



NCBTMB Independent Governance Panel Report Executive Summary

May 9, 2007

As you are aware, NCBTMB entered 2007 at a crossroads. The continued primacy of our organization as the certification body for our profession requires more inclusive, reliable and responsive customer service, greater communications with all of our primary stakeholders, and greater organizational transparency, accountability and visionary leadership. Paramount to the credibility of our organization was addressing concerns raised regarding previous Board stewardship. Actions of the immediate past Chair resulted in the dismissal of two Board members in November and raised questions concerning management issues, as expressed by a group of concerned volunteers. As a result, an independent governance panel was engaged to investigate and report their findings to the NCBTMB Board.

As part of our commitment to transparency, we are sharing our progress and the results of the independent review with our volunteers, as well as certificants, staff, schools, state boards, the media and all other stakeholders. Following is an executive summary of the findings of that panel, relevant changes initiated by the current Chair at the beginning of 2007, as well as areas of future action determined by the Board.

Recommendations Regarding Director Removal

- 1. Recommendation:** The Board should rescind the action of the 2006 Chair and review the expulsion of the directors.

Action: The Board has overturned the action and rendered a judgement on the expulsion.

- 2. Recommendation:** If the Board determines that expulsions were improper, then the removed directors should be reinstated subject to their renewing their certification within thirty (30) days from the date of notification of reinstatement. The appointed directors would be dismissed and given the support of the Board for future Board elections.

Action: On Sunday, April 29th, the Board was presented with the report and recommendations of the independent governance panel's review initiated in February 2007. Following a thorough review of those recommendations, the NCBTMB Board deliberated and subsequently determined to offer re-instatement to the two individuals who were removed from the Board in November 2006, once both had been recertified by NCBTMB. The Board is pleased to announce that, effective May 2, Neal Delaporta has been recertified, has accepted the offer and has agreed to assume his position on the Board effective immediately. He will also function as interim Secretary/Treasurer and as a member of our Executive Committee. Monica Reno has also been notified and has begun the requisite recertification process. We enthusiastically welcome both back to their leadership roles with NCBTMB.

General Governance Recommendations

The panel also presented a detailed series of recommendations regarding governance. The 2007 Board, under Chair Feeley's leadership, had already begun implementing changes designed to remedy some of the same issues that were manifest as recommendations of the panel. Beginning in January of this year and continuing through the present, these changes include:

- a. A full review of NCBTMB Bylaws and Policies & Procedures by the bylaws committee in consultation with an expert panel of bylaws professionals;
- b. Governance training during 2007 Board meetings which included a parliamentarian for purposes of adherence to proper policies and procedures;
- c. The establishment of a volunteer/leadership training program in August;
- d. Initiation of strong relationships between the Board, staff and volunteer groups, as evidenced by the recent strategic planning meeting in April where members of all three groups attended and participated;
- e. Re-activation of the re-certification notification process; and
- f. Reaching out by the Chair and CEO in their respective roles with the goal of stabilizing relationships and establishing new bridges with the CAM and healthcare community, as well as promoting positive messages with the media.

In addition, the Board has already begun deliberating and has accepted recommendations in response to other issues from the governance panel. Key recommendations and/or action items include:

1. **Recommendation:** The Board needs to elevate its agenda to broader professional policy issues, strategic planning, financial and other key management issues, new challenges of board orientation and self-assessment.
Action: The Board will focus on discussions aimed at enhancing strategy, finance and policy issues in order to heighten levels of performance and professionalism.
2. **Recommendation:** The Board should conduct an evaluation of responsibilities assigned to the Executive Committee and specify how and when the committee meets and reports back to the full Board. Minutes should be kept of all Executive Committee meetings along with voting records. Further, the board should expand the Committee to four members (three voting), separating secretary and treasurer.
Action: NCBTMB will re-examine the scope, composition, roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee based on input from the Board, bylaws committee and an external panel of bylaws experts.
3. **Recommendation:** The Board should conduct an annual performance assessment of its own work, both individually and collectively.
Action: NCBTMB will implement Board self-evaluation, quality improvement tools that will help guide, stimulate and measure the continued pursuit of excellence.
4. **Recommendation:** Policies and procedures should be drafted concerning the notification and maintenance of director recertification.
Action: NCBTMB has reactivated and expanded its recertification process of notifying certificants of pending expirations by mail at one year and six month intervals. In addition, nine- and three-month email notices are being sent, as well as a final notice at expiration. As a result, recertification numbers are already showing a significant increase



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over last year to date. At the same time, NCBTMB is developing clearer operational policies and procedures with respect to notification regarding Director recertifications.

- 5. Recommendation:** NCBTMB should consider adding an “affiliate” category for professionals in the field who would otherwise not qualify for certification but are interested in and supportive of NCBTMB and the field.

Action: The Board and the recertification sub-committee have already begun discussions of alternatives to hands-on practice for such individuals, to cover those who teach, conduct research, speak in public, etc. This may or may not be in the form of an alternate certification.

- 6. Recommendation:** Policies and procedures should be devised for proper access and dissemination of the organization's bylaws and policies and procedures for interested parties.

Action: The NCBTMB is taking steps to comply with the recommendation, including posting it's bylaws on the NCBTMB website and making public documents available to the public.

- 7. Recommendation:** Any declaration of a vacancy and subsequent selection of a successor should be a Board responsibility and function, never assigned to a smaller group or one individual.

Action: As NCBTMB revamps its bylaws and policies and procedures, this will be clearly articulated and adhered to.

We are pleased with and grateful for the guidance of the panel, and we are confident that implementing these suggestions will improve the integrity and effectiveness of the Board’s proceedings and ultimately the quality of the organization's performance.

By challenging and changing the ineffective processes of the past, we are beginning to achieve what is necessary for the long-term health, viability and growth of our organization. As Chair, I am confident that the members of our Board are now in alignment, speaking with one unified voice. There is a growing sense of excitement and participation within the volunteer groups, and the path toward tomorrow is clearer than ever.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and effort in this review process, and commend each participant on the spirit of professionalism imbued in the report. I especially want to thank each and every volunteer within the organization. It is your steadfast commitment to excellence that makes NCBTMB an organization with unlimited possibility and a brilliant future.

Now, I look forward to collectively returning our full attention and resources to the good works of a revitalized NCBTMB, and all of the stakeholders we serve.

Sincerely,

Donna M. Feeley, MPH, RN, NCTMB
Chair, NCBTMB