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BCD NewsFlash—an online news source from The American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work

October 3rd, 2007



Howard Snooks is President of ABE

Howard Snooks, MSW, Ph.D., BCD, of Boulder, Colorado, is the new president of the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work. A four-term member of the board of directors, Howard has served in many voluntary leadership positions, including the presidency of the Colorado Society for Clinical Social Work and the vice presidency of ABE. He has a forensic practice specialty in divorce and custody evaluations, and has published articles on various clinical topics. Most recently, he co-presented at a forum on the Future of Clinical Social Work held at the annual meeting of the American Association for Clinical Social Work and Psychoanalysis (formerly the NMCOP). A long-time member of the ABE board of directors and a founder of the Center for Clinical Social Work, he succeeds Joyce Cunningham, MSW, BCD, of Hollidaysburg, Penn., whose presidential term ended in July, 2007. Joyce remains active with the Board as a member of the Executive Committee.

Stand Up to Managed Care with The BCD

A New York BCD clinical social worker recently turned to ABE when a large managed care organization denied his client's claim for services because "active supervision by a psychiatrist or doctorate-level licensed psychologist is required when services are being rendered by a master's-level professional therapist." The clinical social worker pointed out that this policy violates state law, for New York "vendorship laws" guarantee that the services of anyone holding "independent practice licensure" must be covered by any insurance carrier selling policies in New York State. This applies to any New York clinical social worker licensed as an LCSW.

After being informed that their illegal policy had been reported to ABE, the managed care organization began making payments for the covered services. All clinical social workers should respond immediately to such denials, which are usually just mistakes by

claims processors and can be easily rectified. Should you encounter repeated denials, or denials as a result of company policy, please be sure to contact ABE's helpline, 1-888-279-9378.



Time for BCD Recertification

Holding onto your BCD will be easy this year. If you usually recertify in the November-December timeframe, we will first alert you by email in October, and make it possible for you to recertify on-line, safely and speedily. If you happen to be changing email addresses, don't forget to update your OnLine BCD Directory listing and to send the new email address to dlq@abecsw.org, with your name and BCD number if possible.

BCD Clinicians Get New Website

A brand-new website has been launched for the benefit and interests of Board Certified Diplomates. The site, found at <http://abecsw.org/>, has many features, including an archive of ABE position statements, the OnLine BCD Directory, and through-the-web processes for recertifying and for updating your Directory listing. The site was redesigned to offer more information and to make it easier for consumers and referral-makers to understand the value of advanced clinical social work and to contact those who hold the BCD credential. It complements the new website of ABE's advocacy arm, the Center for Clinical Social Work, <http://centercsw.org/>. Take a look at both!

ABE Joins in Urging Better Forensic Rules

ABE has joined forces with the NASW chapter in Washington State to address issues raised by a BCD clinical social worker. The practitioner had provided services in a divorce-custody case, including a court-ordered independent evaluation. One of the parents complained to the state's licensing board, which has jurisdiction over various disciplines. In the course of the investigation, the clinical social worker maintained that the board may not have understood clinical social work practices which were customary for the area, consistent with ethical professional conduct, and endorsed by the judges and local clinical social workers. At least part of the problem arguably arose from the fact that there were not more than two clinical social workers on the nine-person board.

According to the *Bill of Rights for Clinical Social Workers*, clinical social workers have the right “to practice under state laws that clearly identify the scope of practice and responsibilities of clinical social workers in strongly marked contrast to those of non-clinical social workers and other healthcare disciplines” and “to be given a full and fair hearing and to be judged by their clinical social worker peers in matters of complaint brought to the state licensing board.” ABE therefore intervened and provided the NASW-Washington task force with a letter of support for this cause.

In seeking changes to Washington State’s licensing regulations, the task force recommends that a separate licensing board be created for clinical social work and that investigations of grievances against clinical social workers be conducted by those familiar with the profession. The task force also seeks to establish regulations which would allow clinical social work practice methods to be used in forensic procedures relating to divorce-custody issues. *BCD Newsflash* will continue to report on this case, which involves issues that affect the many clinical social workers who provide divorce-custody services, often under court auspices. These issues are by no means limited to Washington State, for no area of practice, nationwide, is so likely to generate complaints and misunderstandings about the clinical social worker’s role. Should you find yourself in need of assistance, call ABE’s 1-888-279-9378 helpline.

Mental Health Parity

Mental Health Parity is a national policy that stands a good chance of being enacted this year. For the past five years, ABE has supported efforts to achieve it. In the past year, we have also made it possible for you (through instructions in our e-mails) to make your views on these bills known to your federal representatives in the House and Senate. As a voting member of the Mental Liaison Group, ABE has joined many other organizations in advocating for these bills and suggesting improvements. At the moment, there is no “public alert” to pass along, but we will do so as soon as we hear from the sponsors again. When you receive an email from ABE about Mental Health Parity legislation, please consider acting on it!

