

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES**

**February 15, 2013
3 p.m. Eastern Time**

1. Announcements:
 - a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
 - i. Ms. Gernhart comment. There are 4 positions posted on the attachment provided; however, note that the Yuma position has closed.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/Copy_of_Open_Optom_etry_Positions.pdf
http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open_VA_Optometrists_Positions.asp
or <http://jobsearch.usajobs.gov/>
 - b. VA Core Values and Characteristics (I CARE)
<http://vaww.va.gov/default.asp>
 - c. Continuous Readiness in Information Security Program (CRISP)
<http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/CRISP/>
 - d. VHA Directive 1601, Non-VA Medical Care Program
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive provides information regarding the operation of the Non-VA Medical Care Program and describes VHA statutory and regulatory authority for purchasing community health care at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) expense.
 - ii. Dr. Townsend comment. This is also in reference to fee-based cases.
 - iii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/VHA_Directive_1601_Non-VA_Medical_Care_Program_1-23-13.pdf
 - e. VHA Directive 1602.01, Medical Review Assistance to Board of Veterans' Appeals Cases
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) process by which VHA provides medical reviews for the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) cases that require expert advisory medical opinions.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/VHA_Dir_1602.01_Medical_Review_Assist_to_Board_of_Vets_Appeals_Cases_2-4-13.pdf
 - f. VHA Handbook 1907.06, Management of Release of Information
 - i. This revised Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides processes and procedures for managing the Release of Information (ROI) within a Health Information Management (HIM) Department.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/VHA_Handbook_1907_06_Management_of_Release_of_Infomration_1-18-13.pdf
 - g. VHA Handbook 1605.02, Minimum Necessary Standard for Protected Health Information
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes guidance on the procedures for determining the minimum necessary amount of Protected Health Information (PHI) that members of the VHA workforce may access, use, disclose or request and defines the assignment of Functional Categories to VHA employees.

- ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/VHA_Handbook_1605_02_Minimum_Necessary_Standard_for_Protected_Health_Information_1-23-13.pdf
 - h. VHA Handbook 1102.01, National Surgery Office
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes the organizational structure, procedures, and responsibilities of the National Surgery Office.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/VHA_Handbook_1102_01_National_Surgery_Office_1-30-13.pdf
 - i. E-mail attachment, Defense Research Funding Opportunity - PH/TBI Program
 - i. Dr. Townsend comment. Attached is the program announcement for the Traumatic Brain Injury Research program released by the Department of Defense. Please consider applying.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/13phtbitbira_instruct.pdf
 - iii. http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/13phtbitbira_pa.pdf
 - j. Professional Development: VA MyCareer (<http://mycareeratva.va.gov/>)
- 2. Optometry Service Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Selvin – unavailable for comment.
- 3. Optometric Education Programs - Drs. Messer/Slagle
 - a. Dr. Lum comment. In January, the Office of Academic Affiliations released its list of funded programs. It is a good year for VA Optometry with its number of residency positions increased to 211. New programs are being funded in N. Chicago which is a joint DoD/VA program affiliated with ICO. The Sierra Vista CBOC affiliated with the Tucson VA through SCCO and the Greenville CBOC affiliated with the Durham VA through SCO. Augmented programs include the following: Albuquerque, Amarillo, Brooklyn, Detroit, East Orange, Fayetteville (AR), Fresno, Lexington, Huntington, Long Beach (2 new residents), Manchester, Marion, Providence, Minneapolis, San Diego, Wichita, Orlando (temporarily in Bay Pines) and Las Vegas. The total is 211 PGY1 optometry residency positions, 2 PGY2 research fellowship positions (Boston and Birmingham), 1 PGY3 fellow in Boston and a PGY1 clinical fellowship in Tampa designed for Polytrauma and Traumatic Brain Injury.
- 4. Optometry Productivity Workgroup - Drs. Bennett/Horn/Selvin
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. For the first time in FY12 they have collected data on optometry in the physicians productivity cube so it is very important to make sure that everyone is mapped correctly for patient care administration and research or other teaching activities. This is in process and eventually all of the VA specialty providers will have productivity recommendations in terms of RBUs. Please continue to use the VHA Eye Care Handbook for guidelines to unique patients.
- 5. Electronic Medical Records/Information Technology Issues - Dr. Ballinger – unavailable for comment.
- 6. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/Mancil/O'Connor/White – unavailable for comment.
One Source Document Site: <http://onesourcedocs.com/member/index.html>
- 7. Teleretinal Imaging Screening Program - Drs. Cavallerano/Selvin

