COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF CERTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

BOARD MEETING

January 11, 2022

VIA WebEx

(OPEN SESSION)

MINUTES

Board Members

Present: Claire Santarelli, Chair | Commissioner’s Designee
Joanne Calista, Vice Chair | Community Health Worker Training

Organization Representative

Catherine Bourassa | Community-Based Community Health Worker Employer
Susan Dargon-Hart | Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers Representative

Sharon George | Community Health Worker 4
 Denise Lau, Secretary | Public Member

Hugo Santos | Community Health Worker 3

Board Members

Not Present: Sheila Och | Community Health Worker 2

Staff Present: Steven Joubert | Executive Director – Multi-Boards, BHPL
Karen Geoghegan | Assistant Executive Director - Multi-Boards, BHPL

Eleanor Montgomery | Office Support Specialist – Multi-Boards, BHPL

Mary Strachan | Board Counsel - Office of the General Counsel, DPH

1. Call to Order | Determination of Quorum:
Ms. Claire Santarelli, Board Chair, called the meeting of the Board of Certification of Community Health Workers to order at 12:37 P.M. and provided verbal notice of recording. A quorum was established with members present via WebEx via roll call as follows: Claire Santarelli: Present; Joanne Calista: Present; Susan Dargon-Hart: Present; Sharon George: Present; Denise Lau: Present; Catherine Bourassa: Present; Hugo Santos: Present. Absent: Sheila Och.
2. Conflict of Interest | Approval of Regular Session Agenda
Ms. Santarelli asked members to review the agenda.

DISCUSSION:
None.

ACTION:
Motion by Ms. Denise Lau to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Ms. Santarelli and unanimously approved by roll call vote as follows: Claire Santarelli: yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Sharon George: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Catherine Bourassa: yes; Hugo Santos: yes. Absent: Sheila Och. Recused: None. Abstained: None.

**Document**: January 11, 2022 Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2021

DISCUSSION:
Ms. Lau suggested that Board staff change the word “deferred” when referring to Abt Associate’s application for CEs as it would not be reviewed later.

ACTION:
Motion to approve the December 14, 2021, minutes as amended by Ms. Lau, seconded by Ms. Joanne Calista and passed unanimously by roll-call vote as follows: Claire Santarelli: yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Sharon George: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Catherine Bourassa: yes; Hugo Santos: yes. Absent: Sheila Och. Recused: None. Abstained: None.

**Document**: December 14, 2021, Minutes

1. Fluoride Varnish

DISCUSSION:
Ms. Santarelli explained that since the last discussion, she had brought this item to the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers. Her primary concern was ensuring that Community Health Workers would be compensated for applying the varnish. Ms. Susan Dargon-Hart explained that it would not work in the Community Health Center payment system. Health Centers do not receive payment for any activity outside of their direct scope. She stated that it would entitle the CHW to receive a higher hourly rate, but that they would not be able to receive the funds themselves. She stated that they could consider a tiered approach, where a CHW would move up the ranks as they gain more skills and take on more tasks.

*At 12:59 PM, Ms. Calista exited the WebEx.*

Ms. Strachan stated that she spoke with the Executive Director of the Board of Registration in Dentistry after the last discussion with the CHW Board to ask if applying fluoride varnish was considered the practice of dentistry. She further explained that it is complicated since Dentists are able to delegate the application of fluoride varnish, but that it *is* ultimately the practice of dentistry. There would need to be a dentist who oversaw this procedure. She recommended looking at the regulations for the Dentistry Board because other Boards state specifically in their regulations when the practitioner must practice under the supervision of a Physician. She also asked the Board if they wanted to invite a guest from the Board of Registration in Dentistry or the Office of Oral Health to attend and present at a Board meeting. This would allow the Board to get some different perspectives from the people who are knowledgeable about the procedure and the practice of dentistry.

Ms. Mercy Anampiu noted her concern that Community Health Workers could become overburdened with expectations. She explained that the Board should consider the scope of practice of a CHW rather than focus on dentistry as the questions will be the same if they are asked about other types of procedures. Ms. Gail Hirsch encouraged Board members to consider the scope of practice that is currently in the regulations, which outlines what a CHW does and states anything that requires a license is outside of the scope of practice. She stated that it could be helpful to hear Ms. Calista’s perspective as she was part of the Board at the time that they were drafting the regulations. Board members determined that they would move on in the agenda and come back to this conversation when Ms. Calista returned to the call.

ACTION:
None.

**Document**: None.

1. Training Program FAQs
Board staff incorporated the Board’s edits into the Training Program FAQs. Executive Director, Mr. Steven Joubert presented it to the Board for additional comment. He explained that there have been requests for this document and asked the Board to approve them so that they can go up the chain.

DISCUSSION:
Ms. Santarelli pointed to the waiver that permits training programs to be conducted online given the COVID-19 pandemic. She asked if the Board would need to review these again if the waiver were extended. Mr. Joubert explained that they would not as this is a simple administrative edit.

ACTION:
Motion to approve the edits and amendments on the CHW Training and Education Program FAQs by Ms. Santarelli, seconded by Ms. Lau and passed unanimously by roll-call vote as follows: Claire Santarelli: yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Sharon George: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Catherine Bourassa: yes; Hugo Santos: yes. Absent: Sheila Och. Recused: None.

