

Minutes of the
Occupational Licensing Reform (OLR) Workgroup
April 22, 2022, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
TEAMS Conference Call

Members present: Katie Ralston, Senator Judy Lee, Major Jay Sheldon, Rep. Cindy Schreiber – Beck, Rep. Kristin Roers, Dirke Wilke, Rick Gardner

Welcome and Introductions

Katie Ralston opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m., welcoming members and gave an overview of the agenda.

RECAP OF CSG PRESENTATION

Katie Ralston Howe

Six trends were presented at the February meeting by Mr. Adam Diersing of the National Council of State Governments. The committee decided to focus on only three of the six trends.

#1 TREND

Targeted Reform for Specific Populations

- Individuals with Criminal Records
 - Preliminary eligibility determination
 - List of disqualifying offenses
- Military Members, Veterans & their spouses
 - Interstate Compacts
 - True Reciprocity policies
 - Dedicated web resources
- Immigrants with work authorizations
 - COVID-19 temporary policies
 - Test translation
 - Recognizing foreign training
 - Modifying licensure requirements
 - Addressing gaps in English language

#2 TREND

Universal License Recognition

Report published in December 2021. Since 2018, 20 states implemented new or amended existing ULR policies. CSG conducted a survey of state licensing boards in AZ, CO, ID, IO, MI, MT, and PA on how ULR policies have changed licensing and the experiences and challenges of implementing these policies.

- Residency Required
- Substantially Equivalent
- Compacts Exempt

#3 TREND

Interstate licensure compacts

Interstate licensure compacts are legislatively enacted agreements among states allowing licensees to practice across state lines. Compacts provide pathways to multistate practice for practitioners utilizing Telepractice. This can alleviate practitioner shortages in high demand/rural areas.

- Currently 9 OLC (Occupational Licensing Compacts)
 - Nurse Licensure – 38 states
 - Psychology – 26 states

- Occupational Therapy – 9 states
- Medical Licensure – 35 states
- Emergency Medical Services – 22 states
- Counseling – 3 states
- Physical Therapy – 34 states
- Audiology & Speech Language Pathology – 19 states
- Advanced Practices Nurse – 2 states

OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED TO DATE

- Central online directory for all licensing boards
- Fair Chance Laws
- Define/remove good character language
- Establish and make public crimes that will disqualify from getting a license
- Establish an ongoing system for data collection
- Join new interstate compacts
- Universal License Recognition (ULR) components that are beneficial
- Listening sessions with boards; like those that were done in August of 2020.
- Centralized website directory for linking to state boards – Smarter not Harder
 - Who creates?
 - Who pays for the site?
 - Who maintains?
- Immigration issues – Job Service ND helps with many of these issues
 - Language barriers
 - Computer illiterate
 - College certifications to be licensed

BARRIERS IDENTIFIED TO DATE

- URL – license needs to be subsequently equivalenced to ND.
 - Boards had challenges getting this information from other states.
- What does ND's URL look like - build the case.
 - Federal level and additional layers
- What model are we striving to get to: What is our flavor?
- Don't create any delays for any instate applicants, priority for instate applicants first.
- Residency does not need to be an issue anymore with telehealth.

CHALLENGES with universal licensing recognition

- Some board administrators said it does have a positive impact
- Barriers to implementation, websites to accommodate Universal Recognition Licensing (URL) policies
- Lack of guidance/legislation
- Building and rebuilding systems to accommodate policy
- Fair chance policies – what paths to dive deeper into
 - Pre-qualification
 - Publishing disqualified convictions
 - Passing legislation to remove blanket bans from licensing rules
- Are other states resorting to legislation to get the process done or is it board driven?
- Working with board members to make better decisions.

- Boards to possibly testify with more engagement from the subcommittee
 - Federal change
 - Possible approach to ND Federal delegation

COMPACT & MILITARY UPDATE

Major Jay Sheldon

Major Jay Sheldon discussed an update to the information he shared at the January 21st meeting, discrepancies on Scorecards in the communities of Cavalier, Fargo, Grand Forks, and Fargo. Military families use these scorecards as strategic decisions when moving families. These cards report data on public education, licensure portability, data of geography, and additional information. ND is not getting the credit for what is being done, and therefore, he has been in communication with the owners of the sites, trying to ensure ND does get the credit.

ND is lacking mental and behavioral health counselors. Military health insurance coverage program is a problem, when military uses services off the air base, as the insurance provider network is considered out of network.

Regarding the Compact issue, a meeting with Psychology Board in Bismarck has been unsuccessful, but also working with the Department of Behavioral Health to set up a meeting.

REVIEW DRAFT SURVEY

Katie put together ten questions for the Licensing Board Survey. Member discussed the question and added more verbiage to the questions. The final survey will be sent to the members before it is sent through Survey Monkey.

UPDATED TIMELINE

May – Survey boards by email and draft recommendations.

June – Review survey results and finalize recommendations

June/July – Meet with boards (listening sessions and one on one meetings)

September – Add OLR recommendations to WDC report (or call special meetings in July to do this)

NEXT STEPS

- Katie will send edited DRAFT Survey out to the members.
- Next meeting is in one month, Friday before Memorial weekend. Sherri will move the Friday meeting date to accommodate the longer weekend for possible holiday plans.

ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned unanimously at 10:45 a.m.