

## OPAG Minutes 06/05/2019

MISSION: Represent and advocate for the professional discipline of optometry and its Commissioned Officers, civil servants, contract and tribal optometrists serving within the Public Health Service and affiliated services.

### OPAG Voting Members

Present:

- CDR Christopher Cordes (Chair)
- LCDR Laura Alexander (Chair-Elect)
- LT Hanna Fylpaa (Executive Secretary)
- LT Jill Thompson
- LT Albert Licup
- LT Matthew Geiger
- CDR Gregory Smith

Absent/Excused:

- CDR Sarah Stienbarger
- CDR Patrick Britton

### Liasons and Non-Voting Members

- LT Regina Sullivan
- LT Emily Mathiak
- CAPT Dawn Clary

### Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve minutes from 02/06/2019: LT Albert Licup

Second: LCDR Laura Alexander

No objections. Minutes approved.

### Subcommittee Chair Reports

1. **Administrative Management:** LCDR Laura Alexander

No report.

2. **Awards:** LCDR Laura Alexander

Annabelle Stroch selected to receive IHS Student Award. Annabelle rotated through Lawton Indian Hospital in Oklahoma. Award to be presented at Marshall B. Ketchum graduation.

3. **Communications:** LT Jill Thompson

- Communications Co-Chair: LT Emily Mathiak

CDR Chris Cordes received a request from HSPAC to recognize OPAG officers in the month of July. An email will be sent requesting additional information from interested officers.

4. **Data & Evaluations:** LT Albert Licup

From April 10, 2019 Analytics Subcommittee Meeting: reviewing standard operating procedure for HSPAC across subcommittees, as well as creating surveys regarding career progression profile and

feedback input toward various PAGs that are submitting other surveys for review. Once promotions are announced the committee will compile and analyze the relevant survey data.

**5. Policy:** LT Matthew Geiger

Nothing to report.

**6. Recruitment (Ad Hoc):** CDR Cordes for CDR Sarah Stienbarger

Nothing to report.

**7. Stakeholder & Community Engagement:** CDR Patrick Britton

Nothing to report.

**8. Technical Readiness:** CDR Cordes for CDR Robert Chelberg

Working on deployment competency template to send to HSPAC. Concern over qualifications for someone to prepare optometry equipment vs qualifications of someone performing optometry exams.

**9. Training, Education, and Mentorship:** CDR Greg Smith

Important points from Mentorship Meeting at COA conference:

-Focus on community outreach on CV, including vision screenings, health fairs, career fairs, flu shot drives, etc and how we are working to build those partnerships within the community.

-Clearly outline how subject matter expert is demonstrated. For example, holding the area liaison for area chief position with multiple optometrists reporting to that officer or being a sole provider for an area or providing village travel to provide care for remote communities. Also include the impact of the position.

There is restructuring occurring at the top of the committee. The committee is working to pair mentors and mentees, an algorithm is used for this pairing, however geographical location makes this difficult as many of us are isolated.

Ensure that CV and eDOC documents align.

Collateral duties on CV should show impact. Example, as secretary of OPAG you took minutes, taught on certain subjects, coordinated guest speakers, etc.

### **Stakeholder Engagement Reports**

• **Chief Clinical Consultant:** CAPT Dawn Clary

CAPT Carmen Palma has stepped down as Area Chief Consultant for Alaska and CDR Sarah Stienbarger has been selected to replace her in this position.

Following a conference call with HSPAC CPO CAPT Willis Marsh, she is impressed with OPAG and sees OPAG as setting an example for other PAGs.

• **CDC Liaison:** LT Regina Sullivan

○ May was Vision Health Month at the CDC. An article was published on Vision Health for Millennials and how to help preserve sight throughout their lifetime.

○ URL for article: <https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/resources/features/vision-health-millennials.html>

## Discussion Topics/ Q&A

### • **IP/RB/BP/BCIP:**

- CAPT Clary contacted pay technicians regarding errors in IP/RB processing. Some officers are seeing Advancement Indebtedness Loan and other errors on pay statements. These errors should be corrected by next pay period. Contact CAPT Clary with any errors or concerns and she can direct you to the correct people in payroll and compensation. She is confident these errors will be corrected.
- LT Licup has applied for IP only and is diligently setting aside a portion of his paycheck for the time when his contract application is eventually processed.
- LT Fylpaa's contracts should have gone into effect in January 2019 but as of most recent paycheck nothing has changed. CDR Cordes suggests speaking with payroll technician and area liaison regarding delays.
- CDR Cordes reminds that IP is a Federally-regulated pay that AOA advocated for in the 80's.

### • **Call to Active Duty – New OD's**

- A few optometrists are still in the process.

### • **COA Minneapolis Review**

- CDR Greg Smith and CAPT Barbara Cohen are great resources for mentorship.
- CDR Smith recommends officers attend COA when possible. Next meeting will be in Glendale, Arizona in June 2020. COA meeting is very broad and public health focused, not specific to eyes and optometry. COA focuses on partnerships in the community, opioid crisis and Narcan, deployments, retirement, workshops, presentations, rapid-fire presentations, nurse presentations, administration, diversity in deployment, diversity inclusiveness, environmental health, and many other broad subjects.
- CDR Smith recommends all officers attend the retirement seminar every 3-4 years as processes change and for considerations as retirement dates approach. At a minimum, this seminar is recommended 3-4 years before retirement to ensure career timeline is appropriate.
- Seven optometrists were present at the COA conference this year but overall optometry is not very visible. Optometrists historically are not presenting at the conference and this is a missed opportunity for exposure to lecturing. We should promote how eyes and vision relate to public health and deployment. We should promote what makes us unique, for example village travel in Alaska and the fact that many of us are essentially working a RAM mission every day of the week, whereas a lot of colleagues in different categories and agencies participate in RAM events on a yearly basis or less. We should be promoting our clinical leadership, many of us are in positions outside of our comfort zones and we can use these experiences to teach and mentor on how to cope through some of these TDYs that we have been assigned throughout the years.
- CDR Smith encourages optometry to submit abstracts for presentations at future COA meetings. We are subject matter experts and have interesting information to present. This will also increase optometry visibility. Lecture abstracts may be denied, but don't be discouraged and do be persistent.
- CDR Smith encourages additional endorsements in addition to our qualifying Doctor of Optometry degree, such as CAC and COR training.
- LT Thompson and CDR Smith stress the importance of networking, getting your name out there, and the opportunities for this at the annual COA conference.

### • **Deployment on USNS Comfort**, email received from CCHQ/RedDOG, CDR Cordes strongly encourages deployment on this mission and stresses what an incredible opportunity this is. Contact CDR Cordes with questions or if selected to deploy on this mission.

### **Good/Welfare**

- CDR Smith has received service unit approval to deploy on USNS Comfort and is submitting his application forward. He will be looking for coverage at his Montana duty station while he is deployed, sometime between mid-July through mid-November, preferably for 2 weeks. Please contact him if available to help with coverage.
- LT Geiger reports their first student has come through in Clinton, Oklahoma, a third year student from Salus, he is very excited to have the student program begin. He also reports a new optometrist beginning in El Reno this week.
- CDR Cordes offers his services in implementing student programs, he has a significant amount of experience with this and may be contacted for assistance.
- Deadline date for promotion results is the end of the day on June 30, 2019.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:51am by CDR Cordes.**

Upcoming OPAG meetings:

07-August-2019

All meetings are:

08:00 Alaska

09:00 Pacific

10:00 Mountain

11:00 Central

12:00 Eastern