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president's *perspective*

Spotlight on Portability

Maggie Donohue, PT

In an ever shrinking world, access to the right resource at the right time has become the expectation not the exception. How do we ensure that licensed PTs and PTAs are available to meet the demand of today's consumers? We believe it's time to move forward in increasing portability for licensees to ensure that the public has access they need to qualified, regulated professionals. Our goal is to remove artificial barriers to licensure while maintaining the crucial aspects of public protection that state boards are in place to provide.

Development of a voluntary physical therapy licensure compact between states has emerged as an idea that addresses many portability issues and creation of such a compact is now a focus of FSBPT. In addition, we have reviewed the processes that foreign-educated PTs need to complete to be licensed; we will be sharing recommendations for streamlining the processes by removing steps that do not ensure competence to practice.

Below are highlights of accomplishments in each of our Areas of Focus since the 2013 annual meeting. I encourage you to take time to read the committee reports to see in more detail how much we have accomplished this year.

Examinations: Ensure the ongoing excellence, reliability, defensibility, security and validity of the NPTE and related examinations

Exam Assessment

This year we were re-accredited for the prestigious Stage One Accreditation from the Buros Center for Testing. The Stage One Accreditation evaluates the appropriateness of the entire NPTE testing program, from registration to records maintenance, including all aspects of examination development, delivery, and scoring. Special attention is paid to the development of the test content outlines and cut scores implemented in 2013. The accreditation process ensures we're in line with all relevant professional standards for licensure test development. The accreditation status will hold until August 1, 2019.

In order to accommodate the volume of candidates and work toward accomplishing our enhanced exam security goals, 2014 saw the completion of a long process of substantially increasing the number of items we develop for the NPTE test forms. FSBPT has been able to accomplish a dramatic upscaling by increasing the size and technology resources available in our onsite facilities, making our software tools easier to use by our volunteers, adding key staff members, and conducting a rigorous research program aimed at identifying the most efficient ways to develop items. This research program has led us to increase opportunities for experienced item writers to contribute through the Item Writing Task Forces, as well as reaching out to professionals who are unable to travel to our facilities by holding regional off-site item writing workshops in cooperation with local educational institutions.

FSBPT also improved our ability to check the validity of scores before they are reported to jurisdictions by implementing a new score screening process. The process looks at statistical indicators of security problems and withholds scores from examination instances that require further review. FSBPT staff then follows up with a questionnaire that gathers more information about study strategies and possible security agreement violations before determining whether to release the score. The short-term goals of the program are modest: (a) to communicate and reinforce the requirements of the security agreement to candidates who might not understand them, and (b) deliver feedback to candidates needing substantial remediation before they are likely to be successful. However, in the future we hope that more sophisticated statistical analyses, which are in development, will be able to better detect and prevent the kinds of security issues we saw in the past.

Exam Services

The following items were completed to enhance exam services to candidates and schools since the last annual meeting report.

- The 2016 National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) test dates were announced.
- The following enhancements were added to the online jurisdiction interface based on suggestions from physical therapy board administrators:
 1. Additional information on withdrawals has been added to the Authorization to Test (ATT) Summary Report for board administrators.
 2. Board Administrators can now export the eligibility list for NPTE candidates to Excel.
- An additional page outlining ID requirements was added to ATT letters so candidates were clear about what ID was necessary to sit for the NPTE.

Membership: Enhance the Federation's value to its membership by developing and maintaining programs and services responsive to membership needs

Jurisdiction Board Member and Board Administrator Training

It is crucial for regulatory board members to understand their role in public protection. As many, if not most, board members are practitioners or licensees in the professions they are asked to regulate, it is important for such public servants to distinguish between the role of the professional association, such as the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the state boards.

Equally important is the role of administrators on the state boards, who do the day-to-day work of the board. Learning more about how their work supports the bigger picture of regulation for the protection of the public may be a welcome refresher.

The annual Jurisdiction Board Member and Administrator Training provides a weekend of educational sessions intended to prepare new and veteran board members/administrators for their service to the public.

The sessions are engaging and cover a wide range of topics addressing not only the legal and practical aspects of serving on or running a physical therapy licensing board, but a detailed description of the programs and services provided by FSBPT to its membership.

We hope that you will consider attending the 2015 session, which is scheduled for June 12-14, 2015 in Alexandria, Virginia. Email communications@fsbpt.org if you would like to register. Attendees are funded by the Federation.

Members can view the 2014 presentations at www.fsbpt.org. Go to Members Login | Meeting Information | Member & Admin Training.

Examination, Licensure & Disciplinary Database (ELDD)

As we continue our journey towards a complete, accurate and up-to-date database of physical therapy exams, licenses and disciplinary actions, we've focused the last 12 months on enhancing the tools and processes we use to compile, consolidate, disseminate and report on the data.

