



Respiratory Care Advisory Council Minutes for March 10, 2020

The meeting was called to order at approximately 2:00 pm on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at the James Rhodes State Office Building, 30 E. Broad Street, Room 336, Columbus, OH 43201

Council members present: Amy Rodenhauen, RRT; Roy Neely, RRT; Sanja Keller, RRT; Cindy Groeniger; Robert Pelfrey, RRT; and Harish Kakarala, M.D.

Staff members present: Nathan Smith, Cierra Lynch, Jonithon LaCross, and Benton Taylor

Approval of Minutes from August 13, 2019 meeting

All council members present voted to approve the August 13, 2019 meeting minutes as presented.

Legislative Update

Mr. LaCross reviewed the reciprocity bills that are pending in both the House and the Senate. The Senate bill, if passed into law, would require the Board to license applicants if they hold a license in another state and are currently in good standing in that state. The Board has expressed concerns about this legislation, particularly with regard to minimal standards of care. The medical associations are supportive of the Board's efforts to maintain its licensure standards. Amendment language will be introduced that maintains the integrity of what the legislature wants but also allow the Board to maintain the safety and integrity of the professions it regulates. Mr. LaCross reported that legislators seem receptive to the Board's concerns.

Mr. LaCross also briefly discussed House bill 263, which would require the Board to establish a list of standards from criminal background checks that would be disqualifying for licensure applicants. A coalition of health care boards are working together to oppose this because the boards do not have automatic disqualifiers for applicants; instead, each applicant is assessed individually. The bill would also require licensure of applicants who have had certain categories of felonies within a given past timeframe. The Board is concerned that this provision would require the Board to license individuals who may not be safe to practice.

Mr. LaCross stated that these items would decrease the integrity of the licensing process. Some policymakers support these actions initially because it will result in more licensed people, but many are beginning to look at the patient safety issues involved.

Mr. Smith stated that the Board's statement on disqualifying criminal convictions can be found on the Board's website.

Standards for Approval of Educational Programs

Ms. Lynch stated that four respiratory care educational programs received citations from the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) based on their 2018 reports. Those programs were asked to submit an action plan to correct their deficiencies. The programs were cited because either less than 80% of their graduates were able to gain CRT credentialing, or the program's retention rate was below 70%

The programs submitted plans with action items to address these concerns, including the following:

- Adding additional tutors
- Increasing communications with students who failed or did not take the TMC examination.
- Increasing formal career training sessions with allied health programs.
- Adding weekly objectives.
- Holding meet-and-greet events between second-year and first-year students.
- Individual counseling sessions.
- Increased open laboratory hours.
- Adding patient record reviews to the syllabi.

Ms. Lynch noted that one school asked not to be credentialed because the school has closed its respiratory care program and all their students have graduated.

Ms. Lynch stated that responses from CoARC should be available by August.

OSRC Workforce Report

Mr. Smith welcomed Sue Ciarariello, Legislative Chair of the Ohio Society for Respiratory Care.

Ms. Ciarariello briefly reviewed the highlights of the OSRC Workforce Report, which was based on data collected from June 2019 to December 2019. These highlights included the following:

- Current vacancy rates for respiratory care positions in Ohio average about 8.8%, which is an increase from 3.2% in 2009.
- 88% of survey respondents expected staffing to grow in the coming year by a projected 8.3%
- About 650 respiratory care practitioners in Ohio are over 55 and are expected to retire within the next ten years.
- 77.6% of responding hospitals were affiliated with at least one educational program.
- Managers have attributed staff shortages to workforce competition and having few respiratory care graduates in their area. About 25% of facilities had no openings and were well-staffed.
- About 88.5% of respiratory care staff were RRT's (registered respiratory therapist) and only 8.8% were CRT's (certified respiratory therapist).
- 90.6% of facilities use protocol-based care, compared to 81% in 2009.

Ms. Ciarariello also used CoARC reports to compile data regarding the supply of respiratory care professionals in Ohio:

- Ohio has five bachelor programs and 17 associate degree programs, though one of those associate degree will close this year.

- 855 graduates were produced last year, 24% from bachelors programs and 76% from associate programs.
- The RRT pass rate was 84.1%. This figure did not include a couple of schools that had very low pass rates and whose students did all their clinical training in West Virginia; those schools appear to be producing graduates for communities in West Virginia and not Ohio.
- 765 RRT's graduated between 2015 and 2017.
- Of employers responding to the survey, 33% preferred associate degree graduates, 24% preferred bachelor's graduates, and 39% had no preference.

Extrapolating from the report's data, Ms. Ciarariello stated that there are about 453 position openings for respiratory care in Ohio with an additional 426 positions in the future due to projected growth. Ms. Ciarariello noted that these figures do not include those therapists who will be retiring. Ms. Ciarariello stated that about 1,100 new therapists will be needed every three years.

The Council discussed the report thoroughly. It was noted that many educational programs are not at capacity due to lack of interest or students not knowing about the profession. All agreed that more awareness of the profession is needed. According to CoARC, educational programs nationally are at about 58.8% capacity.

Ms. Ciarariello stated that OSRC wants to stay involved with allied health workforce preparation task force. Conversations should also be held with the Ohio Secretary of State's office about increasing workforce. Institutions are also working on recruitment programs. Mr. Smith added that the Board can include an article on this topic in a future edition of its magazine.

Mr. Smith and the Council thanked Ms. Ciarariello.

Appointments to the Council

Mr. Smith stated that the Board should make appointments or re-appointments to the Council at the April Board meeting.

The Respiratory Care Advisory Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 pm on March 10, 2020.

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