

Association of Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards
37th Annual Meeting of State Delegates
September 26 -27, 2023, Salt Lake City, Utah

Tuesday September 26 Salt Lake E

8:30 Jennifer Smothermon (TX), AMFTRB President, opened the Annual Meeting. Jennifer welcomed delegates and introduced the of Board of Directors: Kelly Olson (ND), President-Elect; Mary Guth (SD), Past President; Lynell Rice Brinkworth (SD), Treasurer; Jeremy Blair (AL), Secretary; Erika Evans, (PA) Member at Large.
Introduction of Delegates & Participants – Jennifer invited each delegate and others from their board to introduce themselves.

8:30 – 9:00 Welcome Utah Board – Jana Johansson gave a warm welcome from the Utah Board.
Roll Call of Member States – Jeremy Blair led the roll call of states. Present: AK, AL, AR, ID, IL, KS, LA, MN, ND, NE, NM, OH, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VI, WY. He further announced that all 54 members of AMFTRB are in good standing.

President's Report: Jennifer Smothermon

On behalf of the AMFTRB Board of Directors, I welcome you to our 37th Annual Meeting. We are so very grateful to be gathered here in the beautiful state of Utah, and we are even more thankful that YOU are here. We want to extend a warm welcome to our newest member – The US Virgin Islands – The Board voted to accept their membership, and we would like to have a confirmation of that vote from our delegates. We would also like to extend a very special thanks to the Utah MFT Board and Jana Johansson, for your

hospitality. The Board of Directors has put a full agenda together, and we are excited to connect and collaborate with all of you over the next day and a half.

Although each of us wears many hats in our professional work, as we work together over the next 2 days, let's be mindful that we are all here in our capacity as regulators – board members, board staff/teams, and state delegates. Our primary focus throughout our time together and the reason for our existence is to set minimum standards for licensure that protect the public. Throughout our discussions, I encourage you to keep that lens in mind, although I welcome all of you MFTs in the room to bring in your excellent communication and problem-solving skills!

Over the past year since we met in Louisville, the Board, our Executive Director, Lois, and our committees have been working diligently to support the mission of AMFTRB: to facilitate communication among our member boards, to collaborate in developing compatible standards in marriage and family therapy, to aid and support our member boards in fulfilling their obligations, to engage in research in the regulation of marriage and family therapy, and, of course, to develop, conduct, and maintain the exam. Over the past year, we've worked on the priorities identified in our last meeting, including researching, and discussing pathways to enhance licensure mobility, research on quality assurance, complaints and continued competency and supervision, and ongoing conversations and providing resources related to diversity and inclusion. A BIG thank you to each of you who have worked on our research and served on focus groups and committees, including our Exam Construction and Item Writing, Mobility, Elections, and Finance committee members. I also want to take a minute to recognize and honor the life and dedicated service of our practice exam tech

expert, TesTrac president and owner, Doug Odell. AMFTRB has worked with Doug since 1995 until his passing in August of this year.

I want to encourage you all to peruse and use your AMFTRB website as a resource and database throughout the coming year. There you'll find a wealth of information, including Guidelines on Sanction Matrix and Teletherapy, several charts comparing supervision, supervisors, licensing standards, and continued competency across jurisdictions, and resources related to Mobility and our Endorsement Model. The research is clear – everything that we can do to agree on substantially equivalent requirements will help support all models of licensure mobility. Some of that research has already been provided as a resource on our website. You'll also find links to several other regulatory and professional organizations, including CLEAR. If you are able, I hope you will stay for the CLEAR conference this week. Either way, I encourage you to access CLEAR resources, including their Board Member Training, recordings of previous presentations by experts on licensure mobility and on diversity and inclusion and their podcast. We believe that well trained board members are better equipped to handle the regulatory issues they will face, and AMFTRB is here to support you and your board.

