



2010 ANNUAL REPORT

2010 MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Lorna Dittmar
Interior
Public member

Bruce Hallsor
Vancouver Island
Public member

Susan Hogman, RSW
Lower Mainland
Private practice

Elizabeth (Liz) Jones, RSW
Lower Mainland
Faculty member,
University of British Columbia
School of Social Work

Geraldine Manson
Vancouver Island
Public member

Gary Mavis, RSW
Lower Mainland
Executive Director
Federation of Aboriginal Foster
Parents

Kathryn McCannell, RCSW
Vancouver Island
Private practice

Susan Noakes, RSW
Vancouver Island
Social Worker, The Law Centre

Bruce Northey, RSW
Interior
Faculty member, College of
New Caledonia

Glen Schmidt, RCSW
Interior
Faculty member, University of
Northern British Columbia

Heather Stilwell
Lower Mainland
Public member

Chi Ying Wong, RCSW
Lower Mainland
Social Worker, Richmond
Mental Health Team

Executive

Elizabeth (Liz) Jones, RSW (Chair); Susan Hogman, RSW (Vice-Chair); Gary Mavis, RSW (Treasurer)

Staff

Susan Irwin, RSW, Registrar; Sheila Begg, RSW, Director, Registration; Nicole Abram, Registration Coordinator; Helena Quo Vadis Mex and Kirsten Dowd, Office Coordinator

Practice Consultant

Bonnie White, RSW

YEAR IN REVIEW

Registration of Social Workers

The core activity of registering qualified social workers, renewing registrations annually, and maintaining an accurate register continued to be the primary focus of our work at the College. The number of registered social workers has increased every year and is now approximately 2500. Some challenges in the renewal process at the beginning of the year were addressed and an efficient new system has now been established. This has been assisted by a reorganization of the office as a result of creating an additional staff position.

The purchase and implementation of a new database was a significant achievement this year. This was completed within the timelines and the budget which had been established. A major impact for registrants was the availability of an on-line system for registration renewal and updating information.

Public Inquiries and Complaints

The other major activity of the College in protecting the public is to respond to inquiries from the public regarding standards of social workers and to investigate complaints received about the conduct of registrants. As the number and complexity of complaints has increased, there has been a corresponding increase in the workload of both staff and committee members.

Quality Assurance and Standards of Practice

As a final step in the transition from the Board of Registration for Social Workers to the BC College of Social Workers, the review and revision of the Standards of Practice, which had begun in 2009, was completed. This document was redesigned, printed and distributed to all registrants.

The Board re-considered the issue of continuing competence requirements for registrants and adopted the principle of establishing mandatory continuing competence requirements. The Quality Assurance Committee has been requested to develop a framework to achieve this goal.

Professional staff continued to provide practice consultation to social workers upon request.

Governance and Board Supports

With seven new members on a twelve-member Board, the Board focused on orientation and becoming familiar with their roles and work as regulators. There were significant changes in Committee membership, but by the end of the year Committees had developed cohesion, clarity, and goals for their ongoing work.

The governance policy manual was finalized and approved in 2010. It is expected that this framework will continue to provide ongoing support for the functioning of the College in the future.

Election and Annual Meeting

The second election of social workers to the Board was held this year. The ongoing arrangement of electing four of eight positions each year, for two year terms, was established in 2010. Three incumbents were re-elected with one new social worker joining the Board. One position for a public member remained vacant.

The Annual General Meeting was scheduled in conjunction with the BCASW conference. A reception preceded the business meeting which was followed by a panel discussion between BCCSW Chair, Liz Jones, and BCASW President, Pam Miller. There was a notable increase in attendance at this meeting.

Communications

The College Conversation has now been published 5 times in the new format. Regular columns have been created to report ongoing items and increased space is used to include articles on substantive practice issues.

An "E-Bulletin" format was developed to communicate specific notices, reminders, and information to registrants via email.

