

AGENDA ITEM #24.A.2.



BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES AND HOUSING AGENCY • GOVERNOR EDMUND G. BROWN JR

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL NURSING & PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIANS
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DATE: August 1, 2016

TO: Board Members

FROM: 
Kameka Brown
Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Discussion and Possible Action to Seek Repeal of Business and Professions Code Sections 2873 [VN] and 4511(c) (3) [PT]. Qualification for Licensure Based on Equivalent Education and/or Work Experience

STATEMENT OF ISSUES

Pursuant to Business & Professions Code (BPC), Sections 2841.1 and 4501.1, the Board is mandated to protect California consumers by ensuring the education, licensure, and practice of vocational nurses (VN) and psychiatric technicians (PT).

Business and Professions Code, Sections 2866 and 4511 specify that applicants may qualify for VN and PT licensure based on the completion of a prescribed course of study in an approved program. Additionally, current statutes prescribe a route to licensure based on education and experience.

Existing regulations specify requirements for all applicants for VN and PT licensure. As specified therein, requirements are delineated for approved programs including curricular hour and content requirements for didactic and clinical instruction. Requirements are also specified for applicants seeking licensure based on the completion of equivalent work experience. Said regulations specify categories or content areas and amounts of work experience required to achieve licensure.

Nationally and statewide, significant changes have been identified in the incidence and classification of presenting illnesses, diseases, and disorders, escalating population growth, and scientific and technological advancements. Such changes necessitate an increasingly competent workforce to ensure protection of the consumer.

BACKGROUND AND SUBJECT REVIEW

Existing statutes provide that any person who possesses either the education or the experience, or any combination of both education and experience may be licensed as a VN or PT provided:

1. Such education and experience is equivalent to that acquired in an approved VN or PT program; and
2. The eligible candidate successfully demonstrates to the Board possession of the minimum level of competence required to practice safely upon entry into professional practice.

Possession of minimal competence is demonstrated by passing the licensure examination. The goal remains protection of the consumer.

A comparison analysis of candidates seeking licensure as program graduates and those seeking licensure based on the completion of equivalent education and experience reveal distinct differences.

Existing regulations prescribe minimal hour and content requirements completed by program graduates. Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technician Programs are required to include a minimum of 1,530 hours of formal instruction [Theory – 576; Clinical – 954]. Existing program curricula shall contain content presented in a sequence that results in students' progressive mastery of critical and complex content specific to the profession. Specific required content classifications and hours are listed in Attachments A and B.

Conversely, candidates seeking to qualify for VN licensure based on equivalent education and experience are required to complete the following:

- Paid work experience delivering inpatient bedside nursing care that includes a minimum of each of the following

Work Experience Classification	Required Amount
Medical/Surgical Nursing	48 Months
Maternity or Genitourinary Nursing	6 Weeks
Pediatric Nursing	6 Weeks
TOTAL	51 Months

- Pharmacology Amount Required: 54 Theory Hours

Candidates seeking to qualify for PT licensure based on equivalent education and experience are required to complete the following:

- 576 Hours of Theory. That theory must include no less than 54 theory hours of Pharmacology; and
- 954 hours of supervised clinical experience. Any or all of the supervised clinical experience may be satisfied by paid inpatient bedside work experience.

The goal is the preparation of licensees able to administer safe and competent care to today's client population upon entry into professional practice. As a result, VN and PT licensees must be prepared to provide competent care for clients with increasingly

acute and complex illnesses, diseases, and disorders. Similarly, client care must be administered safely and competently in a variety of health care settings.

Significant changes identified in the presenting symptomatology, incidence and classifications of illnesses, diseases, and disorders, population growth, and scientific and technological advancements necessitate an increasingly competent healthcare workforce.

DCA Applicant Tracking System Records (ATS) confirm a 91.75% increase in the number of equivalency applications submitted from 2010 through 2015 (see Attachment C). Increasingly, the Board has identified significant falsification and misrepresentation in documents submitted by and for applicants seeking eligibility based on work experience and a completed Pharmacology course. Equally of concern is the increase in both criminal and administrative fraud identified. As a result, the Board is forced to incur increasing investigative costs required for Division of Investigation services and prosecutorial costs related to services provided by the Office of the Attorney General.

A survey of Member Boards confirmed that less than five (5) states accept eligibility for licensure based on the completion of equivalent education and experience. Most require graduation from an approved program.

Further, of the total candidate population passing the VN licensure examination (NCLEX/PN®) or PT licensure examination (CAPTLE), approximately 80% are program graduates; the remaining 20% are equivalency candidates. As such, only 20% of the total candidates passing VN or PT licensure examinations are able to demonstrate possession of the minimum level of competence required for the delivery of safe and competent care to today's clients in current healthcare settings upon entry into professional practice.

Recommendation:

Seek Legislation to Repeal Business and Professions Code Sections 2873 [VN] and 4511(c) (3) [PT]. Qualification for Licensure Based on Equivalent Education and/or Work Experience

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Comparison Analysis of Educational Requirements for VN Licensure.
- Attachment B: Comparison Analysis of Educational Requirements for PT Licensure.
- Attachment C: Equivalency Applications Received 2010 – 2015.

Agenda Item # 24.A.2., Attachment A

Comparison Analysis Of Education Required for Vocational Nurse Licensure

Graduates of Approved Programs			Equivalency Candidates		
Content	Hour Requirement		Content	Hour Requirement	
	Theory	Clinical		Theory	Clinical
Pharmacology	54		Pharmacology	54	
Anatomy & Physiology					
Nutrition					
Normal Growth & Development					
Nursing Fundamentals					
Nursing Process					
Communication (Verbal and Written)					
Patient Education					
Medical/Surgical Nursing					
Communicable Diseases					
Gerontological Nursing					
Rehabilitation Nursing					
Maternity Nursing					
Pediatric Nursing					
Leadership					
Supervision					
Ethics & Unethical Conduct					
Critical Thinking					
Culturally Congruent Care					
End – of - Life Care					
REQUIRED TOTAL	576	954		54	0

Agenda Item #24.A.2., Attachment B

Comparison Analysis Of Education Required for Psychiatric Technician Licensure

Graduates of Approved Programs			Equivalency Candidates		
Content	Hour Requirement		Content	Hour Requirement	
	Theory	Clinical		Theory	Clinical
Pharmacology	54		Pharmacology	54	
Anatomy & Physiology			Other Education	522	
Nutrition					
Psychology					
Normal Growth & Development					
Nursing Process					
Communication (Verbal and Written)					
Nursing Science	126	270			
a. Nursing Fundamentals					
b. Medical/Surgical Nursing					
c. Communicable Diseases					
d. Gerontological Nursing					
Developmental Disabilities	108	270			
Mental Disorders	108	270			
Leadership					
Supervision					
Ethics & Unethical Conduct					
Critical Thinking					
Culturally Congruent Care					
End – of - Life Care					
REQUIRED TOTAL	576	954		576	0

Agenda Item #24.A.2., Attachment C

Equivalency Applications

2010 – 2015

