

College Conversation

The Newsletter of the British Columbia College of Social Workers

Moving Ahead

Your elected board's first year

Elizabeth (Liz) Jones, RSW

Chair, British Columbia College of Social Workers



I wrote my first report in the March issue of *College Conversation* as the College's new Board was constituting itself and realizing all that was ahead of it. This second report gives me an opportunity to reflect on the Board's progress to date and to report to you, our registrants, of our activities. I hope you sense the energy of the staff and Board as you read this issue – we have been busy!

Our priorities for the first year were twofold. First, to build capacity in the College's office by adding resources that would allow us to serve registrants and the public in a more efficient and effective way. Our Registrar, Susan Irwin, covers these changes in her report so I will not repeat details here other than to highlight that we now have two full-time office administrative staff, an updated website, and a new database that enables online renewals among many other features.

Second, we are establishing and expanding our role to protect the public by developing the Board's committee structure and putting into practice the legislation and bylaws under which the College operates. We now

have five operating committees as authorized by the *Social Workers Act*: Registration, Registration Appeals, Inquiry, Discipline, and Quality Assurance. Each has a Chair from the College's Board and several have registrants as members as well as other Board members. To support our policy governance structure, we also have an Executive Committee (which includes the personnel function) and Finance Committee.

The Registration, Inquiry, and Quality Assurance Committees in particular have been active in dealing with various issues, including identifying sections in our Bylaws that need

"tweaking" in order to support the effective work of the Board. Bylaw changes require ministerial approval, so

(Continues on page 3.)

It is only through the elimination of these exempt social work positions that the College will have full mandatory registration of all social workers in the province.

Are You Still Using Your Old Registration Number?

The six-digit registration numbers (e.g. 69-2035) used in the past by long-standing registrants are no longer valid. All registrants should be using the newer registration numbers (e.g. 03461 or 3461) that are also the numbers available to the public on the online registry. Those needing an updated Certificate of Registration should contact Nicole Abram, the College's Registration Coordinator - registration@bccsw.ca or 604.737.4916.

For more news about the improvements to the online registry, go to page 4.

03461 or 3461?

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Holiday Closing

The office will close on December 24, 2010 and reopen on January 3, 2011.



The College's New Capabilities and Ongoing Improvements

Susan Irwin, RSW

Registrar, British Columbia College of Social Workers

With the governance, legal and organizational aspects of our transition to the BC College of Social Workers now implemented, my focus during the last six months has been on infrastructure issues.

First, there have been staff changes that have involved creating a second administrative support position and reorganizing job responsibilities. Nicole Abram is our Registration Coordinator with responsibilities for managing the database as well as application documents. She is able to assist applicants with the process and answer general questions about registration. Helena Quo Vadis Mex set up the new Office Coordinator position on a temporary basis and has now left to continue her travels. Kirsten Dowd has replaced Helena and is responsible for reception, providing general information, organizing meetings, managing the records, and coordinating communications. Kirsten and Nicole back each other up and are the friendly voices you hear when you call the office. It's a pleasure to have them as part of our expanded team.

A second important change is the implementation of a new secure database system allowing registrants online access to their individual files. Most importantly, you will now be able to renew your registration for 2011 online (see page 4). Included in this mailing is detailed information about how you can access the College's new online renewal system using your personal access code.

There will be immediate benefits if you renew online: first and foremost, you will receive instant confirmation by e-mail that your renewal has been processed so you will be able to avoid last-minute phone calls and faxes to the office.

Over time you will be able to easily update your workplace information or change your mailing address online. In the future we may use this system to record continuing competence activities that may be required. **We assure you that we place the utmost importance on confidentiality of information and have established a secure system to protect personal and financial information.** We will, of course, continue to accommodate all registrants who prefer to renew their registration by mail or fax.

The staff have worked hard over the summer to implement this new system and there will continue to be revisions in the coming weeks and months as we fine-tune the online registry. We anticipate that much support will be necessary as we move forward and encourage everyone to use this service. We hope to avoid the difficulties of last year and definitely anticipate greater efficiency with this year's renewal process.

We have also revamped the College's website (www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca) with a new look, easier navigation, and some reorganization of information. There is, as I've mentioned, a members' log-in and quick access to the online registry. Information about the complaints process is improved. There is now a section for the public with information regarding discipline matters. If a citation is issued to hold a discipline hearing into a complaint, this information is now made public as well as the outcome. (To date, there have been no formal discipline hearings as all recent disciplinary matters have been resolved by consent between the College and the registrant.)

