

(approved November 9, 2000)

**BOARD OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
EXAMINATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

AUGUST 24, 2000

**HYATT REGENCY MONTEREY
ONE OLD GOLF COURSE ROAD
MONTEREY, CA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Marsena Buck, LCSW Member, Committee Chair
Christina Chen, Public Member
Selma Fields, MFT Member
Karen Pines, MFT Member

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Sherry Mehl, Executive Officer
LaVonne Powell, Legal Counsel
Julie McAuliffe, Administrative Analyst

GUEST LIST ON FILE

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

KAREN PINES MOVED, CHRISTINA CHEN SECONDED, AND THE COMMITTEE CONCURRED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE MAY 18, 2000 MINUTES.

2. EXAMINATION STATISTICS

The most current examination statistics prior to the oral examination appeals were included in the meeting materials. Ms. Mehl stated that the marriage and family therapy written and oral examination results have continued to stay consistent for the past three years. The new licensed clinical social worker state constructed written examination results so far have been consistent and the oral examinations continue to be consistent.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING LIMITING THE NUMBER OF TIMES TO PARTICIPATE IN AN EXAMINATION

Ms. Buck stated that this issue has been discussed at prior meetings. At the last meeting the Committee requested that staff prepare several language options to address this issue. These options were included in the meeting materials. This issue is very serious to the Board and to the protection of the consumer. Ms. Buck thought that option number 3, revoking the registration after a person fails the

examination a certain amount of times was a good place to start. Ms. Pines stated that this option would not prohibit anyone from continuing to take the examination and would address the public protection issue because a person cannot work in a private practice unless they are registered.

Ms. Mehl stated that the issue of revoking the registration would limit a person's duty to comply with the mandated reporting requirements and the reimbursement rights.

Mary Riemersma, Executive Director of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, stated that she thought that revoking the registration would cause a problem because people can still work in exempt settings and would no longer be under the registration jurisdiction of the Board.

Ms. Buck stated she was very concerned that people who continue to take the examination time after time should not be licensed at all.

David Fox, Marriage and Family Therapist, stated he did not think there was a problem that needed to be solved. Based on his interpretation of the enforcement statistics, enforcement actions are taken more often against a licensee than an intern. He stated that he thought there was no real enforcement evidence to limit the number of times one can participate in an examination. Ms. Mehl referred Mr. Fox to the enforcement statistics that included statistics of disciplinary actions taken against marriage and family therapist interns and licensees since 1980. These statistics indicate that the number of actions taken against interns are quite high when comparing the licensing population and the registered intern population.

Mr. Fox then indicated that he thought there were some valid reasons why it is so difficult to pass the oral examination. The oral examination is an unusual examination. He thought that methodical thinkers might have a more difficult time. He asked that the Committee provide some clear and convincing evidence that there is really a problem.

Ms. Fields stated that it does not do a service to interns to continue to allow them to continue on in the examination process without any remedial education or supervision. She then indicated that she feels very comfortable with how the current oral examination is performed and administered.

Lydia Blanchard, Marriage and Family Therapist, shared her personal experiences with the examination process. She indicated that she took the examination a number of times and gained enormous benefits from the process. These benefits included learning how to be a better therapist.

Clarence Hibbs stated that he consulted with his colleagues about this agenda item and the consensus was that something needed to be done. He agreed with Ms. Field's suggestion that the Committee look at additional education and/or supervision.

Ms. Pines agreed with the suggestion of requiring additional education. She reviewed the educational options that were provided in the meeting materials and identified the timeframes it would take for people to complete the different educational options. The third option, 18 units, would require about one year. Ms. Mehl explained that the Committee needed to keep the abandonment clause in mind when determining the required amount of education. Ms. Pines then suggested that the education requirement include a certain amount of practicum.

Ms. Riemersma stated that she had concerns with including the practicum requirement. Schools have certain restrictions about enrollment in practicum only and this requirement may become very cumbersome. She thought that additional experience would be beneficial.

Ms. Mehl suggested that one way to look at this could be to require the one to five ratio of supervision to the additional experience. This ratio is required for people in their practicum placements.

Eric Lyden, Marriage and Family Therapist, stated that he agreed with Ms. Riemersma's suggestion of additional supervision and thought this was a good way to judge a person's increase in competency. He then thought this would be beneficial to the person and to the consumer.

Dr. Stein stated that he did not think there was a problem. He suggested the Committee not change the existing process until it can be proven that there is a problem.

Ms. Fields stated that she knew of people personally who would have benefited from going back and gaining more experience and appropriate supervision.

Mr. Fox then suggested an alternative. He asked that the Board look at the possibility of allowing a candidate to only continue to take the sections of the examination that they failed. Ms. Pines stated that she had recently sat in on oral examinations and indicated that the examination is holistically presented. It would be a disadvantage to the candidate if the examination were pulled apart. Ms. Mehl explained that all of the core content areas are included in a vignette and offering the examination in sections is not a possibility.

An audience member indicated that she agreed that the examination should be given as a whole and complete process. She then suggested that the Committee meet with the people who offer the examination preparation courses.

Ms. Pines stated that she had realized that practicum requirements would raise a whole separate issue related to the schools. She suggested requiring a practicum level of supervision that people can seek on their own but would include a closer amount of oversight and supervision.

Ms. Fields agreed with Ms. Pines suggestion and agreed to enhanced supervision for people who fail the examination after a certain amount of times.

After discussion, the Committee requested that staff prepare a few options that reflect the Committee's sentiment of the meeting and bring these back to the meeting in November.

4. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING LIMITING THE NUMBER OF SUBSEQUENT INTERN AND ASSOCIATE REGISTRATIONS ISSUED BY THE BOARD

Ms. Mehl stated that this issue came up at the last meeting and the Committee requested information on the amount of second registrations that have been issued. The requested information was provided to the Committee. Ms. Mehl stated that this issue will be addressed in future meetings in relation to the prior discussion regarding limiting the number of times one can participate in the oral examination.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.