

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE
CONFERENCE CALL**

AGENDA

October 15, 2010

3 p.m. Eastern Time

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

1. Announcements:

a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions

- i. Ms. Gernhart comment. There are 5 open positions currently. There is one fee based position in Ft. Myers, FL and the other 4 are full time positions. Please follow the link below for details.

- ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/Open_Optometry_Positions_List_2010_\(4\).doc](http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/Open_Optometry_Positions_List_2010_(4).doc)

<http://www.vacareers.va.gov/index.cfm>

b. VHA Mission & Vision Statements

- i. Dr. Townsend comment. If you missed last month's conference call, you can view the new VHA Mission and Vision Statements on the Undersecretary for Health's website.

<http://vaww.ush.va.gov/Excellence>

c. PECOS Enrollment for VA Optometrists

- i. Dr. Townsend comment. There is information about PECOS enrollment. For those employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, optometrists are considered positions under the Medicare Act. You have to have a National Identifier Number to enroll.

This is all a part of the Medicare Initiative occurring nationwide.

http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/Medicare_Enrollment.pdf

http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/PECOS_Memo_07_09_10.pdf

http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/Fact_Sheet_PECOS_Enrollment_Instructions.doc

d. VHA Directive 2010-040, Health Care Resources Sharing with DoD

- i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines policy regarding the sharing of health care resources with the Department of Defense (DOD).

- ii. Dr. Townsend comment. One of these openings is at Ft. Benning. There are many joint VA/ DoD activities where we have VA optometrists who are carrying forth care of veterans on DoD military sites.

http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/VHA_Directive_2010-040_Health_Care_Resources_Sharing_with_DoD.pdf

- e. VHA Directive 2010-045, DBQS to Support the C&P Process
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines policy for the introduction and use of Disability Benefit Questionnaires (DBQs) for eligible Veterans, in support of the Compensation and Pension (C&P) examination process.
http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/VHA_Directive_2010-045_Introduction_of_DBQS_to_Support_the_CP_Process.pdf
 - f. VHA Directive 2010-047, Determining the Prevailing Wage in the Labor Condition Application Market
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive provides policy on filing Labor Condition Applications (LCA) with the United States (U.S.) Department of Labor (DOL) in connection with petitions for H-1B or other non-immigrant visas that require an LCA. The Directive establishes mandatory procedures for making the required prevailing wage determinations.
http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/VHA_Directive_2010-047_Determining_the_Prevailing_Wage_in_the_Labor_Condition_Application_Process.pdf
2. Optometric Education Programs - Drs. Grimes/Messer/Slagle
- a. Dr. Slagle comment on the 2010-046 Directive published on October 1st. The purpose of this directive was to provide a policy for use of the acknowledgement agreement when protective health information is disclosed to affiliated educational institutions for the purpose of healthcare operations. This excludes treatment and payments operations, but does include day to day dealings you may have with your affiliates. This is the alternative to the business associate agreement which met some resistance from a lot of the affiliates and designed to support clients with the HIPPA privacy and security rule.
http://www.navao.org/documents/10_15_2010/VHA_Directive_2010-046_Acknowledgement_Agreements_When_Disclosure_of_PHI_is_Made_to_Affiliated_Educational_Institutions.pdf
 - i. Some examples that can potentially allow this type of sharing is Grand Rounds lectures and presentations students and residents participate in, any written case report assignments, information on patient encounter logs that are maintained by the affiliate, or rarely, a grievance policy if there was concern for the potential for health care performance evaluations, and quality assurance responsibilities between the VA physicians and the institution. Look over the elements for de-identification (there are 18 elements). You may be surprised because some do not seem that obvious.

- ii. Some pointed out by Dr. Slagle were: admission and discharge states, photographs, and the last element, “any other unique identifying number or characteristic”.
 - iii. Consider executing this agreement between the VA and your affiliates for information that is disclosed outside the VA medical center.
 - b. Dr. Slagle comment. Today, October 15th is the deadline for your submission request for this next academic year’s residency and fellowship training programs.
 - c. The VA in Tampa, FL graduated the first clinical fellow for Polytrauma and TBI rehabilitation last month. That program has an open start date and is accepting applications. If anyone is interested, please contact Chrystyna Rakoczy, OD at Chrystyna.Rakoczy@va.gov.
 - d. Dr. Townsend comment. Please share this new directive with your affiliates and forward it to your residency and externship directors so they are aware of it.
- 3. Optometry Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Horn
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. The committee had their conference and got together with ophthalmology on the first day and discussed many joint issues. On the second day they discussed optometry specific issues. As soon as they have information resultant from that meeting they will forward that on to you.
- 4. Optometry Recruitment Representatives - Drs. Bennett/Gay
 - a. Dr. Gay comment. The poster has been emailed out that shows the benefits of being a VA optometrist which has gone out to all the representatives to use as they see fit.
 - b. He also had a discussion about how to handle pre-optometry students coming in to observe or shadow and received some different guidelines. He has sent them out to the group.
- 5. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/White
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. We need to make sure the Haag Strait tonometer tips are disposed of properly which is 2 years after use. The new disposable tips will have expiration dates on them. If you have any further questions, please contact Dr. White at the Memphis VAMC.
- 6. Teleretinal Imaging Program - Drs. Cavallerano/Selvin
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There is, tentatively, going to be a conference in January 2011 that will look at the possibility of having regional reading centers. Those of you whom are actively involved in the National Teleretinal Imaging program will probably be in attendance.
- 7. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Townsend