German Journal Publishes ABE Pieces

The *Klinische Sozialarbeit* magazine, published by the national clinical social worker organization in Germany, ran two articles about clinical social work practice derived from ABE’s position statements. “Brief History of Clinical Social Work Psychoanalysis” and “Nature of Specialty Practice with Children” appeared in the October, 2006, issue of the magazine, along with a history of clinical social work practice by Dr. Roberta Graziano, BCD. This was a special issue looking at German and American practice issues. The ABE-related pieces formed a complement to the lead article, by Peter Dentler, entitled “Clinical Social Work in den USA: und Perspektiven fur Deutschland?” It was interesting to see ABE described as a Qualifikationsprufungs organization.

ABE Article To Run In Journal

The **Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal**, published by Springer US, has accepted an article based on ABE's position statement on *Practice with Children & Their Families: A Specialty of Clinical Social Work*. The article, which focuses on practice at the expert level, describes specific knowledge and skills, or competences, by which the specialist applies theory, principles, and methods to meet the bio-psychosocial needs of children and their families. The following topics are addressed:

- the contours of clinical social work practice in this specialty
- the specific practice components of clinical social work practice in this specialty
- the context of the healthcare delivery enterprise and societal needs
- practice competences at the specialist level of professional development
- recommendations for improvements in this field of practice.

It is expected that the article will appear in an issue later this year. The full position statement, on which the article is based, is available at the ABE website, abecsw.org.

V.A. and The BCD

The Department of Veterans Affairs is preparing to implement new regulations which will allow Board Certified Diplomates employed by the V.A. to use their BCD status to apply for a special category of increased pay. The V.A. program may affect almost 4,000 clinical social workers. The V.A. is also busy expanding its programs to provide much-needed mental-health services to returning veterans, including a new program which encompasses services provided through private-sector systems and community behavioral health centers. At present, the U.S. uniformed services have a professional pay program which awards up to \$5,000 extra pay annually to those in uniform who hold the BCD.



Mike Brooks, MSW, BCD

Employee Assistance

ABE personnel will be attending and exhibiting at the 2007 Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) Conference in San Diego, October 25-27. If you are attending the conference, please be sure to stop by the booth and say hello to Michael Brooks, MSW, BCD, who also sits at the Board of Directors of the Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA). As an affiliate member of EASNA, ABE has a seat on its Board, from which we are able to advocate for clinical social work and board certification.

Join the Effort to Stop Suicide

As a BCD clinical social worker, you are invited to participate on October 11 in **National Depression Screening Day (NDS)** to teach the public how to spot the signs of suicide and to respond effectively. The National Hotline and Screening for Mental Health and other organizations are collaborating in this effort.

This year, NDS will provide kits that include:

1. Suicide prevention information for the public
2. Newly developed suicide assessment tools for clinicians
3. Mental health screening and education for the public, with the opportunity to meet with a clinician free of charge to discuss questions or screening results
4. Referral for those needing further evaluation

To learn more or to get involved, go to <http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/> or contact the NDS office at 781.239.0071. Please note that Screening for Mental Health, the non-profit organization that runs NDS, provides free military NDS kits and online mental health screening through a contract with the Department of Defense.



Qualify for a 10% Discount with HPSO Professional Liability Insurance Program!

If you've ever considered switching insurers, HPSO is ready for you. Endorsed by ABE and already insuring over 900,000 healthcare providers, HPSO offers superior occurrence coverage at an affordable premium. Get peace of mind, a preferred rate, and the benefits that you deserve.

With over 25 years of experience, the Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO) Professional Liability insurance is underwritten by American Casualty Company, a CNA company. A.M. Best Company, an independent insurance rating service, has rated CNA with an A (Excellent) rating (as of April, 2005).

ABE's Board Certified Diplomates have professional liability limits of up to \$1,000,000 for each claim and up to \$3,000,000 aggregate. Additional coverages, up to the applicable limits of liability, are built into the program at no extra cost. . .

10% Discount off Full-Time Premium Rate

License Protection

Assault Coverage (Not available in Texas)

Deposition Representation

Defendant Expense Benefit

Personal Injury Protection

Plus much more

[Click here](#) to view and print a detailed Benefit Guide (PDF 128kb).

Classification	Annual Premium Rate ¹
Clinical Social Worker - BCD Full-Time Self-Employed	\$216
Clinical Social Worker - BCD Part-Time Self-Employed	\$120
Clinical Social Worker - BCD Full-Time Employed	\$95
Clinical Social Worker - BCD Part-Time Employed	\$95

10% Discount of the FULL-TIME RATE ONLY. Discount applicable ONLY to active American Board of Examiners' Board Certified Diplomates.

Apply Now!

[Click here](#) to view, print, and then complete this application (PDF 116kb) especially for BCD certificants.

PTSD Course Free To BCD Clinicians in October

To help address the mental health needs of returning veterans, Essential Learning, Inc., and ABE are offering the course *Veterans and PTSD* at no charge through October 31. This two-hour course discusses current research, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and military personnel, and the prevalence, diagnostic approaches, assessments and treatment for PTSD.

Veterans and PTSD is approved for continuing education by ANCC, APA, ASWB, NBCC and various state accreditation bodies. The course is free of charge to any user who registers on or prior to October 31, 2007. You do not have to complete the course prior to that date. Once you have registered, you can also easily browse through any of the more than 250 courses available for purchase in an online library. For full instructions on accessing the *Veterans and PTSD* course, click [here](#).

[Click here](#) for our address and contact information. Send email change requests to dlq@abecsw.org .