We have revamped the College's website (www.bccollegeofsocialworkers.ca) with a new look, easier navigation, and some reorganization of information.

As I report in more detail on page 5, I continue to be actively involved with the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators as a member of the organization's national Social Work Competency Profile steering committee. Along with my colleagues from Alberta, Ontario, and Québec, we issued a request for proposals for a contractor to conduct this project and, after an exhaustive process, we engaged a Vancouver company. I appreciate the opportunity I've had to be involved in this challenging and very important project for the social work profession.

At a policy level, the College is making progress on changing the exemption for registration for social workers employed by health authorities. The Ministry of Children and Family Development has set up a working committee, which includes myself and representatives of health authorities, to develop a

British Columbia College Of Social Workers

The BC College of Social Workers (BCCSW) is the regulatory body for the practice of social work in British Columbia. Our mandate is to protect the public interest by establishing and supporting high standards for qualified Registered Social Workers.

Find a Social Worker

Member Login

A new look for a new era: the College website's home page.

transition plan. An important objective is that no social work job will be in jeopardy if the person holding the position does not currently qualify for registration. The concept of "grandparenting" persons without social work degrees is one of fundamental fairness to those who have been doing the work. It is a standard approach when implementing regulatory change. We will be developing a plan that is fair and inclusive yet maintains the integrity of registration as a social worker. The plan must also allow time for both

applicants and the College to proceed effectively in the registration process.

There continue to be a number of interesting projects to develop as we move forward in self-regulation of the profession - eliminating other exemptions, revising Bylaws, and identifying core competencies that will be recognized across the country. New legislation was only the first phase of changes still to emerge. 

Moving Ahead Your Elected Board's First Year *(Continued from page 1.)*

they are relatively easy to do. We have a list going forward to the Minister of Children and Family Development shortly.

All our committees meet regularly, some more than others, and there has been a demonstrated commitment by all members to move the College forward. The full Board meets four times a year, in person, and it is there that each committee's work is reported, discussed and ratified. Our full Board meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to attend.

From time to time there will be opportunities for Registered Social Workers to become involved in the work of the College's committees and task forces. We always welcome applications from any of you who are interested in being appointed.

We continue to meet with staff at the Ministry of Children and Family Development to address the situation of social workers practising in British Columbia without coming under the jurisdiction

of the *Social Workers Act*. Generally, such social workers are employed by public sector bodies like health authorities, First Nations and the Government of British Columbia. It is only through the elimination of these exempt social work positions that the College will have full mandatory registration of all social workers in the province. Incidentally, this exemption also extends to college and university faculty members in their role as educators but not when they are engaged in private practice.

This year's election has been for half the elected Board members (not all as happened last year) so in 2011 and successive years the Board will have continuity of membership with at least 50 per cent of the elected members returning. As the Board becomes more knowledgeable about the College's legislated processes and procedures, and as we complete the foundational aspects of the Board, we look forward to developing more strategic plans in the New Year. 



Registration Matters!

Sheila Begg, RSW, Director of Registration

A New - and Green - Way to Renew Your Registration

Starting in 2011, the College will be implementing a secure web-based system that will allow Registered Social Workers and Registered Clinical Social Workers to renew their registration online. No more paper, stamps, envelopes or venturing out of the office to find a mail box.

In the package mailed to all registrants **look for the green sheets**: these contain step-by-step instructions to guide you through the process of setting your password, updating your home and work contact information, confirming your agreement with the renewal declaration and immediately paying the fee through the online banking system the College has established. You will receive immediate confirmation by e-mail that your renewal has been processed. Official receipts will be mailed later.

Online registration means that registrants will no longer be constrained by the College's office hours during renewal time. It will also help procrastinators avoid paying reinstatement fees because they will literally be able to leave it to the last hour to renew before the January 31 deadline. Even so, it's best to renew as soon as possible just in case the system finds itself trying to cope with a five-minutes-to-midnight rush.

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Clinical Registration

Congratulations to Yolanda Hall and Jill Newman who passed the ASWB Clinical exam at computer testing sites over the past few months. Another eight wrote the pen-and-paper version on November 4, 2010 in Burnaby. At press time, the results are not yet available.

