

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE
CONFERENCE CALL**

MINUTES

August 19, 2011

3 p.m. Eastern Time

1 (800) 767-1750, Access Code: 16019

1. Announcements:
 - a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
 - i. Dr. Horn comment. Please see the link below for more information on open optometrist positions.
 1. [http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/Open Optometry Positions List 2011.doc](http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/Open_Optomety_Positions_List_2011.doc)
 2. [http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open VA Optometrist Positions.asp](http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open_VA_Optometrst_Positions.asp) or <http://jobsearch.usajobs.gov/>
 - b. VA Core Values and Characteristics (I CARE) – for your reference. <http://vaww.va.gov/default.asp>
 - c. Under Secretary for Health (USH) VHA Mission & Vision Statements <http://vaww.ush.va.gov/Excellence>
 - d. VHA Directive 2011-030, VHA Social Security Number Reduction Policy
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes policy for all VHA facilities and Program Offices regarding the reduction and elimination of all unnecessary use of Social Security Numbers (SSN) as the primary identifier for Veterans and employees within VHA; this includes VHA data managed, or retained in, contractor-owned, managed, or operated systems, and applies to all existing or new uses of the SSN.
 - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/Open Optometry Positions List 2011.doc](http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/Open_Optomety_Positions_List_2011.doc)
 - e. VHA Handbook 1174.05, Outpatient Blind and Vision Rehabilitation Clinic Procedures
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook defines Blind and Low Vision Outpatient Clinics in Blind Rehabilitation Service and describes the procedures for the provision of interdisciplinary outpatient blind and vision rehabilitation and coordination of care.
 - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/VHA Handbook 1174.05, Outpatient blind and Vision Rehabilitation Clinic Procedures.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/VHA_Handbook_1174.05_Outpatient_blind_and_Vision_Rehabilitation_Clinic_Procedures.pdf)
 - f. VHA Handbook 1030.05, VHA Compliance and Business Integrity Screening Procedures of GSL for Individual and Entity Exclusions
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides procedures for Compliance and Business Integrity (CBI) personnel, at all levels of the organization, in an effort to ensure VHA does not remunerate or accept products and services from certain individuals and entities appearing on Government Sanctions Lists (GSL). Parties

identified on GSL are excluded from participation in certain Federally-funded programs, including VHA.

- ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/VHA_Handbook_1_030.05_VHA_Compliance_and_Business_Integrity_Screening_Procedures_of_GSL_for_Individual_and_Entity_Exclusions.pdf
 - g. AMSUS Annual Meeting: November 6-9, 2011, <http://www.amsus.org/>
 - i. Dr. Horn comment. The optometry section meeting will be held November 9. Please follow the link above for more information.
2. Disability Benefits Questionnaire: Eye Conditions - Dr. Arwin
- a. Dr. Arwin comment. The C & P exam is used to evaluate veterans' claims. This documentation tool is standardized and targeted to the ratings schedule with the ultimate goal of enabling rule based ratings. We need an electronic format to capture this data. Currently, the CAPRI program is that interface through which that data can be entered. They are not using that data, yet, for rule based ratings. We have several new things happening at once which is making challenges for clinicians and rating specialists.
 - i. As we develop Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ), we really look in depth in the rating schedules and look what was being asked for in the eye edition rating guidelines. The eye rating criteria was updated in 2006 but there was no change made to the documentation format we use.
 - ii. The other challenge is the DBQ's were developed in a relatively quickly without having time to fully test them, so we know that they are still not perfect. They are soliciting your feedback as you use them as to how they can improve them. Programming them in a short time has also prevented the mandatory logic within the DBQ's that sometimes was useful in the past.
 1. Dr. Vanderzee question: when do we start using this DBQ?
 - a. Answer: when the DBQ is available in CAPRI then it is meant to be used by medical centers. She believes that the eye DBQ is available. They will eventually have the DBQ smart template available in CPRS under tools, but this short cut is not available yet.
 - b. <http://go.va.gov/DBQ> is a link to the Disability Examination Management Office (DEMO) website where there will be online training for CAPRI in the future. There are copies of the eye DBQ to use as a template when you need it to be entered into CPRS.
 - c. All DBQ's will eventually be public so the veteran can take it to their private physician to be filled out.
 2. Dr. Sink question: Has the eye DBQ been updated to the current C & P template?
 - a. Answer: there is no direct link to the new DBQ template, but you should be using that template now

during the C & P exam through the CAPRI system. You can go to the link provided above to get a copy of the eye DBQ in a word format, if needed to copy and paste into CPRS in the meantime.

- b. Provided, also below, is a link to the eye DBQ template.

