



NCSBN
Leading Regulatory Excellence

Past Event: 2022 NCSBN Annual Meeting - President's Address Video Transcript

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Event

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Presenter

Jay P. Douglas, MSM, RN, CSAC, FRE, President, NCSBN Board of Directors; Executive Director, Virginia Board of Nursing

Good morning, members, past presidents, special guests, and staff. Thank you for being with us today. As we convene our annual meeting, it's good to see you and share ideas with our members from all over the country as well as different parts of the world. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for making the trip or for participating remotely.

We have come together to be inspired by amazing speakers, debate policy, and positions in our delegate assembly, and finalize our next efforts toward leading public protection, and vote on some of our next leaders. It's encouraging to see people who want to rise to the challenge of leadership.

And of course, it's always energizing to be around so many nursing regulators dedicated to protecting the public and who are passionate about innovation and creating positive change in the world. The NCSBN 2022 Board of Directors have been committed to the important work of this organization. I truly appreciate the contributions of the officers and directors who are currently seated, as well as the two Board members who departed during the past year.

Anne Coghlan from Ontario, Director-at-Large, and Amy Fitzgerald, North Carolina, Director-at-Large. Not unlike the governing bodies of each of your nursing regulatory boards, the NCSBN Board of Directors adjusted during the past year, to convene and continue the work.

It has not been easy while dealing with challenges back home during what has proven to be a couple of unusual years. So, I share with you some of the joys of the days when we were in totally virtual meetings. As you can see, some of us had to think, you know, harder and deeper than others. I would like to thank the NCSBN staff, led by our CEO, David Benton, and the chiefs who made this annual meeting possible.

We appreciate the level of planning, logistics, and attention to detail that went into convening this body. Please thank staff as you see them throughout the meeting and know that there are also many people

behind the scenes whose efforts and contributions made all this possible. Those staff that are in the room, if you'll please stand, and let's give staff a round of applause.

Time has certainly flown since our last delegate assembly, which I'm sure you recall was a virtual meeting. Although we have progressed, innovated, and adjusted through unusual times, we find ourselves at a hybrid meeting out of necessity and to accommodate all our members.

Although we are moving into a new phase, we know that COVID and other influences continue to impact travel, attendance at meetings, health, and the workforce here in the U.S. and around the world. The last two-plus years of a pandemic, as well as significant climate events, have affected the membership, and as you are aware, have required flexibility, perseverance, and resilience on personal and professional levels.

The Board of Directors is grateful for your engagement in the work of the organization and is always interested in knowing how we can support you and further reduce or lessen the burdens of state government. As I provide you with comments related to the activities of the Board of Directors, it's important to note several key governance roles within NCSBN.

The Delegate Assembly, here you are, as many of you heard about earlier today, is the membership body of the NCSBN composed of voting delegates. The Board of Directors, comprised of 11 elected members, includes 3 officers responsible for general supervision of the affairs of NCSBN between sessions of the Delegate Assembly.

The Chief Executive Officer, David Benton, serves as the administrative officer and has the authority and responsibility for the leadership, management, and supervision of NCSBN staff. We are fortunate to have a CEO such as David. Now, on to some comments reflective of this past year.

It's not possible to delve into all the specifics of the Board of Directors report that you will find beginning on page 16 of the Business Book. In the time I have with you, I will focus on some key activities in areas that influence the business of NCSBN and the work of the Board. As I regularly report to you in my post, NCSBN Board Member Communications, one of the activities that the Board undertakes is to conduct an environmental scan at each meeting.

And during this process, we frequently hear about new challenges and opportunities that arise. As you know, nurse regulatory boards all over the world continue to be impacted by global health issues, political factors, environmental factors, and workforce issues.

As I listen to the descriptions we've used in the past couple of years, we have moved from returning to normal to when we are through this pandemic, to references to the new normal. Now, today, I offer to you that the future is now, and the new normal can best be described as fluid and largely unknown.

We have learned over the last couple of years that the typical predictors and guideposts we've relied upon have to be viewed differently. We cannot rely on business as usual. Do any of us know what that really means anymore? I believe we must accept that the regulatory environment, policy issues, public health challenges, and public expectations will remain ever-changing at a pace that we have not experienced before.

