has taken to address COVID-19, which include educating employees on the importance of hand washing, purchasing an expensive thermometer system, installing Plexiglas cubicles in the cafeteria, and staggering break times. She also noted the special challenges that many meat processing facilities face, including the high number of employees with limited English skills, the fact that multiple members of a family might work at the same facility, and that workers are more likely to live in crowded housing.

Dudley noted that the 5-day wait for test results is making it more difficult to test patients for COVID-19 prior to surgery. Sterilization of equipment is also more challenging due to shortages in the supply chain.

Glesmann reported that clinical sites are strictly limiting the number of students they will accept in order to conserve PPE. Some sites are requiring students to provide their own PPE. Her program, however, had already donated all of its PPE, and thus, is not able to provide PPE to students. Instead, their students will do virtual-only preceptorships.

Walters reported that only 8 of her 30 students were allowed into facilities to complete clinicals. They were able to provide masks to all students, but not N95 masks. Some students in her program have

done simulations instead of preceptorships. Walters noted that ACEN has a good simulation on ventilators.

The meeting concluded at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherri Joyner".

Sherri Joyner
Health Licensing Coordinator