

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES**

**August 15, 2014
3 p.m. Eastern Time**

1. Announcements:
 - a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
 - i. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/Copy_of_Open_Optom_etry_Positions.pdf
 - ii. http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open_VA_Optom_etry_Positio_ns.asp or <http://jobsearch.usajobs.gov/>
 - b. VA Core Values and Characteristics (I CARE)
<http://www.va.gov/ICARE/index.asp>
 - c. Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI)
<http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/pwd.aspx>
 - d. Office of Resolution Management (ORM) – <http://vaww.va.gov/orm/>
(three related links: EEO Complaint Processing <http://vaww.va.gov/ORM/EEOcomplaint.asp> ; Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) <http://www.va.gov/adr/> + VA Directive 5978; and Resolution Support Center <http://www.va.gov/orm/RSC.asp>)
 - e. Continuous Readiness in Information Security Program (CRISP)
<http://vaww.vhaco.va.gov/CRISP/>
 - f. Professional Development: VA MyCareer (<http://mycareeratva.va.gov/>)
 - g. VHA Directive 1093, Delegation of Authority to Process Tort Claims
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes nationwide policy that Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors and medical facility Directors may resolve any non-medical malpractice claim asserting damages for \$2,500 or less that arises out of VHA operations and is asserted under the Federal Tort Claims Act.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Directive_1093_Delegation_of_Authority_to_Process_Tort_Claims.pdf
 - h. VHA Directive 1068, Recall of Defective Medical Devices and Medical Products, Including Food and Food Products
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes policy for recalls involving medical devices, medical products, foods and food products.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Directive_1068_Recall_of_Defective_Medical_Devices_and_Medical_Products....pdf
 - i. VHA Directive 1072, Release of VA Data to State Cancer Registries
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive establishes policy for releasing Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Central Cancer Registry data to State Cancer Registries.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Directive_1072_Release_of_VA_Data_to_State_Cancer_Registries.pdf
 - j. VHA Directive 1177, CPR, BLS and ACLS Training for Staff
 - i. This is a Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive that establishes the policy to optimize patient safety within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) system by training appropriate staff on Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Directive_1177_CPR,_BLS_and_ACLS_Training_for_Staff.pdf

- k. VHA Handbook 1907.01, Health Information Management and Health Records
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides basic health information procedures for managing the patient's health record.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Handbook_1907_01_Health_Information_Management_and_Health_Records.pdf
 - l. VHA Handbook 1200.15(1), Eligibility For VA Research Support, Amended version
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook defines the criteria for eligibility to receive research support from the Office of Research and Development (ORD).
 - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Handbook_1200_15\(1\)_Eligibility_For_VA_Research_Support,_Amended_version.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Handbook_1200_15(1)_Eligibility_For_VA_Research_Support,_Amended_version.pdf)
 - m. VHA Handbook 1202.07, John B. Barnwell Award Procedural Handbook
 - i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides information and procedures relating to the nomination, application, review, and selection process for the annual John B. Barnwell Award.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/VHA_Handbook_1202_07_John_B._Barnwell_Award_Procedural_Handbook.pdf
 - n. Memorandum from General Counsel – Consult and Appointment Delays
 - i. This litigation hold memorandum is to inform you about the situation described above and the legal obligation of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to preserve information that may be relevant to consult and appointment delays within VHA. This memorandum explains what to do if you, as an employee, contractor, volunteer, trainee, or other agent or representative of VA, have information in your possession, custody, or control that may be relevant to this potential litigation, including the steps you must take to preserve that information.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/05142014_-_Consult_and_Appointment_Delays_PDF_v1.pdf
 - o. Message from Acting General Counsel – Hatch Act
 - i. This message reviews the restriction on the partisan political activities imposed by the Hatch Act. The Hatch Act restricts certain partisan political activities by Federal employees.
 - ii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/Hatch_Act_2014_Memo_and_Attachments.pdf
 - p. Message regarding VA expansion of Patient Centered Community Care
 - i. This message reviews the VA expansion of Patient –Centered Community Care Contracts to provide more access to primary care.
 - ii. Dr. Townsend comment. Reminder that there is a NonVA Care Central Office and for those unable to reach veterans needs due to lengthy wait times, look into who is qualified providers in your area to contract out to.
 - iii. http://www.navao.org/documents/08_2014/Patient_Centered_Community_Care.pdf
 - q. VHA Optometry Service Program Office Relocation 8/19/14
2. Optometry Service Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Selvin
- a. Dr. Townsend comment. They have tentatively scheduled a remote meeting due to travel restrictions. They will have their joint

Optometry/Ophthalmology Field Advisory Committee meeting on
September 11th.