We tried on a new model for our annual meeting last year that included more panel discussions and opportunities for our delegates to converse and collaborate. We received so much positive feedback last year that we are using a similar format this year. I encourage you – and cheer you on – in healthy discussion and collaboration as we consider relevant topics in regulation of marriage and family therapy. Our focus in this meeting is once again centered around the feedback that we've received from our member boards about the issues you are facing, including

pathways to licensure, mobility, and standards in post graduate supervision. In addition, we are hoping to provoke thought and stimulate conversation about emerging issues in the field of MFT regulation, including the impact of AI and social media on public protection and our role in public protection pertaining to domestic violence and other crisis situations.

9:00 – 12:00 Regulatory Trends I: Pathways to Licensure Across Jurisdictions Mobility Models for LMFT Workforce.

Jessica Poitras, Legislative Counsel, Institute for Justice
Christine Michaels, CAE, AAMFT CEO
Megan Oudekerk, PsyD, LMFT, RPT-S, ED COAST
Joy Alafia, MBA, CAE, ED CAMFT

Jennifer introduced panel speakers.

Jessica Poitras presented: “Licensed to Work” – low to mid licensing. “Universal Licensing Recognition” – policy that recognizes 1 state to another, including education and training requirements. Easier pathway to move from 1 state to another. Every state using ULR is different. Most impactful laws including good “common provisions,” including granting license if person has valid or in good standing license; only applies to people who have worked for 1 year; pass exam/training experience in first state; no disciplinary action or disqualifying criminal records as determined by the state; no revocation by another board. This ensures safety, reduces barriers and protects the public (REVIEW AMFTRB Model for Endorsement for these specific things) What is the Board’s role? Identify similar scopes of practice and determine substantially equivalent language. 22 states have ULR, 5 include medical professionals; IJ can provide specific info. Why ULR instead of Endorsement or Compacts? Addresses workforce shortage; allows states and boards to act unilaterally instead of 1:1 (Endorsement) or bilaterally

(Compact); allows state boards and legislatures to have more authority over their own rules/regs; supportive of Compacts – can exist together; states can have all 3 models; supports telehealth.

Christine Michaels presented on behalf of AAMFT – Portability Plan based on their Workforce Study called, “Access MFTs” (aamft.org/worforcestudy). Key takeaways: 71% expressed interest in a second license; 44% want to expand portability; 38% are interested in compacts; bordering states are the greatest issue. Goal: rapid advancement of the MFT profession. Model Law: license in another state; completed application without experience timeframe; took their example from Idaho. Roadmap: Phase 1: 10 state study in 2024 (CA, GA, Iowa, KY, MD, NC, VI, TN...); working with CAMFT to accept national exam. Phase 2: 2025, can email familyteam@aamft.org for more information; \$1.5 million going into the project; partner organizations signed on; gathering letters of support and volunteers. Gave Medicare update and discussed upcoming strategic initiatives: revision of Code of Ethics and Jobs of Tomorrow; will need task force for both.

Megan Oudekerk presented on behalf of COAST: Group of states that come together in 2018, supporting MFT state associations and individuals. 2022, board formed. Grassroots organization. Developed organically from conversations around MFT. Identified Needs in the field: education, quality training, reducing barriers to licensure. Therapists wanting to get licensed in other states is a complex question. She was present to answer questions and to be a listener.

Joy Alafia presented on behalf of CAMFT. 65th anniversary of their organization. 2017 survey indicated telehealth. Hurdles to licensure in CA include number of hours in coursework and practicum, passing 2 exams. Times are changing; BBS removed some barriers. Advocacy for adopting MFT exam in CA. 30-day licensure recognition for out of state practitioners.

Licensed portability study: 97% of MFTs are interested. 88% see clients out of state. 55% do conjoint therapy. Wanting to work on reducing barriers to licensure. Advocating for national exam without racial bias.

Regulatory Trends I: Pathways to Licensure Across Jurisdictions State Delegates – continued discussion of the panel and panel took questions from the delegates.