Clinical Examination Rewrites

As the Clinical class of registration develops, the College's Board will, from time to time, review related policy and address any issues before they become problematic. To this end, at its June 2010 meeting, the Board passed a motion that clinical exam candidates can write the Association of Social Work Boards' (ASWB) clinical exam three times. After the third failure, candidates must wait for two years from the last unsuccessful sitting before writing the exam again. This should provide sufficient time for candidates to

acquire additional knowledge, training or experience needed to be successful in passing the exam.

Examination Provider Changes

Effective January 1, 2011, the ASWB has engaged a new examination provider to administer all of its exams. The College will no longer offer pen-and-paper exams. **In future, all examinations will be taken at computer testing sites.** The testing site in Kamloops will no longer be available; instead, social workers will be able to access computer testing centres in Burnaby and Victoria (as well as Toronto and Montreal or at one of the 224 sites in the US). We expect that the number of computer examination locations in Canada will increase in the future.

This new system will be more convenient for candidates. Candidates who have received the College's

approval to take the examination at a computer testing site will no longer have to wait for us to schedule the exam time and place. They will simply arrange their appointments through ASWB so they can sit for the exam at a convenient time and location.

Entry-to-Practice Examinations

As previously reported in the Spring 2009 issue of *College Conversation*, the Board passed a motion at its February 2009 meeting requiring applicants for full registration to successfully complete, at a minimum, the BSW exam offered by the ASWB.

However, the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators has started development of a Canadian national social work competency profile which it will complete by the fall of 2011. Given that it will be necessary for the College to consult with other stakeholders and educators, the Board has put discussion of a process for implementation of the examination on hold until January 2012.

Specialist Certificates

Last summer, the College received a proposal to create a social work specialist certificate in the field of oncology. After lengthy discussion, the Registration Committee headed by Susan Hogman concluded that there was much to be done before entertaining an application for any specialist certificate in this field. Some of the issues of concern include:

- A lack of assessment tools for specialty practice
- Developing a process and criteria for creating specialist certificates
- Once a specialist certificate is created, initiating a process for the individual application and designation
- Monitoring of the certificate, including ongoing education.

The Committee was also concerned that the contemporary social work field is so broad that there are many areas of specialization (including gerontology, addictions, child protection and oncology, to mention only a few) that could have certification.

At its June meeting, the Board considered the Registration Committee's report and decided that the College at this time does not have the resources to adequately address these issues. As a result, it passed a motion stating that the College would "not ... proceed with any specialist certificates at this time." ❁

Competency Project Update

Susan Irwin, RSW

Registrar, British Columbia College of Social Workers

In the spring issue of *College Conversation* I wrote about the proposal to develop a national Social Work Competency Profile and explained the rationale and background leading to this proposal. I am delighted to report that the Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators (comprising the regulatory bodies of all provinces and territories) has been approved for funding for this project by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. HRSDC is providing more than \$320,000 to undertake this work which is due to be completed in the fall of 2011.

As a member of the working committee overseeing this project, I have had the pleasure of collaborating with colleagues from Alberta, Ontario, and Québec in obtaining the funding and overseeing the implementation of this project. Once the funding was approved, we developed and issued a Request for Proposals that was posted across the country. Our committee received nine proposals and we interviewed four proponents. The interviews were held by teleconference but each proponent met directly with one committee member in their home province. Following this rigorous process, the committee selected Directions Evidence and Policy Research Group LLP, a Vancouver firm.

Work has begun to identify background material and plan the specific steps of the project. As well as doing

a thorough literature review, Directions Evidence will consult a panel of experts. They will also develop a detailed communications strategy early in the project to inform and engage all sectors of the social work community. The project design will be approved by the CCSWR before implementation.

The major focus of this project will be a national survey of all Registered Social Workers to validate what competencies are used in practice as well as their frequency and importance. This will be conducted next spring and you are strongly urged to participate when you receive the details from the College. The final report will provide significant information about the knowledge, skills and abilities used in the practice of social work in all its diversity across the land. ❁

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2010 Annual General Meeting

The second Annual General Meeting of the British Columbia College of Social Workers was held on Thursday, November 4, 2010 at the Renaissance Hotel in Vancouver. (The time and place coincided with the annual BC Association of Social Workers Conference.) Before the business meeting the College hosted a reception which provided an opportunity for colleagues to meet, chat, and enjoy some refreshments.