The new website was also completed and uploaded by the end of the summer. This completed our transition to our "new look" for the College with logo and style changes as well as re-organized and updated information. This site includes the capacity for members to log in, change information and complete the renewal process.

Social Workers Act and Bylaws

The Board made amendments to several sections of the bylaws in 2010. An amendment was made to the scope of practice for clinical registration to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the practice of full registration. Other amendments made reference to functions performed by the registration committee and the registrar consistent with requirements provided in the Act and a further amendment established consistent timelines for notices for the election and the annual meeting. The clinical scope amendment was approved by the Minister of Children & Family Development, as required.

The College participated in consultations established by MCFD to develop a plan to eliminate the exemption under the Social Workers Regulation for social workers employed by health authorities. This project will continue into the new year.

Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators

BC was an active participant in the establishment of the CCSWR as a national forum for regulatory issues common to all provinces. Considerable work was undertaken in 2010 on the first major project of developing a national social work competency profile. Funding was approved by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada for this project and, following an extensive search, a consultant was engaged and the project framework developed. This will take another year to complete.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive/Financial Committee:

Members: Liz Jones, (Chair), Gary Mavis, Susan Hogman

Staff: Susan Irwin

The Executive Committee met regularly between Board Meetings to address ongoing governance issues of oversight and working with the Registrar to implement the directions set by the Board. As we moved into the second year of the College, our focus was to ensure that the changes in infrastructure and additional positions in the office are supporting the work of the College, that the Committees have been meeting their required outcomes, and that the Board has been involved in important decisions affecting the College.

Liz Jones, RSW

Registration Committee:

Members: Susan Hogman (Chair), Bruce Northey, Glen Schmidt, Susara Joubert, Susan Waldron

Staff: Sheila Begg

The Registration Committee has two principle functions: 1) to review applications for registration which the Registrar has denied and 2) to monitor existing policy and recommend changes or additions to policy for the Board to consider.

Review of Applications: In 2010, the Committee reviewed applications from 5 individuals. Registration was denied to three of these applicants on the basis of not meeting all the requirements for registration. The other two applications were from registrants who applied for clinical registration but requested exemption from writing the clinical exam based on their inclusion in a clinical registry in another jurisdiction. The Committee denied these requests as there is no provision for exemptions of this requirement in the BCCSW bylaws.

Review Policy: The following issues were considered:

- A proposal to establish a Psychosocial Oncology Specialist certificate.
Result: The proposal was denied as there are not resources or tools to develop criteria and assessment procedures for specialty areas.
- Registration of applicants residing outside Canada.
Result: There are no residency requirements in the *Social Workers Act* and the College will continue to register individuals who do not reside in BC.
- Cross-Jurisdictional Online Counselling.
Result: As few problems have been identified, no additional standards or policy were recommended
- Clinical Supervision Requirements. Result: No changes were proposed
- Entrance to Practice Exam.
Result: The Board accepted the Committee's proposal to put implementation of the exam on hold for further review January 2012.

Susan Hogman RSW

Quality Assurance Committee

Members: Chi Ying Wong (Chair), Glen Schmidt, Bruce Northey, Susan Noakes, Andrea Harstone, Lorna Dittmar.

Staff: Bonnie White

In 2010 the Quality Assurance Committee focused on two major issues.

The first was a review of the scope of practice for a Registered Social Worker and a Registered Clinical Social Worker in relation to providing a DSM diagnosis. After reviewing the relevant issues, the committee recommended a change in Bylaws 42(1) (b) about the scope of practice of RCSWs. The Board adopted this recommendation and this Bylaw change was approved by the Minister for Children and Family Development, as required before coming into force. The amendment can be found on <http://www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca/documents/Bylawamendmentswebnotice.pdf>

The second and continuous issue addressed by the QAC is to respond to the Board's request of developing a framework for mandatory continuing competence requirements for all registered social workers according to section 7(3) (d) in the *Social Workers Act*. The QAC has identified the key elements of the framework and will involve our registrants in the process.