The purpose of the system enhancements was to increase the speed with which we process data received from each jurisdiction. The tools we used in the years leading up to mid-2014 were built a decade ago when the quality of data in the database was much weaker than today. Thus those tools focused on increasing quality and resolving discrepancies in the data rather than speed. The quality of the data today is much stronger enabling us to focus on staff efficiency and throughput while processing licensure data received from the Jurisdictions.

We are also making better use of technology to automatically transmit disciplinary action information to the National Practitioner Databank (NPDB) after review by Federation staff. This allows us to increase accuracy and save staff time when transmitting the 250 disciplinary actions each year on behalf of the 19 jurisdictions where we serve as the reporting agent. This also allows us to expand this service offering to other jurisdictions who may be interested without the need to add staff.

Additionally, those who attended last year's annual meeting likely saw that we have begun piloting a new "Participation Level" measurement tool to help each jurisdiction understand how well they are participating in the database. This metric was developed to be an objective assessment of each jurisdiction's participation level at a given point in time. The tool considers over 25 data points before assigning a rating between 1 star (lowest participation level) and 5 stars (highest participation level) to each Jurisdiction. More than half of the jurisdictions received a rating of 3-stars or higher each time we've compiled this metric. Log in to the Members area of the fsbpt.org website to see your jurisdiction's ratings; please reach out to staff if you have any questions about it.

As we look ahead to the need to collect and assess aggregate workforce data (Minimum Data Set), the potential of implementing an interstate compact, and our other initiatives, the importance of a physical therapy database is underscored. We are pleased to indicate that we have a strong foundation on which we can build.

States' Rights, States' Responsibilities and Professional Standards: Identify and promote effective regulation in physical therapy that ensures the delivery of safe and competent physical therapy care, while respecting states' rights and responsibilities

This area of focus deals with providing tools and resources to improve the regulatory processes for member jurisdictions.

Supervised Clinical Practice

The Supervised Clinical Practice Performance Evaluation Tool was completed last year and is now being piloted in one jurisdiction. The instructions for scoring the Supervised Clinical Practice Performance Evaluation Tool for supervisors of foreign educated physical therapists (FEPT) trainees are complete and as of June 2014, eight trainees in Virginia were being evaluated. When the trainee finishes the 1000 required hours, the supervisor and the trainee both receive follow up surveys from FSBPT to gather information regarding the experience and the tool. This information will be invaluable to continued validation of the tool.

Modernizing Practice Acts

Staff traveled to the Virgin Islands in March 2014 to testify in the Senate in support of modernizing their practice act which had not been revised since its origin in 1969. The bill, which was modeled after the FSBPT Model Practice Act, passed and is on its way to the Governor for signature.

Licensure Compact

An Advisory Task Force on the physical therapy licensure compact was established and began exploring this mechanism for increasing licensure portability and ultimately access of the public to physical therapy services. The licensure compact is now in the hands of the Licensure Compact Drafting Task Force.

Minimum Data Set

The Minimum Data Set (MDS) was revised and is now in the process of being piloted.

Projects completed included:

- Hosted two Licensure Compact Task Force meetings.
- Developed initial guidelines for a regulatory model for telehealth which now will go out for stakeholder input.
- Conducted research into the licensure process and experience of the foreign educated PT.
- Began researching the issues surrounding reentry vs reinstatement in physical therapy and other licensed professions.
- Developed educational tools for jurisdictions interested in requiring supervised clinical practice and/or the Performance Appraisal Tool.
- Set the passing standard for the Supervised Clinical Practice Performance Evaluation Tool via a standard setting workshop.
- Published a resource paper on supervised clinical practice.
- Continued updates and clarifications to the information in the Jurisdiction Licensure Reference Guide.
- A study of the attributes of the foreign educated physical therapist was completed and a report will be provided at the annual meeting.
- Minimum Data Set (MDS) was revised.

Continuing Competence

- Presented the FSBPT Continuing Competence model and the FSBPT-developed continuing competence tools and services at three jurisdiction board meetings, at the Board and Administrator Training, and at the Leadership Issues Forum.
- At least 35 jurisdictions are addressing continuing competence in some fashion.
- The **ProCert** continuing competence activity certification program continues to expand:
 - 20 jurisdictions accept **ProCert** certification.
 - At least 10 additional jurisdictions are working to accept **ProCert**.

- More than 1,000 activities have been certified.
- Seventy (70) vendors now submit offerings for evaluation.
- Fifty (50) volunteer reviewers.
- Practice Review Tool (PRT):
 - Nineteen (19) jurisdictions award credit for completion of the Practice Review Tool (PRT).
 - At least five additional jurisdictions are working to award credit for the PRT.
- aPTitude utilization has increased significantly:
 - Alabama is the first jurisdiction to require continuing competence compliance reporting through aPTitude.
 - Several more states are exploring aPTitude as the vehicle for either required or optional reporting by audited licensees.
- Jurisprudence assessment tools:
 - Currently developing tools for two jurisdictions in 2014/2015 with potential for others beginning in 2015.

Education: Provide and promote educational programs and products for board members, administrators, the public, and other stakeholders

2014: Another great meeting!

