

**OPTOMETRY SERVICE  
CONFERENCE CALL**

**MINUTES**

**June 20, 2014**

**3 p.m. Eastern Time**

1. Announcements:
  - a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
    - i. Ms. Gernhart comment. There are currently 5 open optometry positions available. Please check the links below for more information.
    - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/Open\\_Optometry\\_Positions.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/Open_Optometry_Positions.pdf)
    - iii. [http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open\\_VA\\_Optomtrist\\_Positions.asp](http://www.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/open_VA_Optomtrist_Positions.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. The American Academy of Optometry (Nov. 12-15, 2014) and Armed Forces Optometric Society (Nov. 10-12, 2014) meetings are now open for registration thru August 1, 2014 – ACES Fact Sheet provided.
    - i. Dr. Townsend comment. You need to have approval by your immediate supervisor to attend these meeting before you register and you must register by August 1.
    - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/ACES\\_Request\\_to\\_Attend\\_an\\_External\\_Conference\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/ACES_Request_to_Attend_an_External_Conference_Fact_Sheet.pdf)
  - h. Consult and Appointment Delays in VHA – Memorandum
    - i. Dr. Townsend comment. There was a memorandum that was released from the Office of General Council that you should hold all information about wait times, consult and appointment delays within the VA, confidential.
      1. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/Consult\\_and\\_Appointment\\_Delays.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/Consult_and_Appointment_Delays.pdf)
    - ii. Most have already been contacted by leadership especially if you have appointments greater than 90 days. You will need to work with your facilities leadership to determine what resources are needed to improve access to Optometry Eye Care services.
    - iii. In Optometry, you need at least 1-1.5 FTE eye techs per 1 Optometrist to be efficient within the eye clinic. Approximately 1/3 of all unique Veterans will want to access eye care each year.
  - i. Modifications to Performance Plans – E-mail and Memorandum
    - i. Dr. Townsend comment. Anyone who has a 14 day wait time requirement within their performance plan will need to have that removed.

1. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/Memo-Wait times removed from performance plans.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/Memo-Wait%20times%20removed%20from%20performance%20plans.pdf)
  - ii. The acting Secretary Sloan has suspended all VHA bonuses for this year.
  - j. Disability and Medical Assessment (DMA) Facts Sheets
    - i. Dr. Townsend comment. They have been sent out to the C&P workgroups. There are recommended ICD9 and CPT codes to be used so you can get credit for your workload.
    - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/FactSheetDMA-14-002\\_CliniciansatRO.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/FactSheetDMA-14-002_CliniciansatRO.pdf)
    - iii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/Coding\\_DMA\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_14-006.pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/Coding_DMA_Fact_Sheet_14-006.pdf)
  - k. Revised Guidance on Veterans Preference in Making Hybrid Title 38 Appointments, HRML 05-14-05
    - i. This Human Resources Management Letter (HRML) provides updated guidance regarding the application of Veterans' preference when making **new appointments** to hybrid title 38 occupations.
    - ii. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/HRML\\_05-14-05\\_Hybrid\\_Vet\\_Pref\\_Interim\\_Procedures.docx](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/HRML_05-14-05_Hybrid_Vet_Pref_Interim_Procedures.docx)
2. Optometry Service Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Selvin
  - a. Dr. Townsend comment. Travel monies are being recalled and may not be available to provide travel for the annual meeting with ophthalmology at Central Office this year.
3. Optometric Education Programs – Guidance on Supervision and Billing for Associated Health Trainees, **revised OAA guidance** (<http://vaww.va.gov/oa/faqs/default.asp?TID=18&Cat=3>) - Drs. Slagle/Messer
  - a. The OAA released revised guidance on billing for trainees. The important elements of this document include:
    - i. Supervising practitioners have the clinical and legal responsibility for the care provided to the patients
    - ii. For billing to occur, the supervisor must:
      1. Be listed as the primary provider (that is unchanged from prior policy)
      2. Either write an independent progress note OR write an addendum to the trainee's note
        - a. The note must include appropriate documentation of the clinical encounter and clinical thinking
    - iii. While a co-signature of a trainee's note satisfies supervision documentation requirements, a co-signature alone is insufficient for billing purposes
    - iv. With regard to clinic profiles, trainees may not be listed as providers, either primary or secondary, under "person class." Trainees should be designated in a locally-defined trainee-"user class."
    - v. This billing guidance has no impact on co-payment charges, when applicable, as co-payment billing has a different set of guidelines
    - vi. [http://www.navao.org/documents/06\\_2014/AH\\_Billing\\_for\\_Services\(1\).pdf](http://www.navao.org/documents/06_2014/AH_Billing_for_Services(1).pdf)
  - b. Residency certificates are available for order and the link is available on the intranet website.
4. Optometry Productivity Workgroup - Drs. Bennett/Horn/Selvin
  - a. Dr. Townsend comment. There was a glitch in the Office of Productivity, Efficiency, and Staffing for the first 6 months of the fiscal year. They neglected for the Optometrists and Podiatrists to remove the time for

annual and sick days when looking at productivity for the RVUs. This made it look like full time optometrists were underproductive. Please go back and make sure allocation of clinical and administrative time is mapped correctly and person class codes are correct. The VA staff Attending Optometrist must be listed as the primary care provider so they can receive credit for those 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 – unavailable for comment.
8. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker – unavailable for comment.
9. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Dr. Eldred/Dr. Rakoczy
  - a. Dr. Townsend comment. If you are an AOA member, there was a manual detailing how to diagnose and manage patients with brain injuries and rehabilitation.
10. Low Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Chan-O'Connell/Mancil – unavailable for comment.
11. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Brough
  - a. Dr. Townsend comment. Please continue to adhere to the care collaboration agreements between optometry, primary care, ophthalmology, and for low vision.
12. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Drs. Boyer/Horn – unavailable for comment
13. 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/>
14. VHA Optometry Service Websites – Dr. G. Singh
  - a. Dr. Singh comment. They are still experiencing technical difficulties, but they should be able to continue to update the website soon.
15. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/Pewitt
  - a. Dr. Pewitt comment. The updates are on hold at this time due to IT issues. If things are resolved they should be able to update the website by next week.
16. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory – Drs. Wang/Swift
  - a. Dr. Wang comment. Please contact Dr. Wang if you have any residents who want to be included in the residency trained optometrist directory or would like to receive the email about the open optometry positions available.
17. AFOS Report - Dr. Wasik – unavailable for comment.
18. NAVAIO Report - Drs. Wong/Thomann
  - a. Dr. Wong comment. NAVAIO will hold their annual meeting in Denver, CO on Thursday evening, November 13, 2014.
  - b. Please encourage incoming resident trainees to consider membership in NAVAIO.

Dr. Hettrick comment. If you are asked to give any type of statement to investigators about wait times or any other issues, please remember that you are entitled to representation from your union representative.

Dr. Townsend comment: Reminder to look at the number of uniques and about 1/3 of them want an eye exam each year so plan accordingly with your facility to make sure you have enough support to see these patients.