Introduction and Prayer

The meeting was well attended with approximately eighty people registered in advance. Liz Jones, the BCCSW's Chair, convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. by declaring that a quorum was present. Board member Geraldine Manson led a prayer to start the meeting. All Board members present as well as College staff members were introduced to the meeting which then approved the agenda. The 2009 AGM minutes were circulated and accepted.

Chair's Report

Liz Jones noted that this was the College's first year of operation under an elected Board. With seven of its twelve members being new, the Board's preliminary focus was twofold: learning how to govern a regulatory body and becoming familiar with the College's work. As much of this work is done through committees, changes in their structure and composition had an impact. Much of the implementation of the new *Social Workers Act* is now complete. With alternating two-year terms for all members, the Board is moving smoothly into a new year of operation.

Registrar's Report

Susan Irwin reported that, as of November 3, 2010, there were 2407 Registered Social Workers, including 113 with clinical registration. She spoke about new administrative developments. The College's new website provides updated information as well as all the *Standards of Practice* and other documents. Additional resources will be added as they are developed.

The website will soon have a new and convenient online renewal function for which detailed information, as well as individual passwords, will be sent to all members with the notices for 2011 registration renewal.

The Registrar also outlined the national Competency Profile Project. Planning is underway. A survey will be distributed in the spring for all Registered Social Workers to provide their input. Responding to a question from the floor, Susan confirmed that social

workers are allowed to say they do psychotherapy as long as they meet the standards of having the appropriate competence to do so.

Board Committees

Registration Committee Glen Schmidt, reporting for the Chair, Susan Hogman, reported that the key issue of using an examination as a registration requirement is being deferred as is a proposal to establish specialist certificates. (See page 4.)

Registration Appeals Committee Bruce Hallsor, Chair, said that three applications have been referred to the committee this year with one still outstanding.

Discipline Committee Bruce Hallsor, Chair, reported that two complaints had been referred to the committee this year and both were settled before the scheduled hearings.

Quality Assurance Committee Bruce Northey, reporting for the Chair, Chi Ying Wong, said this committee had addressed two issues this year: revising the scope of practice for clinical social workers (see page 8) and reviewing continuing competence requirements with a recommendation that mandatory reporting by all Registered Social Workers be implemented (the Board has endorsed this principle).

Inquiry Committee Kathryn McCannell, Chair, reported that this committee has held ten meetings, reviewed twenty-one cases (some carried over from last year), dismissed three cases and entered into six complaint-resolution agreements. Five citations are outstanding, with three consent orders reached and a fourth case in negotiation. Seven active investigations are currently open. The committee has discussed ways, including write-ups in the newsletter, to use complaint cases anonymously for educating social workers about common practice concerns.

Finance Committee Gary Mavis, Chair, summarized the College's financial status by stating that the College is in very good financial condition and the current budget is on target.

General Discussion

The meeting opened for questions and discussion from the floor. Three main issues emerged:

- *Expanding registration by focussing on new graduates and social workers employed by the Ministry of Children and Family Development*
The Chair, Liz Jones, confirmed that the College has an absolute commitment to pushing for mandatory registration. She reported on upcoming meetings with the provincial government to consider the exemption for social workers in health authorities. There was some discussion of differences in regulatory control of title of "social worker" and the practice of social work. A letter about registration was sent to all new graduates through university and college schools of social work.
- *Low voter turnout for the Board election*
Liz commented that the Board had discussed this issue at their meeting earlier. While it is hard to determine why participation in the election is low, the Board will look into options for making it easier for registrants to vote in the future.
- *The challenges of foreign credential recognition*
The criteria used by the assessment agency were questioned. The Registrar acknowledged that this is an issue since there are limited assessment models available. This has been identified for further review at a national level. The competency profile is an important step for both foreign credential recognition and recognition of social work competencies acquired through experience.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Dialogue to Survive and Thrive: What's Going on in Social Work in BC?

Panellists: Liz Jones, Chair, BCCSW and Pam Miller, President, BCASW

After declining to cover Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On" in harmony, Liz Jones and Pam Miller engaged in a dialogue about the current state of social work in British Columbia. This followed the College's annual business meeting and provided an update of the work by the College in regulating social work and of the BC Association of Social Workers in promoting the profession.

Liz and Pam alternated in outlining the mandates of their organizations and how each addresses its responsibilities. The College is developing continuing competency requirements, participating in the national competency profile project, and developing an entry-to-practice exam requirement as well as expanding the use of technology for registration renewal and other member services. The Association is considering how to address a wide range of member interests with limited resources and continues to address both social justice issues and professional member services in continuing education.