Chi Ying Wong RCSW

Inquiry Committee

Members: Kathryn McCannell (Chair), Janice Murphy, Jim Campbell, Susan Noakes, Geraldine Manson

Staff: Susan Irwin; Legal counsel: Gerald Fahey

The Inquiry Committee performs a key regulatory function for the College – reviewing complaints about registered social workers. Operating under specific authority of the *Social Workers Act*, this Committee oversees the investigation of each complaint and decides whether further action is necessary. Once an investigation is completed, the Committee may decide to take no further action, propose a complaint resolution agreement in which the social worker may make an undertaking or agree to supervision or other monitoring, or issue a citation for a full hearing of the Disciplinary Committee.

During the year the Committee held 12 meetings, averaging four hours each. This required preparation as well as a thorough discussion of issues in each file. At the beginning of the year there were 12 open files. Eleven (11) new complaints were received during the year. The outcome of the 23 files considered during the year is as follows:

- 3 were dismissed;
- 3 citations were issued - all resulted in consent orders;
- 6 complaint resolution agreements were negotiated;
- 4 previous agreements were monitored and/or completed
- 7 complaints were still under investigation

At the end of the year there were 7 open investigation files and 6 ongoing agreements being monitored.

An interesting note is that there has been an increase in complaints from employers as a result of new reporting requirements under the new Act. This was also the largest number of citations for discipline hearings issued in one year. The work of this statutory Committee has continued to increase.

The Inquiry Committee also developed policy guidelines for public disclosure of information regarding complaints. As several complaints related to a similar practice area - practice with children in the context of custody and divorce - an article providing guidance on key issues was developed for the newsletter.

Kathryn McCannell RCSW

Registration Appeals Committee:

Members: Bruce Hallsor (Chair), Gary Mavis, Chi Ying Wong, Susan Noakes, Geraldine Manson

The Registration Appeals Committee conducted two reviews of applications for registration which had not been approved by the Registrar or the Registration Committee. In the first case the Registration Appeals Committee sent the matter back to the Registration Committee for reconsideration with directions. Upon reconsideration, the Registration Committee again denied the application as did the Registration Appeals Committee. In the second case a panel of the Registration Appeals Committee conducted a review of an appeal by written submissions and a review of documents. The Registration Appeals Committee upheld the decision of the Registration Committee in that case.

Bruce Hallsor

Discipline Committee:

Members: Bruce Hallsor (Chair), Gary Mavis, Chi Ying Wong, Lorna Dittmar, Bruce Northey

In 2010 there were two Discipline Committee hearings scheduled. However, neither hearing convened as both matters settled just prior to the hearings. Consent Orders were signed by the respondents. A third matter was also referred to Discipline, but a Consent Order was reached before the hearing was scheduled.

Bruce Hallsor

REGISTRANT REPORT

At December 31, 2010 there were 2,462 Registered Social Workers:

- Registered – Full 2194
- Registered – Clinical 121
- Registered – Non-Practising 147

Comparable figures for previous years are shown in the following table.

| Year: # of
RSWs |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1978: 1,079 | 1985: 1,111 | 1992: 1,237 | 1999: 1,277 | 2006: 1,938 |
| 1979: 1,167 | 1986: 1,084 | 1993: 1,242 | 2000: 1,304 | 2007: 2,085 |
| 1980: 1,208 | 1987: 1,107 | 1994: 1,238 | 2001: 1,361 | 2008: 2,217 |
| 1981: 1,255 | 1988: 1,125 | 1995: 1,202 | 2002: 1,383 | 2009: 2,358 |
| 1982: 1,238 | 1989: 1,134 | 1996: 1,203 | 2003: 1,521 | 2010: 2,462 |
| 1983: 1,209 | 1990: 1,199 | 1997: 1,257 | 2004: 1,583 | |
| 1984: 1,176 | 1991: 1,244 | 1998: 1,270 | 2005: 1,732 | |