http://www.navao.org/documents/08_19_2011/OPT_O_-_Eyes_DBQ_5-24-11.doc

- 3. Dr. Vetter question: What is the reason behind rushing to provide new DBQ templates that have to be used if they have not been perfected?
 - a. Answer: This is mandatory and VBA is requesting this report for their rating purposes. Dr. Arwin commented that she did not expect there to be so many problems with the function of this new DBQ but it is a good system and they are trying to improve the process as fast as they can.
 - 4. Dr. Gay question: Is there any way to have optometrists at the VBA level that can review these requests before they get mandated i.e. when the exam request is requested?
 - a. Some places already do that before the exam is requested and to avoid unnecessary C & P exams.
 - b. Unfortunately, there is a duty to assist in the rating schedule – if a lay person suspect, due to symptoms, that they have a condition, they are entitled to a VA exam even if they are found later not to have the condition.
 - 5. Dr. Horn comment. Is there contact information for feedback from the field?
 - a. Answer: Please contact Dr. Arwin or Keith Stabler (from the VBA side of things). He is in charge of all the revisions.
3. Optometry Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Selvin
- a. Dr. Horn comment. The Field Advisory Committee is meeting in Washington, DC September 13th with the Ophthalmology Field Advisory Committee and then will meet on its own September 14th.
4. Optometric Education Programs/VA Centers of Excellence in Patient-Centered Specialty Care Education Program Announcement - Drs. Messer/Slagle
- a. Dr. Slagle comment. Reminder regarding Residents day at the Academy meeting: Current residents are invited to submit grand rounds cases for presentation as both papers and posters by September 1, 2011. For more information, refer to the academy's website.
 - b. Review of Memorandum dated April 11, 2011 from the Assistant Secretary for Information Technology clearly prohibits written logbooks that contain sensitive personal information. This includes any information about the individual, including: medical history, information that can be

used to distinguish or trace that individual's identity, including name, social security number, date of birth, or biometric records. Within this memo, there was guidance stating that "logbooks containing SPI will only be stored electronically on authorized VA systems." I want to remind everyone with education programs of this mandate to ensure that no identifiable written logs are maintained, but also that any electronic logs which contain sensitive personal information are only maintained on authorized VA systems and not on an affiliate's server.

- c. This policy is congruent with the ACOE policy delineated on a memorandum dated December 3, 2009, addressing PHI De-identification and Clarification/Modification of Examples of Evidence of 3.7 of the 2009 Optometric Residency Standards
- d. Reminder: for anyone who submitted a letter of intent to the Office of Academic Affiliations for a proposal to establish a VA Center of Excellence in patient-centered specialty care education, the deadline for full proposals is **September 21, 2011. See the link below for more information.**
- e. Also on the agenda is a link to the OAA guidance on appointment of year long trainees with regard to their eligibility for federal health and life insurance. To be eligible for these benefits, trainees must be appointed for greater than one year, even if the training program lasts only one year.
 - i. There are 3 ways to handle these appointments locally to insure that trainees are able to receive their entitled benefits:
 1. In directive 2002-64, the OAA recommended that such trainees be appointed NTE 3 years, with termination of the appointment upon conclusion of the training period.
 2. Appointment for 366 days, termination after 365 days
 3. Appointment for 366 days, program duration of 366 days.
If the facility chooses this option, OAA will provide the needed funds to cover the extra day

http://www.va.gov/oaa/rfp_COE_Patient_Centered.asp

http://www.va.gov/oaa/ahe_fed_health_Life.asp

5. Visual Impairment Prevention Review Board - Dr. Brough – unavailable for comment.
6. VA IDRPs Eye Clinic Electronic Health Record Request - Dr. Ballinger – unavailable for comment.
7. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/White – no new announcements.
8. Teleretinal Imaging Screening Program - Drs. Cavallerano/Selvin – unavailable for comment.
9. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker – unavailable for comment.
10. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Gagnon/J. Kirby – unavailable for comment.

11. Low Vision Rehabilitation EES Program - Drs. Fuhr/Gagnon/Mancil – unavailable for comment.
12. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Norden – no new announcements.
13. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Dr. Horn – no new announcements.
14. VA Research Announcements & Solitations - Dr. Mancil – unavailable for comment.
<http://vaww.research.va.gov/news/announcements/default.cfm>
http://vaww.research.va.gov/funding/solicitations/default.cfm#All_ORD
15. VHA Optometry Service Websites - Drs. Hamilton/G. Singh/Sirott – unavailable for comment.
16. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/Pewitt
 - a. They are still in the process of updating the VHA Optometry Service Directory. If you have not done so, please take a few moments to review the information listed in the Service Directory on the VHA Optometry Service internet website at:
http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/Service_Directory.asp and please direct any revisions or additions to Drs. Egusa, Lim, or Pewitt.
17. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory - Dr. Wang
 - a. Dr. Wang comment. She will send the information for this year's residents to register for the VA Residency-Trained Optometrists Directory next month. Positions are posted through a group email as soon as they are listed.
18. AFOS Report - Drs. Hunter/Wasik
 - a. Registration is open for the AFOS Annual Meeting and members can register and pay online for the pre-meeting event on Sunday, October 9, 2011, as well as for the meetings and CE on October 10-11th. You can find more information regarding the meeting and hotel rooms at afos2020.org/AFOS_Boston.asp.
19. NAVAIO Report - Drs. Kawasaki/Storer
 - a. Dr. Kawasaki comment. The summer issue of the NAVAIO newsletter has been published. Please login to the NAVAIO website to view it. Please email all newsletter submissions or ideas to our newsletter editor Dr. Tomasini at dawn.tomasini@va.gov.
 - b. Officer elections are now open on the NAVAIO website. Members should login and vote before the deadline on Friday, September 2.
 - c. Please mark your calendars for the annual NAVAIO business meeting and dinner which will be held the evening of Thursday, October 13 at the Sheraton Boston Hotel in conjunction with the AAO meeting. We are pleased to announce that this year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Norman Haffner. Please be sure to register online before the deadline on Friday, September 2. More details about the dinner are posted on the NAVAIO website.