While recognizing that the organizations have different purposes, Liz and Pam also confirmed there are common interests in promoting the profession and identifying what social work has to offer the community at large. For social work to survive and thrive in a time when the profession is under pressure from both limited resources and incursion by other professions, these leaders agreed to give priority to working together on areas of common concern and to explore sharing communication strategies on common issues.

The meeting opened for questions, comments, and discussion during which members raised several issues. Responding to concerns about achieving mandatory registration of all social workers, Liz outlined steps the College is taking in meeting with the government to discuss changing current exemptions. Other members expressed concern about the separation of the two organizations some years ago and the impact this has had on small organizations with limited resources. 

2010 Election for the Board of the BC College of Social Workers

Susan Irwin, Registrar, reported the results of the election for Board members held on November 2 to the 2010 AGM. There were five nominations for four vacancies. Ballots were mailed to all Registered Social Workers (approximately 2375 at that time). 340 ballots

were returned, with 34 late and no spoiled ballots, for a total of 306 counted.

Elected to the Board are Curtis Magnuson, Gary Mavis, Bruce Northey and Chi Ying Wong. Their terms are January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2012.



Obtaining Informed Consent for Counselling Children

Bonnie White, RSW, Practice Consultant

Practice Issue

Every year the College receives inquiries from social workers asking about obtaining consent to provide counselling to a child. This is also, not coincidentally, an area in which there are a high number of complaints from clients on how a social worker has handled this counselling request. What follows is a broad outline describing some of the issues and concerns that social workers should be aware of when obtaining consent to provide counselling services to a child.

Matters To Be Aware Of

The primary issue in working with children is determining who is able to give the appropriate informed consent for counselling. Children who have sufficient maturity, intelligence, and capacity to understand the proposed treatment can provide their own consent. In determining the child's maturity and capacity for consent, it is not adequate for the social worker to simply rely on someone else's view of the child's capacity. Determining the child's capacity involves speaking directly with the child.

A younger child, however, is incapable of giving informed consent because of age and maturity. It is still required that the nature of the services be explained to younger children but his or her legal guardians have to give the required informed consent.

There are a number of other issues to sort out before counselling can begin. As part of the initial assessment when asked to provide counselling to a child, the social worker should determine if both parents will be involved. If the parents are separated or divorced, the social worker should, first, determine the guardianship, custody rights and visitation arrangements of each

parent and, second, how both parents will be involved in the counselling. As we know, the parties involved in a marital breakdown may often be very emotional, angry and unable to reach agreement on what is in the best interests of their child. **Counselling for children at such times can provide many benefits but it can also create conflict between upset parents.**

While a divorce agreement may allow only one parent in a custody situation to make an important decision about

the children, it is always advisable to attempt to obtain consent from both parents. Dual consent means there is likely to be more parental cooperation and involvement, resulting in a better outcome for the child. In any event, the social worker should make it clear that they will speak to each parent, so they can gain information about the child's family history from both sides.

When deciding who has the right to give consent for the child, it is advisable to ask whether there is a court

Dual consent means there is likely to be more parental cooperation and involvement, resulting in a better outcome for the child.

order, separation agreement or other arrangement in place. **Without an agreement of any kind the social worker should discuss with the parent who is requesting the counselling what authority he or she has to independently provide consent. If there is a written separation agreement which outlines the arrangements, the social worker should ask to examine it.** The social worker should document this information in the record of the child's counselling.

Whenever social workers are asked to provide counselling to a child, the most important step they need to take is to clarify their role. Their involvement is not to make recommendations about visitation or access but to improve the child's functioning. They also need to decide if the best way to approach the counselling could be through coaching the parents as well as (or, in some instances, instead of) seeing the child directly.

In providing counselling services to children, informed consent is an area that requires professional judgment, knowledge, and clarification with parents and child. In most cases, determining what is in the

child's best interests will involve speaking with the child as well as both parents. If the issues outlined in the following checklist are clarified before counselling the chances of a positive outcome for all are greatly improved. ❁



Bonnie White gratefully acknowledges the assistance and advice of Dr. Kathryn McCannell, RCSW in the preparation of this article. The writer has also benefitted from an opinion provided by Margot Fleming, BSW, MSW, LLB of Somers and Company and an article by George K. Bryce written for the British Columbia Association of Clinical Counsellors' Insights Magazine. The section titled "Child Custody and Access Assessments" in the BCCSW's Standards of Practice was also helpful. The opinions given here are the writer's alone and should not be ascribed to any of the aforementioned sources.