We invited both national and international speakers presenting on topics such as international physiotherapy accreditation, board effectiveness, criminal background checks, working with AGs, telehealth, continuing competence, ethical dilemmas, NPTE security and ADA accommodations.

NPTE Workshop for Educators

This item-writing workshop for PT and PTA educators continues to attract attendees given the high value of the information provided for preparing candidates for the NPTE. Psychometricians and physical therapists who have developed questions for the high-stakes NPTE share the theory and mechanics of developing valid and reliable questions for PT and PTA courses and attendees practice writing sample questions during the workshop. In addition, attendees are given an overview of the NPTE development and administration process, which we hope gives educators a better understanding of the NPTE and its relation to both their curricula and professional standard in physical therapy.

Faculty Newsletter Continues

We have continued to provide PT and PTA program directors and faculty with information pertinent to the NPTE and other subjects that might be of interest to the physical therapy schools. The newsletter distribution is open to all faculty members. Those who would like to receive the newsletter should contact communications@fsbpt.org.

Leadership: Broaden the Federation’s leadership role and recognition within the regulatory, professional and related communities

Leadership Issues Forum “Extravaganza”

The 2014 Leadership Issues Forum (LIF) was held August 2-3, 2014 in Alexandria, Virginia. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Provide information and data on critical regulatory issues that impact the regulation of physical therapy.
- Explore various ways of addressing the critical regulatory issues.
- Establish a plan for addressing the regulatory issues.
- Provide an opportunity for delegates or other jurisdiction representative to understand and discuss issues prior to the Annual Meeting.
- Provide updates on previous LIF initiatives.

Seventy people, comprising delegates/board representatives, board administrators, the board of directors, APTA, committee chairs and the Director of the National Center for Interstate Compacts, attended.

The meeting focused on the new NPTE Eligibility Requirements that will go into effect no sooner than January 1, 2016; the results of a study of foreign educated licensure issues; Supervised Clinical Practice (SCP) and the SCPT Performance Evaluation Tool; the endorsement process for already-licensed foreign educated PTs applying for licensure in another state; telehealth, the physical therapy licensure compact, reentry to practice, and the motion for the Delegate Assembly on the CWT.

Healthcare Regulatory CEO Group

We organized the first face-to-face Healthcare Regulatory CEO group meeting to include representatives from medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, social work, physical therapy, psychology and pharmacy. The CEO’s group has agreed to share their respective initiatives and to expand the participation to others in their organizations in two 2014 webinars and to meet again in a face-to-face meeting in 2015.

International Network of Physiotherapy Regulatory Authorities (INPTRA)

We continue to act as Secretariat for INPTRA and their board of directors. Since FSBPT’s last annual meeting, INPTRA has conducted four webcasts on international regulation – invitations are sent via email to all FSBPT members. INPTRA’s board of directors also hosted a reception at the World Health Professions Regulation Conference 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland May 2014.

INPTRA is hosting **INPTRA 2015** in Singapore **April 29-30 2015**. This is prior to World Confederation for Physical Therapy’s Congress 2015.

If you are going to Singapore, be sure to attend! It will be two days of educational sessions and discussion on international physical therapy regulation.

- You can view more information, register for the meeting and make hotel reservations on the INPTRA website at <http://www.inptra.org/Home/INPTRA2015.aspx>.
- Note the Early Bird Registration fees if you register before December 31, 2014.

Organizational and Financial Stability: Ensure the long-term organizational and financial stability and viability of the Federation

Financials

We continue to be in a financially strong position and have maintained our reserves. Our operating results enabled the Board to defer the planned exam fee increase that was to be effective January 1, 2013 to an implementation date of January 1, 2015.

King-West

Operations for King-West have steadily improved since the wholly-owned subsidiary was incorporated to own and operate the building which houses the Federation offices, along with other tenants. We have enjoyed a 100% occupancy rate for the past two years when the average for the area is 85%.

Updating Policies and Budgets

The Board continues to review, update and approve the Policies, Salary Administration Manual and NPTE Policies, operating budget, capital budget and reserve funding each year in December.

President Maggie Donohue, PT received her physical therapy education from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She initially worked in a large trauma hospital and now is a partner in Foothills Physical Therapy.

Maggie served on the Advisory Committee to the New Hampshire Board of Medicine. She was a member of the legislative committee to create an independent PT board then served as Chair of the Physical Therapy Governing Board and President of the New Hampshire Board of Allied Health Professionals from 1998-2006. During her time on the board, she worked to pass legislation to improve direct access in New Hampshire.

Maggie has served as a Federation Delegate, attended the 1999 Summit and was a member of and then chaired the Ethics and Legislation Committee. In 2006, she was elected to the FSBPT Board and now serves as President.

Maggie's general background includes a history of participation in several organizations including: APTA member: 1984-present; member, committee to create legislation for an independent PT board in New Hampshire; liaison for the PT governing board and NHAPTA government affairs committee; liaison, private practice organization and insurers in New Hampshire; and presenter for FSBPT, APTA and NHAPTA.