3. Optometric Education Programs – Drs. Slagle/Messer
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There will be a call for Associated Health Trainees from the Office of Academic Affiliations. Please make sure you meet the deadlines to request the number of residents and trainees you would like to have.
4. COPE Approved EES Coursework – Dr. Hetrick
 - a. Dr. Hetrick comment. She has identified about 40 faculty members' contact information to send in approval for COPE. There is no funding until the next fiscal year, but they are doing prep work to get EES COPE approved.
5. Optometry Productivity Workgroup - Drs. Bennett/Horn/Selvin
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There are recommendations from the Office of Productivity, Staffing, and Efficiency. RVU productivity may look artificially low for those dealing with low vision services and TBI rehabilitation and you will need to educate leadership at your facility that it is to be expected.
6. Electronic Medical Records/Information Technology Issues - Dr. Ballinger
 - a. Dr. Ballinger comment. There have been emails sent involving communications with the Zeiss Corporation and other communications with vendors or company headquarters which are outside the United States. Out of the Office of Information Security, the VA has now recognized the cyber threats that can exist through VA medical system infrastructures. Towards the end of July there was a bulletin sent out in regards to information security and the VA has been, since, blocking access to websites with specific domains. This does involve the Zeiss Corporation in Germany so communications via emails have been blocked nationally. He tried to resolve the issue, locally, but it has been delayed. He has sent a direct memo to the Office of Information Security to try and resolve this issue. You may still be able to receive information from these companies but you may not be able to send out any information to them.
 - b. For those with any type of electronic medical system, such as image capturing or anything that needs servicing, any of the corporations that need to remote into those devices will need to have the same level of security clearance that any VA employee has.
7. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/Mancil/O'Connor/White
 - a. Dr. O'Connor comment. They had an online conference call with some of the national leaders in infection control and RME processing concerning local facilities being impractical on requirements for RME processing. All equipment needs to be cleaned but not disinfected. They only need for reusable medical equipment to be disinfected is if it is in direct contact with the patient, so please keep that in mind and be practical.
 - b. There was a new online text available for VHA staff called the APIC Text of Infection Control and Epidemiology. There is a specific Chapter related to Eye Care. There is a link on the Optometry Administrative Page under *Clinical Practice* and *Infection Prevention and Control*.
 - c. Dr. Barker comment. There are disposable gonio lenses available that are relatively inexpensive.

One Source Document Site: <http://onesourcedocs.com/member/index.html>

8. Teleretinal Imaging Screening Program - Drs. Cavallerano/Selvin – unavailable for comment.
9. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker
 - a. Dr. Barker comment. The registry is moving along and finally putting data in. He is hoping they will be able to glean some useful information out of it soon. The VCE is working on educational programs to reach out to non-optometric providers (i.e. mental health and voc rehab providers) in working with low vision and TBI veterans.
 - b. They have been working with the US Army Medical Research Command on the Horace Project to try to find an ultimate solution for complete blindness (i.e. a neural implant).
10. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Dr. Eldred/Dr. Rakoczy
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. If you are interested in joining their workgroup, please contact one of them or Ms. Gernhart to be included in the listserv.
11. Low Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Chan-O’Connell/Mancil
 - a. Dr. Townsend comment. If you are interested in joining their workgroup, please contact one of them or Ms. Gernhart to be included in the listserv and their monthly meetings.
12. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Brough – unavailable for comment.
13. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Drs. Cantrell/Varanelli
 - a. Dr. Varanelli comment. They are in the process of directing the charter and mission of what the workgroup will be. Once that is submitted they will start to grow the workgroup.
14. VA Optometric Research & Development - Dr. Mancil - unavailable for comment.

VA HSR&D Centers of Innovation (COINs) and Resource Centers:

<http://www.hsr.d.research.va.gov/centers/>

15. VHA Optometry Service Websites – Dr. G. Singh
 - a. Dr. Singh comment. They are continuing to publish updates on the website.
16. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/Pewitt
 - a. Dr. Wang comment. They are happy to report that the multiple issues with updates have been resolved and they will continue to update the directory as needed.
17. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory – Drs. Wang/Swift
 - a. Dr. Wang comment. She has received about 50 forms from new residents and those are being updated currently.
18. AFOS Report - Dr. Wasik
 - a. Dr. Wasik comment. Just a reminder of a recent email outlining the upcoming deadline for registration for the winter term AFOS Salus University Tribute Scholarship was sent out. Any category of member within AFOS in good standing is eligible. There is more information online and the deadline is August 15.
 - b. The annual AFOS meeting will be held Monday November 10th and 11th, before the Academy meeting in Denver, CO. George Meers has spearheaded a dedication for the Veterans due to the meeting being held on Veterans day to donate essential items or cash to a local Veterans homeless shelter. Those donations will be collected at the registration table during the AFOS meeting.
 - i. Advanced registration is still going on until October 31st for reduced rates.

- ii. There is a call for abstracts and poster submissions for the AFOS meeting which will end September 1st.

19. NAVAIO Report - Drs. Wong/Thomann

- a. Dr. Wong comment. Please save the date for the NAVAIO meeting which will be held in conjunction with the Academy meeting in Denver, CO on Thursday November 13 at 7:15pm with the reception to follow. It will be held at the Hyatt Regency, which is the Academy meeting headquarters hotel. Please encourage your residents to become members of NAVAIO. They will be providing partial travel scholarships again this year for chosen resident members supported by IET and ABCMO.

20. Dr. Townsend comment. Just a reminder that the VHA Optometry Service Program Office will be relocating August 19, 2014 in case there is a delay in responding to requests or information. He hopes to have everything operational by August 21st. They were unable to transfer numbers, so as soon as the new contact information is finalized he will send out an email.