

Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners  
Respiratory Care Advisory Committee  
Virtual Meeting  
June 12, 2023

RCAC Members Present: Dr. Ugo Ezema  
Sheila Guidry  
Elizabeth Hamilton  
Diana Merendino  
Michael Nolan  
Raymond Pisani  
Brett Stafford

LSBME attendees: Vincent Culotta, Executive Director  
Jacintha Duthu, Executive Staff Officer  
Phyllis Johnson, Allied Health Licensing Analyst Supervisor  
Priscilla Bartholomew, Respiratory Therapy Licensing Analyst  
Patricia Wilton, Executive Counsel  
Tracy Mauro, IT

Meeting Called to order and Live Streaming began at 9:09 am 6-12-2023

Diana Merendino – roll call – quorum established.

Dr. Van had request for new item (dual license) to be added to new business – Diana Merendino made motion, Dr. Ezema seconded; all present voted yes.

Raymond Pisani called for public comment at this time – no public comment.

Approval of minutes from March 13, 2023 ; Sheila Guidry motion to approve, Elizabeth Hamilton seconded; no discussion; all voting members in attendance approved.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

**Old Business:**

**Rules and Regulations Revisions:** Sheila Guidry and Diana Merendino made request to possibly meet in person for the review and possible revisions of the Rules and Regulations that were revised in 2017. Sheila suggested meeting a Sunday thru Monday. Beth suggested meeting at the Board Office. Copies of the last revisions need to be distributed to board members and a copy to Dr. Van. Doodle poll to be sent out to members for possible dates to meet. Sheila Guidry gave Dr. Ugo a brief history on the revisions of the Rules and Regs over the last several years.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

**Board Opinions Follow Up:** Ms. Wilton stated that all letters with RCAC recommendations were sent out from the last meeting.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

**RCAC Committee Members Replacements:** Raymond Pisani spoke with Boards and Commissions; The sessions has just ended and the individual apologized for the delay in getting more appointments filled, but stated by the next meeting there will be other appointments.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

**Other:**

**Survey for Licensure Process:** A survey for the licensure process is being reviewed; Dr. Van reported that there are changing coming in the background checks – the State Police are changing their system; there will be 18 offices around the state that will allow for the electronic screen. The LSBME will send information with a 5 digit code to applicant and they will pay the fees there for the electronic prints. These will then be sent off to the FBI. This will assist in increasing the accessibility for electronic prints which are currently only available in Baton Rouge.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

**New Business:**

**Reports from Phyllis Johnson / Priscilla Bartholomew:** No report from licensing analysts.

**Apprenticeship CoARC Standard:** One of the RT schools in the state received information from a acute care facility about establishing an apprenticeship program. The question presented is to what extent can the students of an RT program be utilized? The facility is wanting to use this as an recruitment process for graduates in the program. Raymond Pisani stated that we need to research other apprenticeship programs. Diana Merendino gave a brief overview of what was done from April thru August of 2020 during COVID. Raymond Pisani stated we needed to do our homework: (1) is this a student position, (2) what duties can this individual perform without a license. Dr. Ugo stated that this type of position would possibly be beneficial to the smaller facilities. RCAC wanted to contact the PD of the program approached for more information, Diana Merendino suggested looking at CoARC standard 5.09. Mike Nolan reiterated that we must do our homework – according to our Licensure Practice Act and CoARC standards students cannot get paid for clinical training. Raymond Pisani and Sheila Guidry will approach Dr. Tom Smalling at Summer Forum.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

Scheduled RCAC meetings : September 18<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>.

Dual License / CEU hours: A licensee would like to be able to use any CEUs obtained for one license be acceptable for the other license, Example: individual holds RT and OT licenses. Diana Merendino stated she holds two licenses (PT and RT) and the CEUs for each should be kept separately. Dr. Van will communicate back with the individual.

Executive Session: Elizabeth Hamilton made the motion to move into Executive Session; Sheila Guidry second – all present voted yes:

Upon return from Executive Session:

Diana Merendino made the motion to grant an unrestricted license to individual requesting a license after passing the RRT exam. Brett Stafford second – all present voted yes.

Diana Merendino made the recommendation that the LSBME send written correspondence to the legal firm Epstein, Becker and Green, stating that in keeping with our Rules and Regulations, all individuals performing telehealth and prescribing therapeutic treatment for individuals in Louisiana, need a Louisiana License to practice. Elizabeth Hamilton second – all present voted yes.

Raymond Pisani solicited public comment – no public comment.

Diana Merendino made a motion to adjourn; Sheila Guidry second – all present voted yes.  
Meeting Adjourned at 10:28am.