

**Louisiana State Board of Nursing
Credentialing Committee Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2008**

- Call to Order** The meeting of the Louisiana State Board of Nursing Credentialing Committee was called to order by Gail Poirrier, Chair, at 1:35 p.m. on January 22, 2008 in the Anderson Room of the Cook Conference Center and Hotel, 3848 W. Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808.
- Roll Call**
- Committee Members Present**
Gail Poirrier, DNS, RN, Chair
Nora Steele, DNS, APRN, C, PNP
James Harper, MSN, APRN, CFNP
Deborah Olds, MSN, RN
- Committee Members Absent**
Gerald Bryant, MSN, RN
- Staff Present**
Margaret Griener, MPH, APRN, PNP, Director, Credentialing and Practice
Barbara L. Morvant, MN, RN
Jennifer S. Germond, MSN, APRN, ANP
Elaine C. Vallette, DrPH, RN
Brenda Kelt, Licensing Analyst
Laura Guillory, Licensing Analyst
Jeff Rice, LSBN Attorney
- Guests** Joni Nickens, APRN, FNP, Liaison - Louisiana Association of Nurse Practitioners (LANP)
- Reorder Agenda** Gail Poirrier, Committee Chair, reordered the agenda.
- Motion** by J. Harper, seconded, that the chair be allowed to reorder the agenda.
- Vote** Harper - yes, Steele - yes Motion carried.
- Review of Minutes** The Committee reviewed the minutes of the October 23, 2007 Credentialing Committee meeting.
- Motion** by G. Poirrier, seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the October 23, 2007 Credentialing Committee.
- Vote** Harper - yes, Olds – yes, N. Steele – yes, with grammatical corrections on two pages. Motion carried.
- Old Business
Agenda item 4.1** Agenda item 4.1: Report of Prescription Monitoring Task Force Recommendations and Legislation.
- M. Griener reported there was a meeting last Wednesday January 16th, which was a quarterly meeting, to update the program which is presently collecting the additional money to support the staff. However, because of the hiring requirements by Civil

Service there is a difficulty filling the positions. The Executive Director hopes to get this program running in 2008. The program will be “state of the art” which is given in real time and provided immediately. No bids have been sent out for the IT program and the bidding process will take some time but hopefully it will be complete in 2008.

Agenda item 4.2 Review of nursing continuing education requirements for relicensure.

G. Poirrier referenced to the policy number VI.5.4. stating that the first offense has been changed to read Informal Reprimand Letter. This is a change in this policy and was approved at the last Board Meeting held on December 19, 2007.

B. Morvant proposed to change the revised date on the Policy Number VI.5.4. to read December 2007.

Agenda item 4.3 Review of rules for reinstatement of RN licensure and discussion regarding rule change.

M. Griener reported that the Committee asked the staff to review the reinstatement file records and collect data regarding how long individuals were out of work before applying for reinstatement. Ms. Griener distributed a report to the members reporting the finding which showed that since hurricane Katrina, sixty (60) nurses had applied for and issued reinstatement who had not been working for 5 years or more. Ms. Griener added that some of the nurses she had spoken to by phone when reviewing their reinstatement request admitted that they had not practiced in nursing for over 25 years. The report showed that only one of the sixty nurses who applied for reinstatement had completed an RN Refresher course.

Ms. Griener stated that when she speaks to these nurses (who have been out 5+ years), many do not want to take the RN Refresher course. They wish to qualify for reinstatement by providing nursing contact hours only.

M. Griener distributed a draft of proposed rule changes for the following:

- **LAC 33:XLVII.3335.C.3a** to read “may” prohibit license renewal, instead of “shall” prohibit (reference to Agenda item 4.2 change).
- **LAC 33:XLVII.3335.D.1** to read “5 years” instead of “4 years”.
- **LAC 33:XLVII.3335.D.2** to read “five years” instead of “four years”.
- **LAC 33:XLVII.3335.D.2d** to be cut entirely regarding a minimum of 60 Board approved contact hours as it is misleading. The current rules state that a nurse needs a minimum of 15 contact hours for each year their license was inactive/delinquent and they did not work out of state. So if a nurse had been out of nursing for 10 years, she would need a minimum of 150 CEs to reinstate which might push some nurses to complete an RN Refresher course instead which is more thorough.
- **LAC 33:XLVII.3335.D.2e** will need to be renumbered to 2d.
- **LAC 33:XLVII.3335.D.2f** will need to be renumbered 2e. Ms. Griener also added “160 hours/year or a total of 800 hours clinical practice as RN in another state within the past five (5) years...” to this line item for clarification.

