

Virginia Society for Clinical Social Work

March 24, 2012

The VSCSW, at its Board of Directors meeting on March 24, 2012, authorized Board Member Mr. Joseph G. Lynch LCSW, CSOTP to draft a Response to the Social Work Summit***** group to provide them information concerning the issues connected with MSW's access to licensure in regard to the Virginia Board of Social Work's revised regulations (effective date of March 2, 2011) which included expanded delineation of the specific meaning of the term "Clinical Course of Study."

The VSCSW response below attempts to specify the concerns of social work stakeholders and to review public record documents that establish the timeline and history of the development of the new language in the VBSW regulations concerning the meaning of "Clinical Course of Study."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The VSCSW response provides a historical context for the development of the "Clinical Course of Study" language that appears in the VBSW Regulations that became effective on March 2, 2011. It is clear from the public record that all Virginia MSW programs were invited to be involved in the process of developing this new language. NASW VA was also invited to be involved as well as the Association of Social Work Boards. VCU, GMU, NASW VA and ASWB all participated at various points in the process. The pace of regulatory review and development was protracted and went from October 2007 to March 2011. There were many opportunities for Social Work stakeholders to have input, comment and participate in the process and the record reflects that many did attend VBSW regulatory committee meetings, VBSW Board meetings and did present comment at public hearings on the proposed regulations.

It also appears clear that despite the best efforts of all the social work parties involved that currently there is difficulty with MSW's access to licensure as they try to negotiate meeting the regulatory definition of "Clinical Course of Study." Regulations are a dynamic document that attempts to be responsive to change so they are constantly under revision. It may be that some further revision of the definition of "Clinical Course of Study" is needed at this time. As the record above documents, the pace for revision of regulation even if it is "fast-tracked" can easily take 18 months or longer.

The VSCSW does not endorse and action at this time but hopes the information in this response may be helpful to place the issues in context and give some ideas for generating possible solutions to the frustrations MSW's are experiencing as they pursue licensure.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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*To view the entire "VSCSW Response to Social Work Summit go to: http://www.vscsw.org