- a. Dr. Townsend comment. The Department of Defense and VA Eye Injury Registry (DVEIR) has received funding so it will continue and will be implemented this fiscal year. They hope to have this registry available to identify veterans who have had eye and brain injuries since 9/11 and see how they do over a period of time and be able to contact them for other examinations as needed.
8. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Gagnon/J. Kirby – unavailable for comment.
9. Low Vision Rehabilitation EES Program - Drs. Fuhr/Gagnon/ Mancil
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. This program is undergoing some alpha and beta testing. They are hoping to have it up and running by December at the latest. It will be COPE approved to obtain CE.
10. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Norden
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. In the past year, the subcommittee, working with Dr. Horn, has developed the disease specific OPPE activities that you need to do for macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma. These should be incorporated as part of your on-going professional practice evaluations. If you need examples, please contact Dr. Norden. He has helped many in the past and is willing to help you develop a robust quality improvement program.
11. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Drs. Belkin/Ficarra
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. Here is some preliminary data that we have so far for FY 2010. We have achieved 91% in diabetic reminders due to the screenings as compared to our performance measure of 70%. We exceeded the target for eye clinic wait times for a patient to be seen within 14 days in optometry. The target was 69.17% for the desired wait times for new patients. We achieved 83.85%. For established patients, there was a 78.2% target for the desired wait time and we achieved 91.64% as of August. The missed opportunities rate was at 14.34% which was exceeded as well when we achieved 12.27%.
 - b. Although the final FY2010 numbers are not in, as of this fiscal year, for the first time, VA optometrists have cared for over 1 million veterans.
 - c. We are still waiting to see what the FY2011 performance measures will be, but as soon as that is available, it will be distributed.
12. 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
13. VHA Optometry Service Websites - Drs. Cordes/Ficarra/Hamilton
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. They are continuing to await the migration into Team –Site and that has not yet been accomplished. Hopefully that will

be done at the beginning of this fiscal year so they can make necessary updates to the website.

14. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/Pewitt – unavailable for comment.
15. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory - Dr. Wang
 - a. Dr. Wang comment. She has sent out the request for residents to sign up a voluntary inclusion into the residency trained optometrist directory about two weeks ago. She has had quite a few (40%) of the residents in their current year sign up already.
16. AFOS Report - Dr. Wasik
 - a. Dr. Wasik comment. The FSO meeting is prior to the academy meeting. There are still rooms available and you can still register for the meeting if you have not done so or you can register on site. The keynote speaker is Tom Sullivan and just a few days ago they solidified a lunch speaker for Tuesday. They are planning on having someone from the Vision Center of Excellence give a speech during that time.
 - b. The dues notification for the next year will be coming soon. Please pay those dues in a timely fashion. This will help with the representation in AOA and the support that was given from AFOS in regards to some occurrences in the last few months in VA optometry.
17. NAVAIO Report - Drs. Kawasaki/Storer
 - a. Dr. Kawasaki comment: Registration is now closed for our annual dinner meeting which will be held the evening of Thursday, November 18, 2010 in conjunction with the American Academy of Optometry meeting in San Francisco. Please contact us at info@navao.org if you have any questions about your registration. Also, please note that the room assignment for the Business Meeting has been changed to the InterContinental Hotel's Sutter Room.
 - b. The Fall issue of the NAVAIO newsletter will be published soon. The Newsletter Committee is in the process of creating a continuing education section to help our members easily locate local CE outside of the major optometric conferences. They are asking that members submit information on small conferences that they have attended that they felt were a good resource for continuing education. Please also consider any announcements you may have for our *Keeping In Touch* section, which includes personal and professional announcements for our members. Please email all submissions or ideas to Dr. Tomasini at dawn.tomasini@va.gov.
 - c. We are currently in the process of updating the FAQ sheets in the member's area of our website and would appreciate member feedback about the current ones, as well as suggestions for other topics of interest. Please send an email to info@navao.org with your comments.

Open forum:

Dr. Bishop had a question about care coordination regarding the Information Letter.

Dr. Townsend comment: As a result of the meetings we had at VA Central Office there will be some additional guidance coming out to the field. He anticipates, more likely, within the month, there will be additional information going out to everyone to improve coordination of care for the veterans.