

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES**

**April 19, 2013
3 p.m. Eastern Time**

1. Announcements:
 - a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
 - i. Please see attachments for open optometry positions available.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/Open_Optometry_Positions.pdf
http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open_VA_Optomtrist_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. Requesting updates to the VA Optometric Residency Programs Directory
 - i. Dr. Townsend comment. Please send Kathy Gernhart a message with corrections/updates/new listings of optometric residencies by 5/10/13.
 - e. VHA Handbook 1058.04, Debarments and Suspensions Based on Research Impropriety in VA Research
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures and other requirements for processing debarments and suspensions based on research impropriety in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) research.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/VHA_Handbook_1058_04_Debarments_and_Suspensions_Based_on_Research_Impropriety_in_VA_Research.pdf
 - f. VHA Handbook 1172.01, Polytrauma System of Care
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook defines policies and procedures for the operation of the Polytrauma System of Care (PSC).
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/VHA_Handbook_1172_01_Polytrauma_System_of_Care_3-20-13.pdf
 - g. VHA Directive 0320, Comprehensive Emergency Management Program
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes policy for administration-wide, Comprehensive Emergency Management Program (CEMP) and describes responsibilities for implementing the CEMP at the VHA Central Office, the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN), and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center levels.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/VHA_Directive_0320_Comprehensive_Emergency_Management_Program.pdf
 - h. IL 10-2013-003, VHA Support at Stand Downs for Homeless Veterans
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Information Letter (IL) provides information on what support VHA facilities may provide at Stand Downs for homeless Veterans.

- ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/IL_10-2013-003_VHA_Support_at_Stand_Downs_for_Homeless_Veterans_3-13-13.pdf
 - i. VHA National Core Collection of Online Resources Fact Sheet
 - i. Dr. Townsend comment. These resources have links from the Office of Academic Affiliations as well as access to journals for optometrists and residents.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/Library_Fact_Sheet_L_NO_NCCOR_FINAL-130417.pdf
 - j. E-Mail, ACMO Registration for 2013
 - i. Dr. Townsend comment. Just a reminder to encourage all residents to register for the ACMO which is at a reduced cost the year that they completed their residency training.
 - k. E-Mail, Extension of Federal Pay Freeze and Elimination of 2013 Pay Increase
 - i. This letter provides information regarding the freeze on pay adjustments for certain Federal civilian employees. It provides guidance and new instructions to be used when adjusting market pay for individual physicians and dentists and establishing or adjusting special rate and nurse Locality Pay System schedules.
 - ii. Dr. Townsend comment. There have been many questions involving the pay freeze. This does not impact promotions or special advancements. The professional standards board is still accepting requests for advancements.
 - iii. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/HRML_05-11-06_on_Pay_Freeze_dtd_6-2-2011.pdf
 - iv. Dr. Townsend brought up an unfinished item from the last conference call involving the unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) in administering medications. There has been contact with the Office of Nursing, Patient Care and, Specialty Care services about the inadvertent omission of optometrists and podiatrists in the updated policy. The examples of delegated authority and supervision of a physician does not preclude optometrists and podiatrists but he hopes that additional guidance will be sent to the field and he will keep everyone updated on the current status. Make sure at your facility level, optometrists are listed in all the local policies in regards to your eye technician (UAP) privileges.
 - l. E-Mail, Program Office Announcement – Medicine re: VHA National Desktop Library registration
 - i. http://www.navao.org/documents/04_2013/Program_Office_Announcement_-_Medicine.docx
 - m. Professional Development: VA MyCareer (<http://mycareeratva.va.gov/>)
2. Optometry Service Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Selvin
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. The committee submitted an optometry submission for an evidence based synthesis program looking at ACA and optimizing the care team. They are waiting to see if it will be selected for consideration.
 3. Optometric Education Programs/ORMatch Results - Drs. Messer/Slagle
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. At the February 2013 winter meeting, the ACOE adopted the residency self study template that will become effective on January 1, 2014 and those sites having site visits prior to that date can use

the new or old template. The ORMatch went very smoothly. There is one program listed that is still open which is at the N.Chicago, IL VAMC. If anyone is interested, please contact Dr. Stuart Richer as soon as possible.

