



FUTURE MEETINGS:

May 5 in Sacramento.
July 14 in Sacramento.
September 29 in Sonoma County.
December 1 in San Francisco.

BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING

Executive Officer: Catherine Puri
(916) 322-3350

The Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) licenses qualified RNs, certifies qualified nurse midwifery applicants, establishes accreditation requirements for California nursing schools and reviews nursing school curricula. A major Board responsibility involves taking disciplinary action against licensed RNs.

The nine-member Board consists of three public members, three registered nurses actively engaged in patient care, one licensed RN administrator of a nursing service, one nurse educator and one licensed physician. All serve four-year terms.

The Board is financed by licensing fees, and receives no allocation from the general fund. The Board is currently staffed by 56 people.

MAJOR PROJECTS:

Fee Increase to Implement SB 1267. At its November meeting, BRN adopted a nonsubstantive regulation change to section 1417(b) of Chapter 14, Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, to conform with SB 1267 (Maddy) (Chapter 252, Statutes of 1988), which directs BRN to raise the biennial renewal fee from \$40 to \$45 effective July 1, 1989. The \$5 increase will be used to create a California Registered Nurse Education Program within the Minority Health Professions Fund.

Advisory Committee on Nursing Shortage. The BRN recently approved the criteria and nomination procedure for the special advisory committee on the nursing shortage. SB 2755 (Royce) (Chapter 1321, Statutes of 1988) authorizes BRN to appoint this committee to develop recommendations for the legislature and for licensing agencies to address the shortage of RNs in California. BRN was scheduled to appoint committee members in January.

Functions Interim Permittees May Perform. At its November meeting in San Francisco, the BRN voted to change its former position statement on functions which may be performed by interim permittees. The BRN changed its position in response to public comment opposing its May 1988 interpretation that a permittee may perform "any

function taught in the interim permittee's basic nursing program." Representatives of the nursing community feel this position is too limiting and does not take advantage of the permittee's opportunity to learn skills under the supervision of a RN. The amended statement adds functions for which the permittee has learned theory and acquired clinical practice through "planned learning experiences in the practice setting." The amended statement also provides that "nursing management has ultimate and ongoing responsibility for establishing the permittee's competence prior to assigning the permittee to a staff RN for supervision."

BRN Position on Student Workers. The BRN has received frequent inquiries from various acute hospitals and skilled nursing facilities asking what functions student workers may perform. Student workers are defined as "in a basic nursing program, working for money outside of the program." Section 2729(a) of the Business and Professions Code states that nursing services may be rendered by a student when these services are incidental to the course of study while enrolled in a Board-approved pre-licensure program. The current BRN position asserts that students are unlicensed workers who may not be used in any capacity other than as nurse aides. However, at its November meeting, the Board recognized that student workers are performing functions beyond nurse aide practice in some settings. Therefore, BRN referred this matter to its Education Committee for study and a recommendation whether to alter its policy to permit student workers to perform functions beyond nurse aide practice.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

May 18-19 in San Diego.
July 20-21 in Oakland.

BOARD OF CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTERS

Executive Officer: Richard Black
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The Board of Certified Shorthand Reporters (BCSR) licenses and disciplines shorthand reporters, recognizes court reporting schools and administers the Transcript Reimbursement Fund, which provides shorthand reporting services to low-income litigants otherwise unable to afford such services.

The Board consists of five members, three public and two from the industry,

who serve four-year terms. The two industry members must have been actively engaged as shorthand reporters in California for at least five years immediately preceding their appointment.

MAJOR PROJECTS:

Professional Practice Exam Test Plan. At BCSR's November meeting, the Board considered whether to revamp its professional practice exam. Following a presentation by Nick Fittinghoff of the Department of Consumer Affairs' Central Testing Unit (CTU), BCSR decided to rewrite the exam through a committee composed of school representatives, official and freelance reporters, and firm owners. (See CRLR Vol. 8, No. 3 (Summer 1988) p. 79; Vol. 8, No. 1 (Winter 1988) p. 72; and Vol. 7, No. 4 (Fall 1987) p. 67 for background information.)

The CTU analyzed the relative importance of the various tasks performed by certified shorthand reporters by conducting an opinion poll among licensed reporters. They were asked to comment on the duration of particular tasks, the likelihood of harm if the task were performed incompetently, the level of resultant harm, and an estimate of the level of proficiency that an entry level shorthand reporter should have in each area. The CTU came to three different results by assigning different weights to each of the four factors. The Board approved the plan which placed most emphasis on the level of harm from incompetent performance. The CTU then set the percentage of questions that should be asked from each category of tasks.

In commenting on the proposed test format, Bryan School owner Nancy Patterson objected to the relatively few number of items which would be devoted exclusively to medical and legal terminology. According to Patterson, this would frustrate the schools' policy of emphasizing these subjects. Mr. Fittinghoff met these concerns by explaining that knowledge of medical and legal terminology would be required throughout the test sections, so knowledge of these areas would still be very important. Other problems were discovered in CTU's scheme. Four or five questions dealing with how to distribute a transcript seemed excessive to several of the school representatives. No one could imagine how to frame a question which would reflect an examinee's ability to read back the transcript. The Board explained that the CTU's report is a tool which the Board (along with the Professional Practice Exam Test Committee) will use to draft the new test and should not be