Checklist for Agreements to Provide Counselling to Children

It is always preferable to have both parents sign a written agreement for therapy for their child to clarify their understanding of the social worker's role. This should be maintained in the child's record. Such an agreement could include the following.

- ❁ The determination of the child's guardianship and, if there is more than one guardian, written consent from both.
- ❁ The extent of the involvement of both parents.
- ❁ Clarification of the social worker's role so that both the parents and the child understand what is involved. Parents need to be aware that the purpose of counselling is for the improvement of the child's functioning; it is not for fact-finding or for gathering information as a means to providing an opinion regarding custody and visitation issues.
- ❁ Ensuring that parents understand the difference between therapy and assessment for the purpose of custody and access decisions.
- ❁ If subpoenaed by a court, the social worker will provide observations with respect to therapy but will not provide opinions related to custody and visitation.
- ❁ Issues of confidentiality, discussions and information sharing with parents, fees, and other relevant matters.
- ❁ Ensuring that the parents understand the difference between therapy and assessment and evaluation. ❁



Amendments to **the Bylaws**

At its September 2010 meeting the Board amended some of the College's Bylaws. Below are details of the reasons and objectives for these changes. The amendments to the registration provisions require the approval of the Minister of Children and Family Development and, at the time of writing, this request is before the Minister. Once approval is received, all Bylaw amendments must be posted on the College's website for three months before they come into force. This allows members the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed amendments. Please check the website for updated information regarding these Bylaw changes and the date when they will come into effect.

Section 42(1) – Registered Clinical Social Workers

The primary motivation behind these changes was to revise Section 42(1) which describes clinical social work. This definition is specific to the *Social Workers Act* (Act) and has the purpose of expanding the scope of practice of Registered Clinical Social Workers.

The current definition (in force as of February 24, 2009) states that clinical social work includes the use of "standardized and validated criteria, including the use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association [DSM-IV] ..." The intent of establishing the RCSW class of registration was to allow specific social workers to use the DSM-IV. However, after considerable examination, the College realized that this definition was so broad that it would, technically, limit the use of other standardized and validated tools such as the "mini mental" to RCSWs. The Board recognizes that there are many useful assessment tools that may be used safely and effectively by RSWs. The College never intended to limit these practices.

Furthermore, the College also recognizes that many RSWs working in mental health may have a role in the assessment of clients in which the team uses the DSM-IV. Although diagnosis of mental disorders and conditions is restricted under the *Health Professions Act* to physicians and psychologists, and under the *Social Workers Act* to Registered Clinical Social Workers, this does not mean that full Registered Social Workers have no role in this process. RSWs may have an active role as team members in using a range of diagnostic tools in assessment of clients but authority to "sign off" on a diagnosis, and thereby accept liability, is restricted to those specified professionals. To clarify this in our bylaws, the word "independent" has been added.

The amended definition reads " ... clinical social work means the application of social work knowledge and

theories and the independent use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental, emotional, and behavioural disorders and conditions for the sole purpose of providing psychological intervention to enhance person, interpersonal and social functioning."

A broader definition of clinical social work may be used in practice settings but this definition is the one that sets out the scope of practice for Registered Clinical Social Workers and sets limits on the practice of full Registered Social Workers.

Bylaws Affecting the Registration Process

Amendments were also made to several sections of the Bylaws regarding the registration process. The Act sets out the various steps in the process including the right of an applicant to have a decision of the Registrar reviewed by the Registration Committee and the Registration Appeals Committee. However, the original Bylaws were somewhat inconsistent with the Act by referring to decisions made by the Board when, in fact, they are made by the Registrar and Registration Committee. These Bylaws have now been amended to be consistent with the Act.

Notice for Setting an Annual General Meeting

A further amendment was made to Bylaw 31 which sets out the notice period for the Annual General Meeting. The amendment to a 30-day notice for the AGM means that both the ballots for the election and notice of the AGM can be mailed together and thus allow sufficient time for the office staff to prepare election material. This improves administrative efficiency. 

