

Musings of a NCC AP Commissioner

By Kansas Cafferty, NCC AP Commissioner

It has been quite an adventure serving NAADAC and the National Certification Commission of Addiction Professionals as of late. With a fantastic annual conference in Minneapolis, a landmark report from the U.S. Surgeon General, and the unprecedented success of the grandfathering opportunities for our NCAC I, NCAC II, and MAC national credentials, our small but very busy group of Commissioners has been working diligently to meet all of the needs of those certified by the NCC AP. I would like to reflect a bit on some of these experiences and how profound they have really been for me.

NAADAC 2016 Annual Conference: *Embracing Today, Empowering Tomorrow*

The NAADAC Annual Conference is always a reminder of NAADAC's professionalism, the professionalism of its presenters, the breadth and depth of the trainings offered, and how extremely proud I am of my membership and involvement with NAADAC and the NCC AP. Perhaps being a psychotherapist and addictions specialist in Southern California has skewed my view of some of the directions our field has moved into, but it was refreshing to be at a large scale conference that was not dominated by the vendors, exhibitors, and marketing arms of the industry's private sector. Many of the conferences I have attended recently are filled with laboratory-sponsored events and sponsors brokering services not built on the ethical integrity we as a profession adhere to.

NCAC I, NCAC II, and MAC Grandfathering Update

At the Annual Conference, the NCC AP Commissioners had their semi-annual in-person meeting to discuss current credentials and processes, and strategic planning for 2017. On the agenda was a review of our wildly popular grandfathering opportunities for our NCAC I, NCAC II, and MAC credentials. We opened the door to grandfathering to bring in some of the best in our profession and to advance the field with a strong set of national credentials that are easily recognizable, standardized, and accepted by managed care organizations and other payors.

The MAC credential is, and has long been, our most coveted credential, as it is the most recognized and reimbursed addiction credential. It represents our professional elite and is the highest form of professional distinction available in our profession. Truly no other credential for addiction excellence even compares to the MAC. Even so, we did not expect to be buried by the volume of qualified and hungry applicants for the grandfathering opportunities, and have spent significant time this year analyzing and refining our reviewing processes to employ a more effective and efficient way to review applications and issue credentials, all while maintaining the high quality of our credentials. Grandfathering is always risky to the value of a credential. Knowing the high stakes involved in grandfathering, we worked very hard to ensure the level of quality that has become synonymous with the NCC AP brand while processing over 5,600 applications and issuing new credentials to over 4,000 professionals. Our work was made easier by enormous contributions from NAADAC Executive Director Cynthia Moreno Tuohy and our Certification Manager Donna Croy and her incredible Certification team.

Facing Addiction in American: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health

On November 17th, I was fortunate to attend and represent the NCC AP at the national summit to launch the U.S. Surgeon General's highly anticipated report on substance misuse and substance use. At the Summit, the U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy and colleagues from SAMHSA, NIDA, and NIAAA presented on the report's key findings and messages. I was deeply moved by Dr. Murthy's passion and the force in which he and his team put our current epidemic of substance use disorders in the national spotlight. This report validates what we have been saying to all who would hear for years: prevention works, treatment is effective, and recovery is possible. I was taken with the personal and collective sense of the duty the NCC AP, NAADAC leadership, and NAADAC members have to respond to Dr. Murthy's call to healthcare professionals to support high quality care and the professional and educational standards to ensure Americans are getting the best care we can give them. We have such an incredible responsibility as clinicians, professional leaders, and for me, as a commissioner who is active in daily clinical practice to educate ourselves and our colleagues to ensure that we are offering our clients the best care and options for recovery. This is a watershed moment. Never before has our work and the potentially catastrophic consequences of inaction and inadequate treatment been given a federal voice and spotlight as they have now!

Get Involved

If there is anything I hope to impart during "my turn in the barrel" as the voice of NCC AP for our beloved magazine, it is that collectively this organization is not only capable, but qualified to meet the challenges put before us by the Surgeon General. The surge of NCAC I, NCAC II, and MAC applicants only concretizes the truth that we have the will, the capability, and the skills to meet the needs of this growing profession and the needs of those who suffer from the deadly brain disease that is addiction. I believe it is time for all of us to rise to the occasion. Contribute to our profession by applying to serve on the NCC AP Commission, the NAADAC Executive Committee, your State Affiliate Board, or on one of NAADAC's many committees! Each and every component of our beloved organization is ready for you to step forward. We have so much to do, and for once in our careers, the wind is at our backs.



In addition to serving the NCC AP as a Commissioner, Kansas Cafferty, LMFT, CATC, NCAAC, is also the owner and operator of both the Cafferty Clinic and True North Recovery Services, an intensive outpatient treatment center in Encinitas, CA. He can be contacted through either of his websites www.sandiegoaddictions.com or www.caffertyclinic.com.