- LAC 33:XLVII.3335.E.4 to cut the following from the rule “Review courses for recertification do not meet the continuing education requirements for relicensure” regarding certification as ACLS, PALS or advanced IV therapy.

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M. Griener explained the above recommended rule changes were developed after meetings with Dr. Vallette and Ms. Morvant.

G. Poirrier questioned how long would 800 hours relate to months in full time work.

M. Griener advised that full time work is about 1800 hours per year and part time or PRN nurses work can work as little as 160 hours per year, but sometimes more. Based on a 5 year period, a nurse working part time would have at least 800 clinical hours and would be able to provide clinical competence.

M. Griener stated that Louisiana has no practice requirements and nurses are submitting payment and completing the continuing educations contact hours but not required to have any clinical practice.

B. Morvant confirmed that all a nurse has to do in order to continue to renew her license annually is complete the minimum 15 contact hours of CEs each year even if she’s not working and this will be considered a current license.

M. Griener reported that every year we get calls from nurses 70 years old or older who are no longer practicing, but do not want to give up their nursing license. They will do the 15 CE’s to meet the renewal requirement and keep a current license.

M. Griener stated the entire licensure chapter rules will have to be looked at and possible re-written. She added that the draft distributed is for review and open discussion about the licensure procedure because it can be very controversial.

D. Olds asked for information regarding the options for RN Refresher courses.

M. Griener reported that right now we have four (4) programs approved by LSBN for RN Refresher courses. Two of the programs, South Dakota State University and North Dakota Nurses Association, can be completed online. The LSUHSC IGRO program is an individual request program for self reeducation. The other programs require testing of the modules before advancing through a completed program.

G. Poirrier stated their school (University of Louisiana at Lafayette) had approved an RN Refresher course previously and several nurses took the course. However, when they followed up within 2 to 3 years, the graduates were still unemployed. Dr. Poirrier added that this issue was brought back up a few years ago and the Board collected data from some hospitals who responded that they didn’t feel the need for the new refresher courses.

Dr. Vallette stated that Our Lady of the Lake College has previously offered the refresher courses but since no students had asked for it, they have removed the courses. Dr. Vallette added that LSBN has received information from Idaho Board

of Nursing that they offer a refresher course. She stated that staff should gather all the information concerning what states offer RN refresher courses for come up with a more comprehensive list.

B. Morvant stated that this was a competence issue and the concern is will the nurse have enough knowledge without having a certain number of hours of practice.

M. Griener stated that all of licensure rules will have to be reviewed if this change is approved. She does recommend the refresher courses for certain individuals based on the South Dakota program. She stated that on the individual basis, the South Dakota program has successfully prepared individuals for practice.

N. Steele questioned if the Board has had any reported safety issues for nurses who have come back to work and have not had the practice hours. She also questioned if the Board was making work for themselves where issues have not been raised concerning these nurses.

M. Griener advised that some nurses are coming to Louisiana to reinstate just so they are eligible to apply for endorsement licensure in another state where they plan to work because the LSBN current rules for reinstatement are much easier than most states. The nurses do not want to meet the other states reinstatement requirements which for some states require them to retake the NCLEX exam.

M. Griener stated the main issue is whether or not to reinstate nurses who are not going to be practicing in Louisiana just so they can hold active nursing license. If an adjustment is made to the rules as proposed to section LAC 33:XLVII.3335.D.2f, it would prevent nurses who have not been working anywhere to come to Louisiana and get reinstated without any clinical requirement. Ms. Griener explained that since most states have clinical requirements for reinstatement, nurses who haven't been working come here to reinstate and be active in some state so they can turn around and apply for licensure by endorsement in the state they are residing.