- a. Dr. Townsend comment. They are likely going to image a record number of Veterans this year. There has been a great deal of expansion within the CBOCs and they have plans to include screening for age related macular degeneration. There are some pilot programs that have started in that area.
8. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker – unavailable for comment.
9. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Dr. Eldred – unavailable for comment.
10. Low Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Chan-O’Connell/Mancil – unavailable for comment.
11. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Brough – unavailable for comment.
12. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Drs. Boyer/Horn – unavailable for comment.
13. VA Optometric Research & Development - Dr. Mancil – unavailable for comment.
<http://vaww1.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/research.asp>
14. VHA Optometry Service Websites - Drs. Hamilton/G. Singh
 - a. Dr. Singh comment. There will be a change in the appearance of the website. This will be occurring in the next few months.
15. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/Pewitt – unavailable for comment.
16. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory - Dr. Wang – unavailable for comment.
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. If anyone has a resident that is interested in being notified about open positions, please contact Dr. Wang to have them included in the directory.
17. AFOS Report - Drs. Hunter/Wasik
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. Please consider registering for the Federal Service Optometry meeting in Atlanta, February 25-26th before the annual SECO meeting.
18. NAVAIO Report - Drs. Kawasaki/Storer
 - a. Dr. Kawasaki comment. NAVAIO’s annual membership drive has been extended to February 28. He asks that new and current members please login to the NAVAIO website to join or renew before the February 28 deadline, after which a late fee will apply. He would like to announce Dr. Jessica Fedor from the Minneapolis VA as the winner of our "early bird" membership renewal drawing and Dr. Bhagya Segu from the Houston VAMC as the winner of our membership renewal drawing for those who renewed by January 31. Drs. Fedor and Segu will receive free membership in 2014. There is still one more opportunity for a free 2014 membership drawing if we reach our goal of 500 members this year, so please join or renew right away to be eligible. NAVAIO also asks that you encourage other optometrists at your facility to join as well.
 - b. NAVAIO strongly encourages all eligible candidates to register for the next Advanced Competence in Medical Optometry (ACMO) exam on Friday, June 7, 2013. Please visit the NBEO website at www.optometry.org for details and read our ACMO FAQ sheet in the members area of the NAVAIO website. The exam fee is \$780; however, please note that there is a special reduced fee of **\$480** for current residents who sit for the test during the year in which they complete their residency. He urges all

residency coordinators to please encourage current residents to consider taking the ACMO exam. He recommends that you register early to have a better chance of reserving a spot at your desired testing site. The deadline to register for the ACMO exam is May 13, 2013.

**Dr. Townsend comment. They are investigating the recent VACO announcement for the reclassification of certain positions including health aides and eye technicians for eye care as well as opticians, optometry and ophthalmology. There is a work group that has been working on this for quite some time and there have already been some conference calls. Question from the field: Whether or not both optometry and ophthalmology would be included in reference to eye technicians and his answer was that he believes they would both be included. There is no critical need to be overly anxious at this time because nothing will happen for at least this year. There is a whole HR process that is involved to review the whole series. This has been an on-going process. The VA has put a hold on any decrease in GS levels at this time.

http://www.navao.org/documents/02_2013/External_Fact_Sheet-1.pdf