4. Optometry Productivity Workgroup - Drs. Bennett/Horn/Selvin
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. This is the first time optometrists are within the physician's productivity reports. Please make sure that all of your residents have the proper coding and all their work is linked to an attending staff optometrist for proper workload. Please review your local data that was sent out to the respective optometry VISN consultants. If you have not heard from your consultant, please contact them directly. This is crucial to obtain accurate data for such things as costing.
5. Electronic Medical Records/Information Technology Issues - Dr. Ballinger
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. The Do/D and VA are not trying to create a new joint electronic medical record system from scratch. They are meeting to try and do an IT fix to create a more seamless transition in patient records from Do/D to VA.
6. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/Mancil/O'Connor/White
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There was a separate email sent to everyone because there was a change in VOLK manufacturing reprocessing/ disinfecting procedure which can be found on the One Source Document site as below.
One Source Document Site: <http://onesourcedocs.com/member/index.html>
7. Teleretinal Imaging Screening Program - Drs. Cavallerano/Selvin
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There have been pilot programs that are screening for macular degeneration and they are trying to work out the details at this time.
8. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker
 - a. Dr. Barker comment. He is working on practice recommendations regarding TBI Vision Syndromes. There was a recent publication on primary care recommendations which is located on the Defense Center of Excellence website. They are in the final stages of producing a clinical recommendation for eye care providers regarding ocular motor rehabilitation and visual field rehabilitation. This will be a multidisciplinary, multiagency consensus which will be available soon.
 - b. They are also hoping to hold another educational course on ocular motor rehab and if approved will take place in August 20-22 in Spokane in conjunction with the Blind Veterans Association meeting. The intent is to create material to use for online training.
9. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Dr. Eldred
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. If you are interested in participating in the TBI workgroup or conference call, please contact Ms. Gernhart to be added to the TBI list serve.
10. Low Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Chan-O'Connell/Mancil
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There is a monthly conference call regarding low vision rehabilitation and you are interested, please contact Ms. Gernhart to be added to that group.
11. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Brough

- a. Dr. Brough comment. Please make sure OPPE and FPPE requirements are being met. They are finding that, in some instances, the Eye Care Handbook and Care Collaboration Agreements are not occurring as well as they should.
12. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Drs. Boyer/Horn
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There is an increase in demand for eye care services and with the new wait time calculations there is still a huge unmet need for primary eye care exams. Please continue to work with your local facility administrators to ensure access.
 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 – unavailable for comment.
 15. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/Pewitt
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There are quite a few that are in transition or thinking about it at this point (ie. Transferring or retiring). Please let Ms. Gernhart know as well as the Optometry Service Directory committee leads (as above) to make the necessary changes and keep the directory up to date.
 16. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory - Dr. Wang
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There are over 1700 residency trained optometrists listed and 942 are receiving the open position listings.
 17. AFOS Report - Drs. Wasik/Meers – unavailable for comment.
 - a. Dr. Kawasaki comment. AFOS has recently emailed a survey to those that are AFOS or NAVAIO members. If you are not a member but would like to participate in this survey, please email Dr. Aly Wasik and she will forward a link.
 18. NAVAIO Report - Drs. Kawasaki/Storer
 - a. Dr. Kawasaki comment. The Newsletter Committee has published the spring edition of our Optimum VA Newsletter. An email with a link to the newsletter was sent to all members earlier this month. It is also posted in the “Newsletters” section of our website. Please login to the members area to view it.
 - 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. We ask that residency coordinators to please encourage current residents to consider taking the ACMO exam. We recommend 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.
 - c. Please note that the American Board of Certification in Medical Optometry (ABCMO) requires passage of the ACMO examination for those applying via Career Path #1 and, on July 1, 2013, both residency training with emphasis in medical optometry and passage of ACMO will become mandatory for all applications for ABCMO board certification in

the specialty of medical optometry. For more information about ABCMO, please visit their website at www.abcmo.org.

Open forum:

Dr. Chiara comment in regards to UAP administering medications. At his local facility, they were incorporating these updated policies into their local memorandums which he had to intervene with some concerns because of eye technicians administering eye drops.

Dr. Townsend is requesting those optometrists that are having the same difficulties with the current omission of optometrists as supervisors to UAP (eye technicians) administering medications to contact him so he can relay the impact of these omissions.

Discussion about the Do/D and VA Electronic Medical Record system.

Dr. Townsend commented that they were not going to continue with their plan to create a new medical record system so one of the proposals was to have the Do/D adopt the VA's current VISTA imaging system to integrate and view patient records. This is similar to what happened with the IHS (Indian Health Service) which ended up adopting the VA EMR system.

Question about scanning in paper records into CPRS/ VISTA imaging. Dr. Townsend suggested contacting Dr. Ballinger about a more efficient way to do this.