12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH All Delegates and Presenters

1:00 – 2:00 Regulatory Trends II: Risk for violence and homicide for couples: A research review

Chelsea Spencer, PhD, LMFT, Research Assistant Professor
Sandra Stith, PhD, University Distinguished Professor, Emeritus, AHS, Kansas State University

Jennifer introduced speakers on the panel:

Only 2-50% of providers screen for IPV; assessment is crucial. 36-58% of couples coming to therapy have experienced IPV. Strongest risk factors are other forms of violence or being a victim. Therapist can help to reduce risk factors. IPH – 13.5% of all homicides are committed by a current or former partner. 38.6% are against women; only 3% against men. Risk factors include previous partner violence. 1000% increase with access to guns, strangulation, rape, control, stalking, jealousy, substance abuse, less than high school education, rage, MH issues, violence. Assessing for guns in couples where there has been violence and creating protocols for this is safe practice. The Danger Assessment. What do regulators need to do? What promotes professional competence in this area? How to assess access to firearm? Do states require CE in suicide prevention? What about duty to warn? Is it in your informed consent? Good training programs and regulation: require education and training; know how to do DV screening before seeing clients; suicidal/homicidal ideation rules and protocols; have best

practices on website; know crisis intervention plans; relationships with local law enforcement; cultural competency; know red flags for extreme risk protection orders.

2:00 – 3:00 Regulatory Trends II: Implications for Regulators

State Delegates – The delegates broke into small group discussions to reflect on the information and questions by the presenters and to discuss what their states are currently doing to promote safety.

3:30 – 4:30 Regulatory Trends III: Regulating Emerging Technology

AI and Social Media Regulation – State Delegates were provided with resources prior to the meeting; see resources on the website. Jennifer introduced the topic, and delegates broke into small groups to discuss what their states are doing related to AI. States gave feedback suggesting that AMFTRB develop guidelines related to AI and MFT regulation, based on research. They wanted to know about complaints related to AI, how to stay on top of the issue. They asked about the ethical considerations of clinicians in disclosing the use of AI and regulations re: Informed Consent. They noted that social media can be covered under existing rules. Biggest factor: transparency of the MFT with clients about AI use.

Regulatory Trends IV: State Delegate were in small groups and encouraged to discuss updates on DEIA in their states.

WY: Board composition and traveling to meetings to engage the public. LA: 3 CEUs in multicultural training. TN: mass rule revision, including changing pronouns. KS: new license types; how to get license back; adding CE requirements in cultural diversity; leg not receptive to DEI. MN: large focus on cultural competency; grant funds available for CE and loans; state pays for ELL accommodations for national exam; considering alternative pathways for licensure, including provisional licensure for those who fail the exam; considering

eliminating licensure. CA: transgender inclusion in language.
ND: strong stance against reparative therapy. TX: CEUs in
cultural diversity.

4:30 Adjourn for the day

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CLOSED SESSION

8:30 – 9:30 MFT National Examination Annual Report
Vicki Gremelsbacker, M.S.Ed., President PTC.

Jennifer introduced Vicki.

Vicki presented the Annual Exam Report. During the presentation, she realized that there were slides and pages that should have been included that were not. She noted that these would be available to all the delegates after the meeting. After her presentation, there were some questions from the delegates regarding the overall pass rate, asking for an explanation of the data Vicki indicated that this would be provided. She reviewed how DEIA is addressed throughout the exam process: recruitment of SMEs, SME training, requesting test items from groups, PTC training, CLEAR DEIA committee, reviewing feedback, monitoring for changes in various groups, DIF analysis. Several state delegates noted that they would like to see more data on demographics and how this information is being used.