CHARD Update

The Community Health and Resource Directory (CHARD) is now available province-wide to all physicians through the internet. CHARD lists all Registered Social Workers and Registered Clinical Social Workers by location and, if the information is provided, by area of practice. Social workers may also provide their business telephone number and address to facilitate referrals from physicians. This listing is not limited to private practices and will be useful for physicians who wish to make specific referrals for their patients in their region.

If you did not list any information about your social work practice when this project was first announced, but wish to now, please contact the College's office to obtain a CHARD form. Completed forms are to be returned to our office.

If you wish to change your listing for areas of practice or to change your contact information, call the CHARD toll-free line at **1.877.330.7322**. Call from the telephone you have listed with them for easy verification. In the future, CHARD will provide social workers with information so that they can access the directory online to update their information.

Changed Your Address? Don't Forget To Let Us Know

As part of the annual membership renewal process, all registrants must provide the address and telephone number of all the places where they practise social work. This is required under the *Social Workers Act* and the College's Bylaws.

If your contact details change during the year, please ensure that you advise the College promptly. You may send us a letter, fax, e-mail, or

telephone the office at 604.737.4916. And, with the College's new website, it is now possible (and probably more convenient) to log in to the members' section and update this information directly yourself.

Are You Considering Setting up a Private Practice?

Any Registered Social Worker or Registered Clinical Social Worker may establish a private practice without further approval of the BC College of Social Workers. In doing so, social workers are responsible for being aware of the extent and parameters of their competence and their professional scope of practice – they must limit their practice accordingly (*Standards of Practice* 2.1).

If you are contemplating this move, as well as determining that you are sufficiently prepared to offer your services to the public, please become familiar with the College's Bylaws and *Standards of Practice* that apply to private practice. In particular, please note:

- Bylaw 68 - requires liability insurance of \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- Bylaw 69 - sets out standards for marketing and use of the title "specialist"
- *Standards of Practice*, #4 - the Social Work Record
- *Standards of Practice*, #6 - Fees
- *Standards of Practice*, #7 - Advertising.

Registered Social Workers are not required to charge HST when providing health services to clients (contact the Canadian Revenue Agency for further information). The BCCSW does not provide business advice or promotion for

private practitioners but there are other resources available to social workers such as the BC Association of Social Workers (www.bcasw.org).

Examination Writers Sought

The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) is seeking qualified social workers to write questions for the licensing tests used in the United States and Canada.

Interested applicants must have a degree in social work, a currently valid social work licence, be currently practising social work (including teaching in a social work program), and have the ability to produce 30 multiple choice questions that meet ASWB standards. All writers must attend a training session, typically held during the last weekend in June, with food, lodging and travel expenses paid by ASWB. All writers must be able to work with computers and e-mail.

Social workers from all levels of social work education, licensure, and experience are needed. Writers from diverse demographic and practice backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Selections are limited to 20-25 writers. Successful applicants will be paid \$1,000 for a set of 30 test questions determined to meet ASWB standards, written over a six-to-eight-month time frame.

Applicants must complete all screening documents and supply other information via e-mail by December 31, 2010 to be considered. Visit www.aswb.org for more information and application materials. 

Board Highlights – summary of decisions made by the Board of the BC College of Social Workers in 2010

June

- Approved expenditure of up to \$80,000 to establish a new database.
- Appointed Susara Joubert, RSW to the Registration Committee and Andrea Harstone, RSW to the Quality Assurance Committee.
- Clarified examination policy to allow candidates to write the clinical examination three times. Candidates will have to wait two years to write the examination again after a third unsuccessful sitting (for details see article on page 4).
- Decided that the College will not establish any specialist certificates at this time (see article on page 5).
- Deferred implementation of an entry-to-practice examination for all applicants until a further review in January 2012 (see article on page 4).
- Proposed change to the scope of practice for clinical social work so that full Registered Social Workers are not prevented from using any standardized assessment tools other than the DSM-IV TR (see article on page 10).

September

- Approved an application to include College staff in the Public Sector Pension Plan.
- Decided to allocate \$1500 to be a sponsor of the BC Association of Social Workers annual conference which will include a display table.
- Appointed Susan Noakes, RSW and Geraldine Manson to the Registration Appeals Committee.
- Supported the principle of mandatory continuing competence requirements for all Registered Social Workers and requested the Quality Assurance Committee to develop a proposal for implementing them.
- Adopted an amended version of the College Policy Manual.
- Amended the College Bylaws, in particular the definition of clinical social work and some language in the registration process (see article on page 10). ❁

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