



REGULATORY AGENCY ACTION

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:

Nursing Shortage Advisory Committee. The Board is in the process of seeking members for the committee which will conduct the nursing shortage study mandated by SB 2755 (Royce) (Chapter 1321, Statutes of 1988). (See CRLR Vol. 9, No. 1 (Winter 1989) p. 63 and Vol. 8, No. 4 (Fall 1988) p. 73 for background information.) The BRN has sent letters to a number of specific organizations seeking committee nominations. The application filing deadline was January 10. Nominees have been forwarded to the BRN's Administrative Committee for a decision regarding appointments to the Advisory Committee.

Review of Nurse Support Groups and Facilitators. The BRN recently approved a revised process to review nurse support groups and facilitators who provide counseling for chemical dependency. Rather than formally approving of support groups and facilitators, the BRN Diversion Program will review the application to determine whether the facilitator or support group meets the minimum requirements established by the Board. Each BRN Diversion Evaluation Committee (DEC) will be provided with a list of groups and facilitators who meet the minimum criteria. DEC's are then responsible for reviewing and designating treatment facilities for registered nurses. Each DEC may designate to which group a Diversion Program nurse will be referred.

The BRN recently adopted the conclusions of a committee established to define the role of support groups and

facilitators. The BRN also adopted refined criteria for diversion program groups and facilitators, including the possession of a current RN license, demonstrated expertise in the field of chemical dependency, and a minimum of six months experience as a group facilitator.

LEGISLATION:

AB 395 (Felando) would require all hemodialysis technicians, vocational nurses, and registered nurses who provide services to dialysis patients in a patient's home to be held to the same requirements as when they provide health care services to dialysis patients in a dialysis clinic. The bill is pending in the Assembly Health Committee.

AB 638 (Quackenbush) would increase the membership of the BRN from nine to eleven members. The Board would be comprised of three public members, four registered nurses active in direct patient care, two registered nurses active as educators and administrators of a nurse training program, one registered nurse who is an administrator of a nursing service with at least five years of continuous experience, and one physician. This bill is pending in the Assembly Health Committee.

SB 576 (Maddy) would provide that nursing students who agree to work in a county health facility would be eligible to participate in the Registered Nurse Education Program. Current law limits eligibility to students from a demographically underrepresented group or students who agree to serve in a health manpower shortage area upon graduation. SB 576 is pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 368 (Torres) would redefine nursing hours as the number of hours of work performed per patient day by aides, nursing assistants, orderlies, registered nurses, or licensed vocational nurses, and would require the Department of Health Services to adopt regulations to take effect January 1, 1991, to reflect that change. This bill would also require an increase in Medi-Cal funding for affected facilities to reflect the increase in staff levels. SB 368 is currently pending in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

LITIGATION:

An Orange County Superior Court judge has issued an order prohibiting registered nurse Abigail H. Odam of Del Mar from performing home births until the Board had reached a decision concerning accusations against Odam's license. Odam has been charged by state

officials in six cases, including one infant death. Odam is accused of maintaining an unsanitary practice, failing to call more highly trained personnel when birthing problems arose, and overbilling insurance plans for fees.

RECENT MEETINGS:

At the January 19-20 meeting in Los Angeles, member Patricia Hunter was elected BRN President.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

July 20-21 in Oakland.

BOARD OF CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTERS

*Executive Officer: Richard Black
(916) 445-5101*

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:

Disciplinary Guidelines. The Board recently approved the latest version of the disciplinary guidelines submitted by the Disciplinary Guidelines Committee, which will be used by the Board when considering disciplinary matters. Sections 8016-8025 of the Business and Professions Code specify the offenses for which the Board may take disciplinary action. The guidelines provide a range of penalties for each section of the code which is found to be violated. The Board hopes that the guidelines will foster uniformity of penalties and ensure that licensees and registrants understand the consequences of violating applicable Code provisions.

Citation and Fine Program. The progress of the Board's citation and fine regulations has been delayed due to the resignation of staff counsel Barbara King. Her replacement, Steven Martini, will complete the drafting of language to present to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). (See CRLR Vol. 8, No. 4 (Fall 1988) p. 73 and Vol. 8, No. 3 (Summer 1988) p. 79 for background information.)