OPEN SESSION

10:00 – 11:00 Regulatory Trends V: Continued Competence Supervision
MFT's Competencies for Independent Practice
Post-Graduation Supervised Experience Hours

Pamela Rollins, PhD, LMFT/S, CFLE-P Louisiana Tech
University, Lois Paff Bergen, PhD, LMFT, and Peter Bradley,
PhD, LMFT-S, National University

Jennifer introduced Pam Rollins and Lois.

Pam presented on research. Current climate is deregulation. There is no empirical data that supports number of hours, modality or type of supervision...that supports public protection. Study included 600 participants. Harmful: not using contract, not monitoring supervisee work, meeting less than 1 hour per week. Urging states to include these as mandatory standards. Most supervision is case report, which doesn't tell everything or account for supervisees not telling information. 1241 cases from 2008-2018: 29% provisionally licensed MFTs; only 2.5% violations by supervisors. Current study with focus groups: Provisional MFTs, Supervisors, Board Members. Considering how to determine minimum competence in supervision. All supervisees express frustration on cost based on their income. What are boards looking for as minimum competency: business acumen, rules/laws/ethics/no violations, personal growth, cultural competence, skills in therapy. Supervision has a lot to do with responsibility: gatekeeping. If they don't make a complaint with the board, they must sign off on hours. Remediation plans are required, but few do this. Pam asked if there's an area that AMFTRB should pursue in research on supervision. Dale Battleson (NE), Greg Searles (WY), Spencer Zitzman (ID) agreed that we should continue this research.

11:00 – 11:30 Regulatory Trends VI: Quality Assurance, Complaints & Discipline Teletherapy, State Delegates – Pam presented on her most recent publication in this area. Complaints included: Telesupervision, Teletherapy, Social Media, Sexual and non-sexual dual relationships with clients, DUI/DWI – most in the first 10 years of practice and again after 40-50s/over 10 years. What happens after 2-5 years of practice? Delegates would like AMFTRB to continue to research complaints and discipline trends. How to respond to disciplined licensees just moving to coaching?

11:30 – 12:00 AMFTRB Business Meeting

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 11:32 am.

I. Secretary's Report

The 2022 business meeting Minutes were presented by Jeremy Blair.

Motion by Lisa Merchant (TX) to approve the minutes.
Kourtney Vaillancourt (NM) seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

II. Treasurer's Report

Lynell Rice Brinkworth presented the treasurer's report. Income exceeds expenses. AMFTRB's finances are stable.

Motion by Greg Searles (WY) to approve the financial report. Jamie Doming (LA) seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

III. Elections Committee Report

Shonda Craft (MN), Chair of the Elections Committee submitted the election report and results of the 2023 election for President-Elect and Secretary.

The Election Committee was comprised of Shonda Craft (MN, Chair), Lisa Merchant (TX) and Canaan Crane (OK). Sixteen member jurisdictions voted.

The results of the election have been certified by the Election Committee and AMFTRB Executive Director as follows:

President- Elect: Frank Gomez (MA)

Secretary: Jodie Elder (TX)

IV. New Business

Kelly introduced a motion approved during the Monday Board of Directors Meeting to change the deadline for annual membership dues. Greg Searles (WY) raised a point of order about notice to delegates and process. The motion was withdrawn.

V. Awards Presentations

Jennifer presented awards on behalf of AMFTRB to Jeremy Blair and Mary Guth for their service to the Board.

Jennifer recognized the efforts and contributions of Lisa Merchant (TX) and Shonda Craft (MN) for their work on the election committee, Danny Garnett (SC), and Noah Shields (AK) for their work on the reserve fund committee.

Jennifer thanked all participants of the conference for their time and dedication in attendance.

Kelly Olson (ND) recognized Jennifer for her work and dedication to AMFTRB in her service as President of AMFTRB.

VI. 2024 Annual Meeting of Delegates

The 2024 meeting will be in Baltimore, MD in September.

Motion by Lisa Merchant (TX) to adjourn the annual business meeting. Mallary Schaefer (ND) seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:53 am.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Board of Directors

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