

PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY REPORT TO AREA 3

March 15, 2019

Member Services: The Society continues to review our current programs and services for relevancy to ensure that our members stay active within the district branch and at the local chapter level. With the election of Dr. Certa as new Area 3 trustee, and with another Area 3 representative vacancy, Drs. Hector Colon-Rivera and Nazanin Silver will begin their terms as Area 3 representatives after the APA Annual meeting. Our Society continues to distribute materials to eligible members and to chapter presidents/membership committee members to encourage Fellow and Distinguished Fellowships. We have three new Distinguished Fellows being inducted at the Convocation of Distinguished Fellows in San Francisco.

Our chapters continue to hold various events to educate and inform member/nonmembers of networking opportunities, benefits of membership, malpractice insurance/risk management topics and on future PaPS leadership opportunities. The Philadelphia chapter has two educational opportunities in the spring: our Annual Women's Brunch and Colloquium of Scholars. We were fortunate to have APA President, Althea Stewart, MD as the keynote speaker for the Women's Brunch. Our Pittsburgh chapter has commenced planning for their first Symposium-Update in Psychiatry on March 23rd. Topics include long acting injectables, dementia, substance use and parasomnia. It is their hope that this will be an annual event. Finally, our Central and Lehigh Valley chapters will be hosting CME meetings on medical marijuana in early May. For more information, access our website at www.papsych.org.

The Society's annual scientific educational meeting was held on Saturday, November 17, 2018. This CME event satisfies patient safety/risk management licensure requirements. A highlight for this year's gathering was that Dr. Everett, APA immediate past president, presented PA Department of Health Secretary Rachel Levine, MD, with the Jacob Javits Award. This year's event is tentatively scheduled for November 2, 2019 at the Chubb Conference Center in Lafayette Hill.

Advocacy: Governor Wolf handily won re-election this past fall. Early this session, his administration began a listening tour to gauge citizen's interest/opinions on legalizing marijuana. At the same time, the state Department of Health is exploring additional expansions to our current medical marijuana program. Advocates tout the success of the program, although dispensaries have only been in existence for about a year. Stay tuned for additional updates.

The Society continues to work closely with one of our most respected House members on proposed legislation to create Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) to temporarily remove a firearm from an individual demonstrating a threat to themselves or others. With the sponsors' focus on harm reduction/part of a public health strategy to assist in reducing suicide across the commonwealth, additional stakeholders are engaged in this effort. PaPS was quoted in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in late February. A link to the article is attached here: <https://www.philly.com/news/extreme-risk-protection-orders-guns-pennsylvania-stephens-killion-20190305.html>. The NRA currently opposes this measure.

Collaboration with our partners at the PA Medical Society (PAMED) and with our fellow medical specialty organization colleagues continues a variety of issues, including a recent proposed change to the rules governing appropriate venue in medical professional liability actions. If enacted, the proposal would have expanded the possible venues where a medical liability action can be initiated. Fortunately, the state legislature got involved and introduced a resolution to stay any further action until a study is performed to substantiate the need for this option. Other areas that the Society joins our house of medicine colleagues includes opposing an Ambulatory Surgical Center tax, out of network (surprise) billing and prior authorization.

Opposing legislative efforts related to scope of practice expansion remains a top priority for the Society. Proposed legislation to allow independent practice for Advance Practice Nurses was reintroduced a few weeks ago. Additional proposed legislative initiatives the Society has on its radar screen includes amendments to our Minors Consent Act, psychiatric bed tracking, substance use legislation, and mental health parity. There is a proposed push to Carve-In Behavioral Health treatment and services within the Medicaid program. The Society has not taken a position since we have members with opinions on both sides of the issue. With the beginning of a new two-year session, we anticipate a flurry of activity over the next few months while the legislature debates the 2019-2020 proposed state budget.

Please contact Deborah Ann Shoemaker, Executive Director, with any additional questions or for more information.

Respectfully Submitted,
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