OPTOMETRY SERVICE
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES
January 15, 2021
3 p.m. Eastern Time

1. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
   a. http://vaww.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/Open_VA_Optometrist_Positions.asp or https://www.usajobs.gov/ or https://www.vacareers.va.gov/
   b. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Open-Optometry-Positions.xlsx

2. **Employee Resources** (https://vaww.va.gov/landing_employee.htm):
   a. VA Core Values and Characteristics (I CARE) http://www.va.gov/ICARE/index.asp
   b. Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/pwd.aspx and ODI Training Opportunities https://www.diversity.va.gov/training/default.aspx
   c. Office of Resolution Management (ORM) – http://vaww.va.gov/orm/ (three related links: EEO Complaint Processing http://vaww.va.gov/ORM/EEOcomplaint.asp ; Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) http://www.va.gov/adr/ + VA Directive 5978; and Resolution Support Center http://www.va.gov/orm/RSC.asp)
   d. Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act https://vaww.va.gov/OHRM/EmployeeRelations/accountability/; EEO, Diversity and Inclusion, No FEAR, and Whistleblower Rights and Protection Policy Statement (PDF); and https://osc.gov/
   e. VHA Code of Integrity https://www.va.gov/HEALTHCAREEXCELLENCE/docs/VHA-Code-of-Integrity-March-2019-FINAL.pdf
   f. Office of General Counsel (OGC) Government Ethics Website https://vaww.ogc.vaco.portal.va.gov/law/ethics/SitePages/Home.aspx
   g. VA Employee Engagement https://vaww.va.gov/ODI/EmployeeEngagement/ and https://vaww.vashare.vha.va.gov/sites/NCOD/EmployeeEngagementCouncil/SitePages/Employee-Engagement-Toolkit.aspx
   h. All Employee Survey (AES) Dashboard https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/AESDashboard/SitePages/Dashboard-Data-Selection.aspx
   i. VA Talent Management System (TMS) Resources https://www.va.gov/HREC/TMS/ and TMS Training Opportunities https://www.tms.va.gov/SecureAuth35/

3. **New Policies and Other Important Announcements:**
   a. Reminder of availability of our intranet site that contains a wealth of helpful guidance/information: https://vaww.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/index.asp
   b. FAQs – new link on Optometry's intranet website http://vaww.va.gov/OPTOMETRY/FAQs_Optometry_FINAL_10-20-2020.docx
   c. Revised COVID-19 Vaccination Leave Guidance
      i. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/COVID-VACCINATION-LEAVE-GUIDANCE.docx

d. USH Memo 10-2021-03, [Providing Testing and Vaccination to Family Caregivers in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers](#)
   i. Facilities may provide COVID-19 testing and vaccines to Primary and Secondary Family Caregivers to support the health and safety of Veterans in the care of a PCAFC caregiver, in balance with site-specific resources, needs, vaccine availability, hesitancy to accept the vaccine, and status of the pandemic locally. Facilities may schedule Family Caregivers to receive testing and vaccines in a coordinated manner with the Veterans for whom they provide care.
   ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/USH-Memo-10-2021-03-Providing-Testing-and-Vaccines-to-Family-Caregivers...1-12-21.pdf
e. VHA Directive 1065, [Productivity and Staffing Guidance for Specialty Provider Group Practice](#)
   i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive establishes national policy for monitoring and assessing specialty provider group practice productivity and associated staffing.
   ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Directive-1065-Productivity-and-Staffing-Guidance-for-Specialty-Provider-Group-Practice-12-22-20.pdf
f. VHA Directive 1030, [VHA Integrity and Compliance Program](#)
   i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive provides an enterprise-wide consistent and mandatory framework for integrity and compliance and defines the roles and responsibilities of VHA staff in implementing and maintaining an effective integrity and compliance program.
   ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Directive-1030-VHA-Integrity-and-Compliance-Prog-12-29-20.pdf
g. VHA Directive 1761, [Supply Chain Management Operations](#)
   i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive provides policy, mandatory standards, and operational requirements for implementing an effective VHA Supply Chain Management (SCM) program at medical facilities within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
   ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Directive-1761-Supply-Chain-Mgmt-Operations-12-30-20.pdf
h. VHA Directive 1177, [Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation](#)
   i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive maintains policy to optimize patient safety within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system. This ensures that VHA has emergency response capability to manage cardiac arrests on VHA property. This includes access to appropriate resuscitation equipment and appropriately trained responders.
   ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Directive-1177-CPR-1-4-21.pdf
i. VHA Handbook 1004.01(4), [Informed Consent for Clinical Treatments and Procedures](#)
   i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook clarifies and updates VHA national policy on informed consent. It discusses the goals, scope, and key concepts related to patients' informed consent for clinical treatments and procedures and the related responsibilities of VHA staff (see VHA Handbook 1200.5(1) and

Handbook 1058.03 for VHA policy on informed consent for research.). **The provisions of this VHA Handbook take effect August 17, 2009.**

  ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Handbook-1004.014-Informed-Consent-for-Clinical-Treatments-and-Procedures-1-4-21.pdf

 j. VHA Handbook 1108.05(2), Outpatient Pharmacy Services

  i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook provides specific direction and procedures related to outpatient dispensing, outpatient clinical activities, automation, operational efficiencies, hand hygiene, and the appropriate handling and dispensing of drugs and supplies to outpatients.

  ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Handbook-1108.05-Outpatient-Pharmacy-Svcs-2-6-20.pdf

 k. VHA Directive 1401, Billing for Services Provided by Supervising Practitioners and Physician Residents

  i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) directive establishes policy on the appropriate billing guidance for VHA revenue staff, located at each Consolidated Patient Account Center (CPAC), when billing third party payors for supervising practitioners and resident physicians.

  ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/VHA-Directive-1401-Billing-for-Services-Provided-by-Supervising-Practitioners-and-Physician-Residents-1-5-21.pdf

 l. Guidance on Implementing Section 1111 of the FY21 NDAA (2020 Leave restoration information)

  i. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Attachment-Guidance-on-Implementing-Section-1111-of-the-FY21-NDAA.pdf

 m. OCHCO Bulletin – Higher AL Carryover Limit Authorized under the FY21 NDAA

  i. This OCHCO Bulletin provides guidance to Human Resources (HR) offices on the provision affecting leave benefits under section 1111 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2021 (H.R. 6395), enacted on January 1, 2021.

  ii. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/OCHCO-Bulletin-Higher-Annual-Leave-Carryover-Limit-Authorized-under-the-National-Defense-Authorization-Act-for-Fiscal-Year-2021.pdf

 n. OAA Guidance for Protected Time for Education Staff

  i. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Office-of-Academic-Affiliations-Guidance-for-Protected-Time-for-Education-Staff-11-2020.pdf

4. Optometry Service Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Joy – unavailable for comment.

5. Optometric Education Programs – Dr. Slagle

 a. Dr. Slagle comment. The OAA has published guidance for Protected Time for Education Staff.

  i. https://www.navao.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Office-of-Academic-Affiliations-Guidance-for-Protected-Time-for-Education-Staff-11-2020.pdf

b. There is an updated telehealth algorithm for HPTs which authorize health professions trainees to deliver health care under supervision across state lines.

c. The ACOE is inviting comments on proposed additions to "examples of evidence" associated with Optometric Residency Standards 2.1 and 2.4. These are the standards that specify a written curriculum and the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to attain the advanced competencies in the program's mission, goals, and objectives. They are now proposing a list of advanced copies may be submitted as examples of evidence.

    i. ***A program may choose to provide some, all, or none of these examples as long as it provides evidence to demonstrate compliance.***

    ii. Comments should be submitted by Feb 15th to accredit@aoa.org.

d. VHA Directive 1401 was published this month. The statement on the previous policy excluding optometry from using the -gr modifier was removed. Care at VA can be provided without regard to CMS Path (physicians at teaching hospitals) guidelines.

6. COPE Approved EES Coursework – Dr. Jensen

a. Dr. Jensen comment. Please remember to complete the posttest and survey for the January 8th webinar on Thyroid Eye Disease. The next webinar is scheduled for February 12th from 3:30-4:30pm EST. Dr. Cari Nealon's topic will be Giant Cell Arteritis. The registration information should be emailed out in the next 1-2 weeks. Attached to the registration email will be an updated list of all the available TMS COPE courses, as well as upcoming live webinars.

7. Electronic Medical Records/Information Technology Issues - Dr. Ballinger

a. Dr. Ballinger reports that things are moving forward with the Cerner eye care templates development and the committee is working on facilitating smoother transitions to the new EMR as new stations come online. Dr. Gosnell will be spearheading this effort. Additionally, the committee is working on updating the coding and billing modules which will include the updates for 2021.

8. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/Trout/White – nothing new to report currently.

a. **One Source Document Site:** http://onesourcedocs.com/member/index.html

9. Eye Telehealth Screening Program – Drs. Elcyzyn/Morris

a. Dr. Elcyzyn comment. They are continuing the expansion of the telehealth screening program.

10. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker – nothing new to report at this time.

11. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Rice/Mandese – nothing new to report at this time.

12. Low Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Chan-O'Connell/Whitman – nothing new to report at this time.

13. Optometry Quality Improvement - Drs. White/Horn – nothing new to report at this time.

14. Direct Scheduling/Access/VA Systems Redesign - Drs. Cantrell/Varanelli – nothing new to report at this time.

15. VA Optometric Research & Development – Dr. Joy – unavailable for comment. **VA HSR&D Centers of Innovation (COINs) and Resource Centers:** http://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/centers/

16. VHA Optometry Service Websites – Dr. G. Singh
    a. Dr. Singh comment. He is currently working on the most recent updates for the website.

17. VA Optometry Service Directory - Drs. Egusa/Lim/D. Wong – unavailable for comment.

18. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory – Drs. Wang/Gilbertson – unavailable for comment.

19. AFOS Report - Dr. Elkins
    a. Dr. Elkins comment. They are gearing up for their membership drive and encourage all to renew their membership for 2021. Please log on the new AFOS website at AFOS2020.org for more information and to update their current directory.

20. NAVAO Report - Drs. Mercado/McGinty-Tauren
    a. Dr. Mercado comment. He wanted to thank those who have already renewed their membership to NAVAO and invite those who are not currently members to consider joining. Please visit the NAVAO.org website for more information. If anyone has any questions or would like more information about the organization and its benefits, please contact us or email info@NAVAO.org.
    b. There is currently 8 hours of CE available on the NAVAO website which is free for all members.