

## **AGENDA ITEM 4**

**REVIEW AND VOTE ON APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 8,  
2024, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES.**



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## **AD HOC DISASTER PREPAREDNESS/RESPONSE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

### **Committee Members Present**

Richard Bookwalter, OT, Board President/  
Committee Chair  
Hector Cabrera, Board Member  
Mary Evert, OT

### **Board Staff Present**

Heather Martin, Executive Officer

### **Committee Members Absent**

None

### **Board Staff Absent**

None

**Thursday, February 8, 2023  
9:30 am Committee Meeting**

1. Call to order, roll call, establishment of a quorum.

President of the California Board of Occupational Therapy (Board) and Committee Chairman Richard Bookwalter call the meeting to order at 930 am. Role was called, and all Committee Members were present; a quorum was established.

2. Board President/Committee Chair’s Opening Remarks.

Chair Bookwalter welcomed those in attendance and said he looked forward to the Committee ‘s work and making some actionable recommendations to the Board.

3. Introductions by all Committee Members.

Committee Chairman Richard Bookwalter shared that he was an occupational therapist (OT), the Board’s current President, with 27 years of experience, mostly in geriatrics; he added that he has spent the last 15 years in wheelchair seating and mobility at Kaiser San Francisco.

Mr. Bookwalter announced the recent appointment of Mary Evert to the Committee. Mr. Bookwalter stated that Ms. Evert was an OT and not only a long-serving Member of the Board but past President of the Board as well. He added that Ms. Evert was a member of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC), and former delegate to the World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT). Mr. Bookwalter noted that Ms. Evert she has presented

widely on the topic of disaster preparedness and response, and that he appreciated the expertise she would provide the Committee.

Ms. Evert thanked Mr. Bookwalter for asking her to join the Committee and was glad the Board was prioritizing disaster preparedness and response since it affects so many. She added that she looked forward to the Committee's work and presenting the Board with some solid and actionable recommendations.

Mr. Cabrera welcomed Ms. Evert and stated that he was a public Member of the Board, appointed by the Assembly Speaker's Office in 2022. Mr. Cabrera said that he looked forward to working with Mr. Bookwalter and Ms. Evert on this very important topic.

4. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda.

There was no public comment.

5. Committee discussion on services that occupational therapy practitioners can offer, such as disaster planning, risk reduction, environmental modification, and disaster response, and possible recommendation(s) to the Board.

The Committee discussed the phases of disaster and emergency is not just preparedness but included addressing the before, during, after phases, known as Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

Chairman Bookwalter referenced the meeting materials including many government resources. Ms. Evert advised the Committee that WFOT published a document in June of 2022 that might be a helpful resource, the Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction Manual. Ms. Martin agreed to provide that in the materials at the next meeting.

Mr. Bookwalter referenced the materials, including information from the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) about the Disaster Medical Response Programs it oversees, including the California Health Corps (CAHC) Program and the California Medical Assistance Team (CAL-MAT) Programs. The CAHC is the State's response to an increased need for licensed medical professionals within healthcare facilities experiencing a medical surge due to a disaster such as the COVID-19 pandemic. A CAHC member becomes a paid temporary emergency hire State employee deployed to healthcare facilities provide patient care. The CAL-MAT medical professionals also become paid temporary emergency hire State employees deployed to support disasters statewide in California.

Mr. Bookwalter noted that neither the CAHC nor the CAL-MAT programs include OTs or occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) in the list of medical professionals utilized in disaster response despite published documents about the role of occupational therapy in disaster response.

Mr. Bookwalter referenced the physical therapist (PT) duty statement that followed the information on EMSA's Disaster Medical Response Program and noted inclusion of PTs in the CAL-MAT teams and asked how the PT duty statement was established.

Ms. Martin stated that duty statements are prepared by the hiring State agency; she elaborated that there are several State agencies that hire OTs so there are duty statements available if EMSA were to OTs and OTAs to their list of medical professionals hired to respond in the event of a disaster. He suggested that people, organizations, don't really know how the role of occupational therapy fits in with disaster response.

