

PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY REPORT TO AREA 3
September 21, 2018

Member Services: Recruitment/retention efforts continue in earnest at our district branch/chapter levels. We had three members inducted as Distinguished Fellows during this year's APA Convocation of Fellows. Our Society will continue to distribute materials to eligible members and to chapter presidents/membership committee members to encourage Fellow and Distinguished Fellowships.

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. Four of our six chapters hold an annual resident event. Their agendas range from poster sessions to social events. One of our malpractice carriers also presents resident awards to recognize excellence across residency programs.

The Society's annual scientific educational meeting will be held on Saturday, November 17th at the Chubb Conference Center in Lafayette Hill. This CME event satisfies patient safety/risk management licensure requirements. A highlight for this year's gathering is that Dr. Everett, APA immediate past president, will be presenting PA Department of Health Secretary Rachel Levine, MD, with the Jacob Javits Award. For more information or to register, go to www.papsych.org.

Our Society's leadership continues to work with staff to strategically review our proposed budget and our scope of work to determine if our programs and services are in line with member needs and interests. Stay tuned for updates.

Advocacy: With limited number of session days left in this two-year legislative session, speculation is that not much substantive activity will occur prior to November 30th. Governor Wolf is up for re-election with limited competition. The Wolf Administration also continues to create initiatives to fight against the heroin/opioid overdose crisis. Under his tenure, state and federal funding for the expanded use of Medication Assisted Treatment is at an all-time high, along with his continued funding of Opioid Use Centers of Excellence.

The Society has been working 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. The sponsor created House Bill 2227 as an alternative to our 302 involuntary commitment process and as part of a public health strategy to assist in reducing suicide across the commonwealth. PaPS, with the assistance of APA, distributed a letter of support to all House members. Although there is opposition to this bill, a vote is anticipated to occur prior to end of this session. Thirteen states, including eight this session, have enacted ERPO-related laws.

Collaboration with our partners at the PA Medical Society (PAMED) and with our fellow medical specialty organization colleagues continues on a variety of issues, including on out of network (surprise) billing, prior authorization and telemedicine. We recently signed onto a letter with PAMED and our medical specialty friends related to CMS' 2019 proposed changes to Medicare and Medicaid (including payment revisions under the Physician Fee Schedule-E/M coding changes). For a copy of the letter, please contact our executive director.

Opposing legislative efforts related to scope of practice expansion remains a top priority for the Society. Senate Bill 530, with amendments allowing diagnostic ability for Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, and Licensed Professional Counselors, was signed by the governor prior to the summer recess. The Society has expressed opposition to the state legislature prior to its final passage and enactment.

Additional proposed legislative initiatives the Society has on its radar screen includes changes to our Mental Health Procedures Act (including involuntary commitment changes for substance use and Assisted Outpatient Treatment), psychiatric bed tracking, substance use legislation, amendments to the Minor's Consent Act and mental health parity. Any legislation not enacted by the end of this two-year legislative session needs to be reintroduced next session.

Please contact Deborah Ann Shoemaker, Executive Director and Lobbyist, with any additional questions or if you need more information.

Respectfully Submitted,
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