

## **Disaster Preparedness/Disaster Response Teleconference Meeting Minutes Tuesday, June 26, 2012**

### Committee Members Present

Mary Evert, Chair  
Kathay Lovell  
Carol Bartolo Loeffler  
Mohammed Khalifa

### Board Staff Present

Jeff Hanson

### **A. Call to order, roll call, establishment of a quorum**

At 5:20 p.m. the meeting was called to order. Contact with the teleconference site in Fairfax was established. Roll was called; a quorum of the Committee was established.

### **B. Approval of May 17, 2012, Committee Meeting Minutes**

- Kathay Lovell moved to approve the May 17, 2012, Meeting Minutes as presented with a minor edit to remove a hyphen from Committee Member Carol Bartolo Loeffler's name.

#### Roll Call Vote

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Mary Evert             | Aye |
| Kathay Lovell          | Aye |
| Carol Bartolo Loeffler | Aye |
| Mohammed Khalifa       | Aye |

- The motion was approved by the Committee

### **C. Committee Members updates/activities**

Kathay Lovell, reported that since the Angora Fire five years ago, the South Lake Tahoe area continues to examine and consult with experts on the area's Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan. Disaster plans have become more comprehensive with more focus being devoted to evacuation plans.

Mary Evert referenced materials contained in the agenda packet. One of the items was an insert in a San Diego newspaper that was designed to assist households in the San Diego to prepare for disasters. Ms. Evert indicated occupational therapists should be considering these matters when providing client services, especially when performing home assessments, but also in discharge planning.

Ms. Evert shared that she and Kit Sinclair submitted a proposal to the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) to provide a short course at the Annual Conference in San Diego in 2013 titled "Are you preparing your clients to be personally

ready for the next disaster to hit". The synopsis of the course involves OT's having an obligation to prepare disaster response plans with clients for their needs and environment, the OT's roles and practices within a disaster management framework plus strategies to improve professional and team competencies in this critical area of patient safety and quality of life.

Mohammed Khalifa reported that he made contact with representatives with the American Red Cross in San Francisco and San Mateo to open dialog on how occupational therapists could contribute in Disaster Preparedness/Response. Mr. Khalifa reported there was an openness and willingness to explore the possibilities. Discussion ensued on the possibilities of preparing a presentation in the event a meeting can be arranged. It was suggested this might be a wonderful project to recruit a student to develop.

Carol Bartolo Loeffler brought several brochures and pamphlets she obtained from the American Red Cross to the meeting for reference. Ms. Bartolo Loeffler reported that her interactions with therapists who work in facilities has found that the therapists rely on the plans, good, bad, or indifferent, that the facility has developed. Many times the plans are rudimentary and do not consider the wide variety disasters/situations that might occur. As examples, Ms. Bartolo Loeffler cited often there are no plans in place for a disruption in power. Often when provisions for food and water have been made, storage is sometimes problematic and results in contamination. Ms. Bartolo Loeffler indicated that she would like to see therapists become more aware, and actively engage and collaborate with their employers and clients on improving or developing disaster plans.

**D. Review and discussion on including establishing a continuing competency requirement related to disaster preparedness/response.**

There was consensus among Committee Members that establishing a continuing competence requirement could be a viable avenue to pursue. However, concerns regarding the legalities of making such coursework mandatory, the availability of courses, course content, and the cost to a practitioner would warrant more research.

**E. Review and discussion on including disaster preparedness/response training as an Ethical Standard of Practice.**

Committee Members also demonstrated a willingness to establish a requirement for disaster preparedness/response training as an ethical standard. Discussion ensued on whether this option would carry enough punch or impact for a therapist to complete such training. The Committee was advised that language contained in the Ethical Standards of Practice establishes that any violation of the ethical standards would be deemed as unprofessional conduct, therefore subjecting a licensee to potential disciplinary action.

**F. Discussion on goals and direction of the Committee.**

Committee Members believe disaster preparedness/response training would benefit occupational therapy practitioners and ultimately the client population that they serve. Discussion ensued on finding a way or a mechanism to encourage therapists to complete training and integrate the concepts into practice with their clients or their work place. Committee Members expressed an interest in developing an on-line course and reference material that could be put on the board's website where licensees could educate

themselves. As encouragement, the course could be applied toward the professional development requirement. The Committee may pursue the making the course mandatory training or weave it into an ethical requirement.

**G. Selection of 2012 meeting dates/times.**

The Committee's next Teleconference Meeting is being scheduled at 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., on Thursday, August 9, 2012.

**H. Public comment on items not on agenda.**

There was no public comment.

**I. Adjournment**

At 6:55 p.m. the meeting adjourned.