There will be no returning to back in the day or before the pandemic other than to learn from our history and to acknowledge the innovations and progress since that earlier point in time. The fact remains that

our hospitals in many areas are still challenged with providing care and workforce preparation and distribution is a major concern.

As nursing regulators, with public protection as our mandate, we are challenged to take strategic action that will lead to quantum change. The NCSBN bylaws, in part, state that the purpose of NCSBN is to provide an organization through which jurisdictional boards of nursing act and counsel together on matters of common interest and concern affecting public health, safety, and welfare.

The Delegate Assembly recommendations and the sessions offered during the annual meeting agenda is one of the significant ways that we do that. The pandemic has certainly accelerated the pace of change and the need to move forward to ensure more consistent and more agile systems that are based on requirements that are relevant today and address cross-jurisdictional and international needs.

We have made huge strides in the last decade. However, there is more work to be done through a refreshed lens that takes into consideration the gaps that we have become aware of. The new normal is not a defined phase, an event, or a mark in time. It is often a day-to-day adjustment to the elements disease, climate, the economy, legislation, and policy.

Those influences do not recognize borders and nursing regulation challenges are shared by regulators all over the world. Global issues quickly become local issues, and if we harness our collective strengths, global solutions can inform local solutions and vice versa.

The Board of Directors' charge, along with our CEO, is to ensure we are fit for the future. That requires paying attention, being vigilant, and developing sound strategy. The Board's work is informed and enriched by the vision of our CEO, David Benton, and the leadership of the chiefs and directors who are expertly supported by the NCSBN staff who do an amazing job for this organization.

Reflecting on this past year and one of the ongoing processes, the Board of Directors has monitored the progress of fiscal year 2020 to 2022 strategic plan, not the one you're voting on, the one we're in now. The annual progress report is on Page 1 of the Business Book and outlines both the fiscal year accomplishments as well as future activities, giving you a sense of how this plan guides the work and offers opportunities for involvement by the Board, the membership, and the staff.

You will hear during the forums how the outcome of the Board Strategy Retreat held in October last year, began with the process for developing the 2022... '23, I'm sorry, to 2025 strategic initiatives. This is a key meeting.

That's the future direction and is held shortly after the new Board of Directors is seated. Usually, held in a location outside of Chicago, this meeting is a time for the Board of Directors, the CEO, and the Chiefs to come together for generative discussions, planning, and team building necessary to set a firm foundation for the coming year.

To harness diversity of thought, competencies, and experience, all attendees are asked to complete preparatory work, submit ideas and responses to topics that are the basis for discussion. This can be a little intimidating when you are a newly appointed board member. However, over the years, this has proved to be a very effective process.

And I share with you here, a picture of the Board of Directors, after a hard day's work participating in some team building during last year's retreat. Throughout the year, at regularly scheduled meetings, the

Board of Directors, as they contemplate the business of the organization in the areas of governance, finance, testing, IT, nursing regulation, and research, ask themselves, "Are we fit for the future? Are we prepared to what the future holds? Are we doing the right things for the right reason? Are we spending our resources wisely? Are we providing value to the membership? Are our actions aligned to the vision, mission, and values and to the results we desire? Are we making a difference?"

In terms of board governance, one of the activities that the Board undertakes is an assessment of the Board as a corporate body, and on alternate years, which occurred this year, NCSBN conducted a review of individual Board of Directors' performance. This process offers an opportunity to look at individual board member contributions in more detail and allows members to discuss strategies for overall Board of Director development, including member orientation and ongoing board education activities.

Many of the tools available for such an assessment are designed for nonprofit organizations that work in very different spaces than we do. This year, recognizing the unique nature of our business, we revised the assessment tool for it to be more aligned with this organization's structure and responsibilities. The process for board member performance assessment involved the completion by each director of a self-assessment survey instrument that consisted of questions focused on board member competencies, and each member also completed a survey related to each of their colleagues.

