



**TENNESSEE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS’
COMMITTEE ON PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

October 7, 2016

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners’ Committee on Physician Assistants was held in the Poplar Conference Room at 665 Mainstream Drive, Metro Center, Nashville, Tennessee.

Members Present: Barbara Thornton, Public Member
Russ Dailey, PA-C,
Benjamin Hux, OPA,
Omar Nava, PA-C
Brett Reeves, PA-C

Staff Present: Keshia Evans, Administrator
Maegan Carr Martin, JD, Executive Director
Rene Saunders, MD, Medical Director
Mary Katherine Bratton, JD, Deputy General Counsel

Mr. Omar Nava, Committee Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The Chairman determined that a quorum was present.

Mr. Russ Dailey, the Committee’s newest member, was introduced to the Committee.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Reeves made a motion to approve the regular Committee meeting minutes, the teleconference to consider Darron Smith’s application and the reentry taskforce’s meeting. Ms. Thornton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Applicant Interview

Mr. Jawaid Meraj was asked to appear before the Committee because he has not met the educational standards required for licensure as an OPA. Mr. Meraj was trained as a physician in

Pakistan and has completed a US fellowship in clinical hand surgery. He holds a license as a specialist assistant in orthopedics in NY. According to the applicable statutes and rules, Mr. Meraj must have graduated from a Board and Committee approved OPA training program in order to qualify for licensure. Because he has not completed the requisite training, he doesn't qualify for licensure. After considering Mr. Meraj's training and qualifications, the Committee gave him the option to withdraw his application. He elected to withdraw his application and no further action was taken.

Petition for Declaratory Order

Ms. Bratton summarized Ms. Jessica Johnson's Petition for Declaratory Order, the granting of which would send this matter to a contested case for further consideration. Frank Scanlon, counsel for Ms. Johnson, agreed with Ms. Bratton's presentation of the facts and informed the committee that Ms. Johnson's position is that her OPA license was not granted in error. Ms. Bratton did not oppose granting the petition, as it would effectively consolidate these matters and allow the Committee to move forward in the most expeditious manner possible. After presentation of the petition, Ms. Thornton made a motion to grant the petition. Mr. Dailey seconded the motion. Mr. Hux recused himself.

Upcoming Changes to NCCPA

Ms. Martin noted that the NCCPA is changing its CME requirements. She did not believe that the change would create the need for a rule change, however, and offered the point for informational purposes only. She stated that she was working on the newsletter and would add information about the change to that publication.

Ms. Martin summarized some of discussion which occurred during the taskforce's meeting and referred the Committee to a document containing the taskforce's recommendations, which were:

- An applicant for licensure as a physician assistant who has been out of clinical practice for more than 2 years will be required to undergo a formal assessment by a PLAS collaborator to determine the applicant's competency
- If the evaluation confirms the applicant is safe to return to practice, a license will be issued
- If the evaluation identifies deficiencies in the applicant's knowledge or skills, such deficiencies must be cured by:
 - Successful completion of a PLAS program; or
 - Successful completion of a Committee-approved preceptorship.

Mr. Reeves made a motion to accept the policy statement. Ms. Thornton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Consent Order

Ms. Bratton presented the consent order of Mr. Aldrich. Mr. Aldrich was convicted in April 2016 of driving under the influence on two separate occasions. Mr. Aldrich sought and completed treatment alcohol dependence and has agreed to a reprimand of his license. He is currently under a 1 year contract with TNPAP. Ms. Thornton made a motion to accept the consent order. Mr. Reeves seconded the motion. The motion carried.

TnPAP Report

Mr. Mike Harkreader reported to the Committee that between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016, TnPAP has monitored eight practitioners. One referred by department of health, five involuntary and two voluntary.

Ratification of New Licenses

Mr. Reeves made a motion to ratify the list of new licenses and reinstatements. Mr. Dailey seconded the motion. The motion passed.

OGC Report

Ms. Bratton, Deputy General Counsel of the Office of General Counsel, referred the Committee to the OGC report. There are currently 10 pending cases in OGC against physician assistants.

Investigation & Disciplinary Report

Ms. Nichelle Dorroh, Disciplinary Coordinator, reported that there are currently sixteen open complaints. Ms. Dorroh informed the Committee there are no complaints pending against Orthopedic Physician Assistants.

Manager's Report

Ms. Martin referred the Committee to the statistical licensing report. Ms. Martin pointed out that the numbers are increasing pretty rapidly. Ms. Martin informed the committee she will bring the percentage of growth from 2014-2016 to the January meeting.

Ms. Thornton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Reeves seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.