**Document**: CHW Education and Training Program FAQs
2. Flex Session
	1. Announcements
		1. CY2022 Board Meeting Schedule
		Mr. Joubert presented the proposed meeting dates for 2022. He suggested that the Board meet quarterly rather than monthly, noting that the Board has had difficulty reaching quorum for their regularly scheduled meetings. In the event that the Board is not able to achieve quorum for a meeting, they would have the flexibility to reschedule a meeting in the interim months.

		DISCUSSION:
		Ms. Hirsch recalled that the Board determined that they would like to meet monthly until all things were functioning the way the statute intended. She feels that there are many pressing and time sensitive issues that would not be conducive to meeting quarterly. Ms. Lau echoed Ms. Hirsch’s statements and opined that the Board would need to meet at least every other month. Ms. Dargon-Hart expressed her agreement and explained that scheduled meetings are best for her schedule. She elaborated that there are methods for the Board to tighten up their meetings. Ms. Sharon George agreed that the Board could be more efficient in their discussions and stated that they should focus on that.

		Mr. Joubert asked Board Counsel, Ms. Mary Strachan for comment. She explained that the Board must meet four times a year at a minimum but that they can elect to meet more often. She agreed that the Board could be more efficient in their conversations so that they can reach a resolution more quickly. She explained that Boards each have their own working style, but that unless an item warrants a long discussion, Boards such as the Nursing Board and the Physician Assistant Board have a conversation for about 15-20 minutes per agenda item.

		*At 1:36 PM, Ms. Calista returned to the WebEx.*

		Ms. Lau asked if the Board should consider meeting monthly but not putting so much pressure on getting quorum every month. That way the Board has the option to meet monthly if they need to. Ms. Santarelli expressed a strong preference to meet monthly. She additionally announced that this would be Ms. Catherine Bourassa’s last meeting as she retired a year ago. Board members thanked her for her dedication to the Board. Ms. Calista expressed a preference for meeting monthly as well. Mr. Joubert stated that some Board members have expressed difficulty making monthly meetings. He additionally explained that as the Board grows, they will have more business to discuss.
		Ms. George explained that IT issues were quite cumbersome and sometimes lead to issues with not being prepared for the meetings. Ms. Dargon-Hart agreed and asked if there was an option to sign a waiver that would allow materials to be sent to personal emails. Ms. Strachan explained that all business must be sent to the state email as it would open up personal email to Public Records Requests. Ms. Santarelli presented two suggestions: 1) IT tends to be less busy at the end of the week and 2) Board members can set a calendar reminder for a little less than 90 days out knowing that their passwords will expire.
	2. Topics for Future Agenda
		1. Tiering
		2. Reciprocity
		3. Online vs In-person training
		4. Blanket Continuing Education Provider Application
3. Fluoride Varnish (Continued)
The Board continued their discussion on fluoride varnish now that Ms. Calista was back on the call. She explained that the Board set the scope of practice for CHWs to be intentionally broad to include many aspects of the role, but also kept the scope focused on the Ten Core Competencies. She opined that even if Board determines that this is in the scope of practice, they do not have to determine how it is implemented as that is for others to decide.

Ms. Santarelli asked Board members if they would like to invite a guest to speak more on this topic or if they felt comfortable with the information they had. Ms. Calista stated that her questions had been answered and asked Ms. Santarelli for her opinion. Ms. Santarelli explained that Dentists are able to delegate this task to sixteen different professions and that the procedure is quite simple and the intervention is low risk but high reward. Ms. Strachan explained that she could draft an advisory that notifies the CHW or their employer to act consistent with the regulations from the Board of Registration in Dentistry. Ms. Calista worried about the precedent that issuing an advisory would set as this is the first time the Board has considered whether or not a certain task falls into a CHW’s scope of practice. Ms. Santarelli recommended taking a vote about whether or not this falls into the scope of practice and revisit if the Board feels there is a need to issue a formal advisory.

ACTION:
Motion to determine that applying fluoride varnish is under the scope of practice by Ms. Calista, seconded by Ms. Lau and approved by roll-call vote as follows: Claire Santarelli: yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Sharon George: abstain; Denise Lau: yes; Catherine Bourassa: yes; Hugo Santos: yes. Absent: Sheila Och. Recused: None. Ms. George explained that she was not comfortable voting as given the information she has, she is not sure that this procedure falls under the scope of practice for CHWs.
4. Executive Session:
At 2:28 PM, Ms. Santarelli announced that the Board will meet in Executive Session as authorized pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(1) for the purposes of discussing the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against an individual.

	* 1. Specifically, the Board will consider approving prior executive session minutes in accordance with M.G.L. ch.30A, § 22(a) for previous executive sessions of the Board.
		2. Specifically, the Board will discuss complaints or charges brought against a Licensee or Licensees.

**The Board will not reconvene in public session subsequent to the closed session(s).**

Motion to enter into Executive Session by Ms. Calista, seconded by Ms. Lau and unanimously approved by roll-call vote as follows: Claire Santarelli: yes; Joanne Calista: yes; Susan Dargon-Hart: yes; Sharon George: yes; Denise Lau: yes; Catherine Bourassa: yes; Hugo Santos: yes. Absent: Sheila Och. Recused: None.

The next meeting of the Board of Certification of Community Health Workers is scheduled for Tuesday, February 8, 2022.

Respectfully submitted:

The Board of Certification of Community Health Workers.