G. Poirrier stated that it can reflect poorly for Louisiana when a nurse goes to another state to practice after reinstating here if they didn't have any clinical hours. She also questioned if Louisiana is held liable for the nurses who practice in other states and endorsed based on a reinstated Louisiana license.

B. Morvant advised that Louisiana would not be held liable.

G. Poirrier asked if our Board had any data on the older individuals who will not let go of their license and do not plan to return to nursing work.

M. Griener stated that some older individuals decide to work on a volunteer basis and she does not consider them to be harmful to the public. They usually take blood pressure and teach people how to control their medicine. M. Griener explained that the problem is not with the older individuals who've kept their licenses active, but rather the current rules which allows for a nurse to apply for reinstatement when she hasn't practiced in nursing for 25 years.

G. Poirrier asked if the Board staff could track the nurses being reinstated without clinical practice to see if they returned once they receive their Louisiana license back and if so, had any complaints, investigations or disciplinary actions.

M. Griener stated that some of the nurses who have not practiced in several years can not function in a hospital but may function in smaller entities.

N. Steele stated that if our Board wants to put some practice requirement in the reinstatement process, it could not hurt the individual.

M. Griener confirmed that if a nurse volunteers or performs functions as a nurse that is considered practice.

N. Steele offered a suggestion for the Credentialing Committee to relook at this procedure in 1 year based on the findings from the Board Staff.

M. Griener stated that she will get with our IT personnel to find a way to keep a track of nurses who are reinstating that lapsed 5 or more years and prepare some time of report on the findings to the committee a year from now.

New Business

Agenda Item 5.1

Licensure of nurses of Puerto Rico.

M. Griener reported that a contact from Ochsner Health Systems is in process of recruiting nurses from Puerto Rico. Ms. Griener, Dr. Vallette, and Ms. Morvant met with representatives from Ochsner to discuss the issue and offer solutions. The research proposal for regarding these nurses being presented to the Educational Committee today.

M. Griener stated the credentialing issue is that Puerto Rico is no longer under the Member Board Jurisdiction under the National Council. The Puerto Rican nurses that were licensed before August 2006 took the NCLEX English exam and are considered US citizens and were able to get licensed by endorsement. There is now a new situation with the Puerto Rico Board concerning the NCLEX exam. The Puerto Rico Board of Nursing can not approve any graduate nurses who complete the nursing programs in Puerto Rico to complete the NCLEX and require they take another exam to be licensed in Puerto Rico. In order for our Board to endorse them, they must have credentials evaluated by CGFNS.

M. Griener stated when the Ochsner representatives came to speak with the group they wanted to submit information of the 2 (two) English speaking schools for approval to take NCLEX here. They can take NCLEX in Puerto Rico but the Puerto Rican Board does not approve the NCLEX.

M. Griener stated the completion of the meeting with Ochsner resulted in a research proposal for the Educational Committee and to review the curriculum of the English speaking schools to find if they are comparable to programs in Louisiana. M. Griener also stated that Ms. Morvant received an email confirming that Ochsner will not propose submission to the Educational Committee but will contact the CGFNS to have a credential evaluation. She also confirmed there is

no Visa required for these nurses; Puerto Rican nurses are considered citizens of the United States.

Announcements 6.1 Report of Student Loan Default for 2008 license renewal.

G. Poirrier stated the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) provided the LSBN a list of 37 nurses to be delayed/denied licensure renewal for 2008 due to default of their student loans. Letters alerting the nurses were mailed on 10/09/07. To date 18 nurses have been released by the OSFA for licensure renewal.

G. Poirrier questioned if the Board knew which schools were affiliated with the nurses for their default loans.

M. Griener stated this information would have to be reviewed because the OSFA does not provide the school name of the nurse involved. She also stated this is a state law. It is required for anyone who has a professional license. The loans do not have to be paid off, just current.

J. Harper stated that at least once a year the loan has to be current.

B. Morvant confirmed that overall numbers are going down each year. She stated the first year there was over 400 in default and each year it has kept decreasing.

Adjournment

A motion for adjournment was approved and seconded. The Committee adjourned at 2:20 p.m.



Submitted by:

Margaret Griener, Director - Credentialing and Practice

Approved 4/22/2008