Ms. Evert pointed out that PTs don't address mental or social needs, which is important in disaster response. She added that the American Red Cross also does not recognize OTs as part of their disaster response team and felt it should be priority to get them to do so.

After further discussion on the meeting materials provided, including the Department of Consumer Affairs' Disaster Help Center webpage, the Committee expressed interest on having the Board be added.

Chairman Bookwalter recapped the Committee's discussion, including:

- Possibility of recommending requiring Professional Development units related to Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.
- Partnering with AOTA, OTAC, the Accreditation Council on Occupational Therapy and other organizations to promote the Board's interest in training related to disaster/emergency response for OTs and OTAs.
- Staff to find out more information on including OTs and OTAs in EMSA's CAHC and CAL-MAT programs and draft duty statement.
- Staff to draft information for inclusion on DCA's Disaster Help Center webpage.
- Review of national Disaster/Emergency Management education standards.
- Developing a survey to determine the licensing population's awareness of disaster/emergency preparedness and response.

6. Discussion on scheduling time(s) for future meetings.

The Committee agreed to meet April 10, 2024, via WebEx, rather than in person.

7. New suggested agenda items for a future meeting.

There were no items suggested.

8. Consideration of the Committee's next steps.

The Committee agreed there was more information to review before making recommendations to the Board.

**The Meeting adjourned at 11:02am.**

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

**Committee discussion on services that occupational therapy practitioners can offer, such as disaster planning, risk reduction, environmental modification, and disaster response, and possible recommendation(s) to the Board.**

The following are attached for review:

1. Draft Survey to licensees regarding disaster preparedness
2. Draft webpage to add to DCA's
3. Information about possible future presenter and/or possible resource for material(s) development



# CALIFORNIA BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

## Disaster Preparedness and Response Survey

CBOT needs your help by answering three (only 3!) short questions related to Disaster and Emergency Preparedness and Response and identifying whether you're an OT or OTA. The survey should take no more than one minute of your very valuable time to complete.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND VALUABLE FEEDBACK!**

**1. Please select your licensee type:**

- Occupational therapist
- Occupational therapy assistant

**2. Do you address issues with your clients/patients related to emergency response or what to do in the event of a disaster?**

- Yes (survey goes to **Q3**)
- No (survey goes to **Q4**)

**3. Please list the topics you address or the information you provide:**

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**4. Would you like information provided to you?**

- Yes
- No

**5. In what areas do you practice in? Include all positions, including full-time, part-time, intermittent, per diem, etc. Please check all that apply:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academics                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driving & Community Mobility | <input type="checkbox"/> Pediatrics              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Modification   | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Rehabilitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding, Eating, Swallowing  | <input type="checkbox"/> School Systems          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gerontology                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Rehabilitation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Vision                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Decline to state        |

If your practice area is not listed above, please provide here:

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## **The information below was copied from DCA's Disaster Help Center webpage**

### **The Contractors State License Board (CSLB)**

As a consumer protection agency, and in its role regulating California's construction industry, CSLB is responsible for protecting those whose homes and property are directly affected by wildfires, as well as other catastrophic events like floods, mudflows, earthquakes, and pipeline explosions. CSLB's post-disaster mission is to help ensure that survivors are not victimized by unlicensed or unscrupulous contractors who may try to take advantage of them during the recovery and rebuilding process. It is a felony to contract without a license in a declared disaster area. Consumers can protect themselves by using CSLB's resources to check a contractor's license status and history.

After a disaster, CSLB staffs various assistance centers that are opened for survivors and operated by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and/or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In 2018, CSLB began a series of workshops, in conjunction with local agencies, to help survivors and contractors with the rebuilding process. Survivor workshops are focused on providing information about permits, hiring architects and contractors, and insurance claims. Contractor workshops are focused on assisting those interested in adding license classifications, employees, and workers' compensation insurance to their licenses, and specific information about rebuilding.

