



BoardBrief

December 2003



NC Social Work Certification and Licensure Board

Board Officers for 2003 – 2004

The Board selected new officers to begin one-year terms in July 2003. Dr. Jacalyn Claes, Ph.D., LCSW, was re-elected Chair. Vice Chair is Mrs. Bennett Cotten, LCSW, BCD, and Secretary/Treasurer is Mr. William Lamb, MSW, CMSW.

A Message to Supervisors of P-LCSWs

The role of the Supervisor for a Provisionally Licensed Clinical Social Worker is vital in the process of assuring high quality and ethical clinical practice for years to come. Most practitioners agree that the supervised experience after attaining an MSW degree is critical to skill development and professional identification. This period of intense learning is shaped primarily by the supervisor, who instructs, encourages, and reviews the clinical care of each case. Most clinical supervisors feel the weight of these responsibilities and approach the job with an acute appreciation for the complexities of the role.

Supervisors also serve the Board. They are responsible for seeing that the P-LCSW has work experience that is truly clinical in nature—clinical as defined in our law, G.S. 90-B. Each supervisor should review the job description and clinical case summary that are periodically submitted by the P-LCSW to the Board to insure that they accurately reflect the clinical tasks and work experiences. If a P-LCSW has contracted with a supervisor outside his or her agency or practice setting, that supervisor is as responsible for the work as if working within the agency. The agency must sanction and support the supervision. The supervisor should be knowledgeable about the organization's structure and should arrange for access to case records, as review of clinical documentation is an important supervisory function.

One of the distinguishing marks of the field of social work is its dedication to supervision as a practice tool. But after the Provisional period is completed, LCSWs are allowed by law to practice in any setting, even alone, without supervision. Will a supervisee be prepared to diagnose mental and emotional disorders and treat them competently and safely? If the PLCSW's clinical experience is limited in scope, does he or she demonstrate a keen awareness of the limits to safe practice? Is the P-LCSW knowledgeable about the training and supervision that would be necessary for competent practice in other clinical areas? Does the P-LCSW, like most advanced clinicians, view ongoing supervision as an important aid in practice? Transmitting the value of supervision serves the licensee, all future clients, and the field at large.

The Board and the supervisor are partners in identifying and addressing any problems that surface in the P-LCSW's practice and ethics. The supervisor is an extension of the Board. If a supervisor observes that a Provisional licensee is impaired in any way that may affect practice, has poor judgment in resolving ethical dilemmas, has problems with boundaries in the professional relationship, or has deficits in clinical knowledge or skills, this concern should be brought to the Board's attention. If the Board finds it necessary, it can require more supervised work experience to bring competency up to the minimum standard.

North Carolina's process for provisional licensing is challenging for social workers and consumes significant Board time and resources. The oversight that this process provides, however, is one way to support high quality and safe clinical practice in North Carolina. The entire endeavor relies on supervisors who grasp the importance of their role in preparing clinicians for practice. The Board is indebted to those who serve in this capacity and is planning ways to work more closely with supervisors.

Current Disciplinary Actions

Phyllis Starr Nolan: 6/30/00 Suspension (12/13/01—Board approval to return to LCSW practice under supervision)

Rebecca Merrill: 2/25/00 Censure (Voluntarily retired license effective 12/6/00)

Bruce Whealton, Jr.: 06/14/01 Revocation (Requires Board approval to return to practice)

Alan Konell: 10/22/01 Censure (License surrendered effective 4/1/02)

Peter Alan Ruiz: 4/19/02 Revocation for three years (License surrendered effective 7/1/02)

Karen M. Rosner: 11/14/02 License suspended

Kelly Ann Foss: 01/10/03 License suspended

Identity Crisis—NCSWCLB??? NASW-NC???

Do you call NASW-NC with questions about supervision for a clinical license? Why can't that office provide help in registering for the exam? Are you fed up with NCSWCLB for not sending you the monthly newsletter? And since you didn't get all of the Continuing Education required, can you drop membership and get part of your dues refunded? Frustrated? Some of you must be, from the number of calls placed to the wrong organization. It's understandable. Here's some help:

NCSWCLB stands for the NC Social Work Certification and Licensure Board, the Board that is publishing this news brief. It is a governmental board appointed by NC's Governor to regulate the social work profession for the benefit and protection of NC citizens. NASW-NC is the North Carolina Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. It is a voluntary professional organization that advocates for social workers in NC and the clients they serve. There are other important social work organizations representing social workers in our State, but fewer calls of confusion involve them.

NCSWCLB

- Regulates social workers
- Requires licenses for clinical social workers
- Certifies BSWs, MSWs, and SW Managers
- Disciplines social workers
- Establishes Rules and Regulations for practice
- Board established by NC law
- Office in Asheboro, NC

NASW-NC

- Advocates for social work profession
- Voluntary membership organization
- Publishes monthly newsletter
- Sponsors workshops and conferences
- Offers a job bank
- Lobbies for legislative changes
- Office in Raleigh, NC

Calling All Procrastinators

For all whose practice licenses or certifications will expire in 2004, please be alert to the many opportunities to get your continuing education hours now. Cramming in CE at the last minute creates a poor climate for learning and limits your choice of programs to meet individual practice needs.
