Innovation and Regulation – Oxymoron or Opportunity?

Our Board and Staff believe strongly in the value of regulation and we strive to be innovative in our critical mission of protecting the public through shared goals. There is great opportunity in innovation which does not interfere with effective regulation. These strategies are not mutually exclusive and must be integrated to be successful in our work. I am excited to highlight several examples of board innovation...

“New Grad Fee Discount”

First, I want to take this opportunity to extend appreciation to stakeholders, including applicants, licensees, social work educators, professional social work organizations, Legislators, and the Governor, for the welcomed support and collaboration to ensure the BOSW licensing fee increase was passed into law. The board approved an innovative "new grad discount" resulting in an increase of only 15% for new LSW and LGSW initial licenses, to be responsive to stakeholders’ concerns.

Increased Education and Outreach

With additional financial resources the board is developing innovative and free educational tools for applicants and licensees, which we hope to publish in 2020. First, is a free online licensing law learning tool, in an open-book quiz format, to help licensees and applicants learn more about the Board’s Practice Act and ensure safe and ethical social work practice. In addition, we are in the initial phase of developing online educational modules on the topics of supervision, continuing education, ethics, and licensing requirements, which will be posted at our website. We updated our brochures with a focus on plain language, and continue to develop new informational materials like the “Top 10 Tips” and “Application Action Steps” fact sheets to help licensees and applicants navigate licensure.

BOSW 2020 Legislative Proposal

The 2020 Legislative Proposal is the culmination of almost two years of the Legislation and Rules Committee work reviewing each section of the BOSW Practice Act and includes 13 sections of statute. Much effort has gone into reorganizing sections and subdivisions to increase clarity, readability with plain language, and to simplify sections to create common-sense reform updates to the Social Work Practice Act.

The Board intentionally appointed three representatives from its Advisory Committee, from the National Association of Social Workers-MN Chapter, Coalition of Licensed Social Workers, and the Minnesota Conference on Social Work Education, to its Committee, to include stakeholder involvement, input and expertise. I am extremely proud of the great effort by stakeholders, board members, and staff to produce this proposal.

The Board is excited for the 2020 Legislative Session! Please read more about the scope and intended goals of the proposal at the new 2020 Legislative Proposal page at the Board’s website and subscribe to receive Licensing News & Updates to stay up to date on the proposal. I am confident the proposal will create outcomes that benefit applicants, licensees, mental health workforce, state, and board!

New BOSW Strategic Plan

Beginning conversations and planning are underway to conduct a board “advance” (most often known as a “retreat”) in early 2020. The intent is to move the agency in a forward direction, to engage in building effective governance, and determine the best strategy to create a new innovative, strategic plan to guide board and staff work.

We are excited about advancing our strategic goals in 2020. Our Board and staff renew our commitment to be collaborative, innovative regulators!

Best regards,

Kate Zacher-Pate, LSW
Executive Director