The consultant then met individually with each director to discuss their individual results and report, and the overall survey findings were presented to the Board of Directors and the CEO in a closed session to determine strategies going forward. The level of trust, risk-taking, and willingness to have crucial conversations throughout this process was impressive.

I share this with you as an example of the lengths to which we go to ensure sound governance and to ensure that we, as your Board of Directors is performing at the highest possible level to discharge our duties for the good of NCSBN. You will note in the Board of Directors report that to continue to look up and out, the board has been engaged with strategic partnerships, attending external meetings, and undertaking intentional joint work that ensures that regulation is at the table on a national level and that we collaborate on areas of mutual concern, ever mindful of our mission and strategic plan.

And you see here on the screen just some of the organizations that reflect also some of the meetings that we've attended over the years in our joint work. In addition to the highlights of business activities such as the strategic plan, creating a compact nation, and Next Generation NCLEX, NCSBN has been engaged with our regulatory colleagues from other disciplines and professional associations.

Three areas of mutual concern that impact regulation and led to engagement with our strategic partners are mental health, the opioid crisis, and workforce. And I just took a sample of some of the issues to discuss. The pandemic has taken a significant toll on nurses worldwide.

Sickness, burnout, intention to leave or move away from acute care and retirement are climbing, as are reports of abuse and violence against nurses. The stress on the profession has left an unprepared workforce, and nurses have faced care situations more challenging than they have ever been exposed to.

Preparations were not in place to support and educate related to the patient population nurses have to serve, and the profession has long overlooked self-care. From a nurse regulatory standpoint, a close examination of reports to boards related to safety to practice is necessary to ensure a balance between public protection and retention of a professional.

Alternative programs are playing an important role in regulatory boards are under greatest scrutiny to ensure that the license processes and the decisions provide adequate protection for nurses with conditions that may need to be accommodated. Prevention, self-care, resilience, and retention are top of mind. Likewise, the opioid crisis is a significant challenge that, along with NCSBN's Regulatory and Professional Association colleagues, we have worked to address.

At a meeting of the Opioid Regulatory Collaborative attended by the Board of Directors, we heard the stark reality of the current crisis, the current opioid crisis. We came together with our regulatory colleagues in medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, physical therapy, and social work to discuss strategies and opportunities for mutual work.

To put this in perspective as to the importance of this work, provisional data from the CDC indicates there were an estimated 107,000 drug overdose deaths in 2021, a 15% increase from 2020. As you know, the approach to the solutions is complex and must be multi-faceted, and we must ask ourselves, "Are we taking actions as regulators that are within our control? What resources are available to educate? What is the state of access to evidence-based treatment for licensees for opioid use disorder and mental health conditions, and the impact of the associated stigma? Have we considered updating policies related to opioid prescribing? Have we examined the effectiveness of required CE for prescribers and non-prescribers? What are the practice and patient safety implications?"

I think we can all agree more than ever, the workforce issues necessitate intentional collaboration between regulation, practice, and education. Through research committees, position statements, strategic objective work groups, and external stakeholder engagement, NCSBN remains focused on the many influences impacting our workforce, scope of practice, innovation, licensure mobility, licensure reform, migration, international recruitment, support workers, federal legislation, data analysis, care delivery, and nursing education redesign are component parts under which consideration is necessary to influence the workforce solutions.

As you participate in forums, this meeting, and focus groups, presentations, and deliberations, I want you to know that the Board of Directors values and considers vital your feedback, involvement, and questions to inform activities and decision-making. If we are to lead public protection and implement strategic action towards quantum change, it will take all of us.

Thank you again to the Board of Directors for taking on this leadership role and for their service, and expert contributions, and perseverance during the past year. Mark Majek and Cathy Borris-Hale, as you complete your terms on the board this week, know that your perspectives, your voices, and your energy will be missed. It has been my honor to serve as the President of Board of Directors of this premier organization this past year and I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the coming year.

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to participate in this meeting. Whether you are here in person, in Chicago, or joining us virtually, I hope you benefit from the content, dialogue networking opportunities offered around this year's theme "Leading Public Protection: Strategic Action Towards Quantum Change."

Thank you and let's make it a great week.