

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

**November 9, 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 10:20 am.**

**Board members in attendance:**

**Joseph Costa**

**Terrence Giblin**

**Noelle Harris**

**Ronald Mancini**

**James Pinel**

**Board members not in attendance:**

**Dale Blumen**

**Elizabeth Johnson**

**Staff members in attendance:**

**Rosemary Sheets**

**Thomas Corrigan**

**David Heckman**

**Others Present:**

**Dimity Peter**

**Nancy Gordon**

**Kalina Brabeck**

**Christina Tortolani**

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**The minutes of the meeting held on September 14, 2012 were presented. On motion of Terrence Giblin, seconded by Joseph Costa, it was unanimously voted to accept the minutes.**

## **Business**

**The Board continued the review of possible amendments to the statute and regulations. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that the masters degree program would include a 100 hour practicum and a 600 hour internship. Research that was previously conducted and reviewed by the board indicated that the majority of states use the term Licensed Professional Counselor (27 states) or the variation of Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (12 states). Only 11 states**

currently use the term Mental Health Counselor. The board strongly feels that the term “mental health counselor” does not adequately define the scope of their professional practice and is frequently misinterpreted or confused with mental health workers.

The board requested that the term Licensed Mental Health Counselor be changed to Licensed Professional Counselor and a new license type of Licensed Professional Counselor Associate be created; a two tier license approach that is similar to the Clinical Social Worker and Clinical Independent Social Worker. This would allow graduates to obtain a Professional Counselor Associate license upon receiving the requisite masters degree and provide the opportunity for licensed practice while completing the supervised clinical experience. The minimum of 2,000 hours of supervised experience currently in statute would be increased to a minimum of 3,000 hours to meet the national and Tri Care standard in that forty-four (44) states have clinical experiential requirements of at least 3,000 hours for professional counselors. The board suggested that the post graduate supervision should require at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 3,000 hours be supervised by a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (Licensed Professional Counselor). At the completion of the 3,000 hours, the individual could then apply for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor; the license that qualifies the individual to practice independently.

It was agreed that the board legal counsel, Tom Corrigan, would draft a bill for submission to the legislature hopefully for the upcoming

**legislative session in January. The draft must first be vetted and approved by the Department of Health legislative review committee and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.**

**The Board reviewed a request from Christopher Gelinis to re-examine the board's September 14, 2012 split decision that he must complete 6 additional practicum credit hours. The board unanimously agreed that they would waive 3 credit hours of practicum and require only 3 additional credit hours in order to qualify for licensure. Mr. Gelinis will be notified of the board decision.**

#### **Application Review**

**There were no applications reviewed.**

#### **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 11:30 am.**

#### **Return to Open Session**

**The Open Session was called back to order at 11:40 am.**

**On motion of Terrence Giblin, seconded by Joseph Costa, 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 was updated on the progress of the consent agreements for case numbers 2011-01-MFT and 2012-02-MFT. There were no votes taken in executive session.**

### **Adjournment**

**Having no further business, on motion of James Pinel, seconded by Ronald Mancini, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. The Open Session of the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Rosemary Sheets**

**Board Administrator, Health Professions Regulation**