**Web:** [www.cslb.ca.gov/media\\_room/disaster\\_help\\_center](http://www.cslb.ca.gov/media_room/disaster_help_center)

### **SAMPLE INFORMATION:**

#### **The California Board of Occupational Therapy**

**During a disaster, emergency or evacuation, the Board's DISASTER PREPAREDNESS webpage advises consumers of the benefit of occupational therapy during this stressful time. There are also links to state and local resources, health services, shelters, and housing, and more.**

**The Board's DISASTER PREPAREDNESS webpage also provides valuable information for OTs and OTAs to use in their practice, including sample emergency plans and Go-Kit checklists. There are also resources for OTs and OTAs to use when responding in a disaster, including information on caregiver training, accessing personal care or equipment, and more.**

**Web:** [www.bot.ca.gov](http://www.bot.ca.gov)

## The California Architects Board

The Board's Disaster Preparedness page advises consumers to be aware that illegal operations often try to take advantage of a disaster situation. The Board has two publications to assist consumers: The Homeowner's Rebuilding Bulletin and the Consumer's Guide to Hiring an Architect. These publications can help consumers understand how to hire an architect, their rights in obtaining copies of plans, the steps to take in negotiating a contract, and general suggestions to assist in the planning and rebuilding process.

**Web:** [www.cab.ca.gov/consumers/disaster\\_preparedness.shtml](http://www.cab.ca.gov/consumers/disaster_preparedness.shtml)

## The California Board of Pharmacy

**Consumers:** During a disaster evacuation, the Board stresses the importance of staying on a prescribed medication treatment plan. Take steps to ensure that medications are not exposed to water or extreme temperatures. Consumers can find an open pharmacy in areas impacted by disaster at: [www.healthcareready.org/rxopen](http://www.healthcareready.org/rxopen).

The Emergency Prescription Assistance Program (EPAP) helps people in a federally-identified disaster area who do not have health insurance get the prescription drugs, vaccinations, medical supplies, and equipment that they need. To determine eligibility for EPAP, call (855) 793-7470.

**Pharmacists:** During a declared state of emergency, the Board reminds pharmacies of information and state laws intended to help pharmacists provide prescription drugs—including controlled substances—for residents displaced because of emergency evacuation.

**The information above is not a complete copy/paste  
from DCA's *Disaster Help Center* webpage**

**The above information on licensing Boards  
is informational and for context only.**



## **Amber Ward**

(Information found on-line by staff; CV requested)

Amber Ward has been a treating occupational therapist for 23 years — 10 years in inpatient rehabilitation and 13 years as full-time occupational therapy coordinator with persons with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and muscular dystrophies. She has treated a wide variety of patients, of all ages and functional levels. She currently is an adjunct professor at the occupational therapy assistant program at Cabarrus College of Health Sciences, in addition to working in the clinic. She received the RESNA Assistive Technology Professional certification in 2004, the Seating and Wheeled Mobility certification in 2014, and became AOTA board certified in physical rehabilitation in 2010. She runs the seating clinic at the Neurosciences Institute Neurology in Charlotte, North Carolina. She is involved with multiple research projects and is the author of two peer-reviewed journal articles about power wheelchairs with persons with ALS.

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Cowrote: APPLYING THE HAAT\* MODEL TO TACKLE EQUIPMENT ABANDONMENT, published in 2021 in DIRECTIONS magazine. DIRECTIONS is the official magazine of the International Registry of Rehabilitation Technology Suppliers.

(HAAT - Human Activity Assistive Technology)

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Course Presented by Amber L. Ward, MS, OTR/L, BCPR, ATP/SMS, FAOTA

### ***Facilitating Client Emergency Preparedness***

Course Learning Outcomes:

- The participant will be able to describe the reasoning behind the need for mobility specialists to address emergency preparedness with clients.
- The participant will be able to describe 1 potential role of the mobility specialist in each type of emergency situation clients may face.

The participant will be able to identify 3 resources to offer clients about emergency preparedness