

**BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS AND
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS
MINUTES OF MEETING**

September 14, 2012

Open Session

The Open Session of the Board of Mental Health Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists was called to order on the above date in Room 104, Cannon Building, Rhode Island Department of Health, Three Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island, pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Open Meeting Law, so called, and other applicable provisions of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, as amended. A quorum was established at 10:10 am.

Board members in attendance:

Joseph Costa

Terrence Giblin

Elizabeth Johnson

Ronald Mancini

James Pinel

Board members not in attendance:

Dale Blumen

Noelle Harris

Staff members in attendance:

Rosemary Sheets

Tom Corrigan

Others Present:

Dimity Peter

Nancy Gordon

The minutes of the meeting held on July 13, 2012 were presented. On motion of Terrence Giblin, seconded by James Pinel, it was unanimously voted to accept the minutes.

The minutes of the subcommittee meeting held on August 31, 2012 were presented. On motion of James Pinel, seconded by Elizabeth Johnson, it was unanimously voted to accept the minutes.

Business

Board member Ronald Mancini presented some of the pertinent issues that were discussed at the NBCC Annual State Boards Meeting that was held in Greensboro, NC on August 9 and August 10, 2012. The national trend to which all states agree is that Rehabilitation Counseling should be its own entity. As such, a bill would need to be

submitted to the Rhode Island General Assembly in order to create the statute authorizing the distinct license type. CACREP appears to be the credentialing agency of choice nationally especially due to the TRICARE billing policy reserved for professionals with post graduate degrees from CACREP accredited educational institutions.

It was briefly discussed that Rhode Island could include the CACREP standard as a model but not a requirement in statute and regulation to ensure Rhode Island post graduate mental health counseling programs are not adversely affected. The board requested an additional subcommittee meeting on October 26, 2012 at 10:00 am to further discuss the agenda issues raised at the NBCC annual meeting in relation to possible statutory changes the board may submit.

Dimity Peter, graduate program director of the Salve Regina University Rehabilitation Counseling Program, explained that the first 48 hours of their post graduate degree program in Rehab Counseling qualifies individuals to work as a rehab counselor. In addition, the 12 hour CAGS program in Mental Health Counseling offered at Salve, supplements the rehab counseling masters degree with the additional courses necessary to meet the Mental Health Counselor license requirements contained in The Rules And Regulations For Licensing Mental Health Counselors And Marriage And Family Therapists [R5-63.2-MHC/MFT]. Thus, an individual with the rehab counseling degree and the CAGS in mental health counseling has the appropriate credentials to practice as both. The board agreed that the additional

CAGS concentrated on mental health counseling would meet the requirements for licensure.

Ms. Peter requested to be put on a future board meeting agenda to work with the board to ensure Salve is meeting the state guidelines as the board prepares changes to the statutory language. It was also suggested that written guidelines would be helpful.

The Board reviewed a request from Christopher Gelinias to waive 6 hours of the 12 hour practicum requirement. The chair of the department where he received his masters degree in counseling psychology signed him up for Advanced Clinical Practicum I and II which totaled six hours. The department head waived the additional 6 hours of practicum because he was working for DCYF in Massachusetts. After discussion, board members were not in agreement and a vote was held. Two (2) board members felt that working at DCYF was a step above practicum and as such this work experience could replace the additional six (6) hours of practicum. Two (2) members voted to approve the waiver request and three (3) board members vetoed the waiver request. The applicant will receive communication explaining that six additional practicum hours are needed to meet the regulatory requirements for licensure.

Application Review

The application of Lynne Adams for licensure as a Mental Health

Counselor with a masters degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and a CAGS in Mental Health Counseling from Salve Regina was reviewed by the board. It was unanimously agreed that the applicant met the qualifications for licensure.

The board reviewed the application of Denise Walters for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor. The post graduate degree transcript indicated four (4) hours of practicum were completed in the psychology degree program with an acceptable number of internship hours. The board unanimously agreed that an additional eight (8) hours of practicum are necessary to meet the licensing requirements. The applicant will receive a letter explaining what is needed to meet the regulatory requirements for licensure.

The attendees from Salve Regina University, Dimity Peter and Nancy Gordon, exited the meeting prior to the Board adjourning to executive session.

Adjournment to Executive Session

On motion of Ronald Mancini, seconded by James Pinel, it was unanimously voted to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to sections 42-46-4 and 42-46-5(1) of the Rhode Island General Laws, as Amended, in that confidential issues of fitness for licensure and investigative cases will be discussed. The Open Session adjourned at 10:45 am.

Return to Open Session

The Open Session was called back to order at 11:20 am.

On motion of Elizabeth Johnson, seconded by James Pinel, it was unanimously voted to keep confidential all matters discussed in Executive Session and to seal those minutes of the meeting inasmuch as fitness for licensure and ongoing disciplinary matters were addressed. The Board voted unanimously on the following:

Case number 2012-03-MHC No Unprofessional Conduct

Case number 2012-02-MFT Consent Agreement including Suspension of license.

Adjournment

Having no further business, on motion of Elizabeth Johnson, seconded by Ronald Mancini, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. The Open Session of the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Sheets

Board Administrator, Health Professions Regulation