

## PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY OF DELAWARE (PSD) - Report to Area 3 – September 29, 2018

### MEMBER SERVICES

Member recruitment and member engagement continue to be top priorities for our organization. We encourage psychiatrists to be engaged in organized Psychiatry as well as other health-related organizations and initiatives within the State. We have several members currently serving on State committees and commissions, ensuring that psychiatry has a voice in behavioral and mental health initiatives happening in Delaware. We serve the professional needs of our members through programs and initiatives that are inclusive and promote collaboration, communication and education. Our annual symposium, biannual digital newsletter, *The Delaware Psychiatrist* and our monthly business meetings are all opportunities for interaction and sharing that support our recruitment and engagement goals. We partnered with the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to host an integrated care training in April and in August to educate psychiatry residents on the benefits of membership.

### ADVOCACY

The 149<sup>th</sup> Delaware General Assembly concluded on June 30, 2018. PSD worked in close collaboration with the Medical Society of Delaware (MSD) and other stakeholders on several important legislative bills. Ongoing efforts to reform the mandatory reporting laws as well as repairing our Tarasoff Duty to Warn statute will continue in the 150<sup>th</sup> General Assembly which convenes in January. Highlights from the 149<sup>th</sup> sessions include:

**Mental Health Parity (SB230):** Delaware was one of five states to pass mental health parity laws this past legislative session. Signed by the Governor on August 29<sup>th</sup>, SB230 imports federal mental health parity reporting requirements to the state level. The next step will be implementation of the parity legislation with the Delaware Department of Insurance (DOI) and Department of Delaware Division of Medicaid & Medical Assistance (DMMA).

**Primary Care (SB227):** Also signed by the Governor on August 29<sup>th</sup>, this bill sets the reimbursement floor for primary care services at Medicare. SB227 made headlines throughout the state and its successful passage was due to impressively strong and determined advocacy efforts by Delaware physicians. With the first step successfully passed, ongoing engagement will be critical to ensure the work started this session continues into the next.

**Mental Health & Guns (HB302):** In 2013 the Psychiatric Society of Delaware through the Medical Society, worked with Attorney General Beau Biden in crafting HB 88, which sought to create a mechanism to remove firearms from persons a danger to self or a danger to others with due process. While the bill cleared the House unanimously, it ultimately failed in the Senate. In 2018 the legislation resurfaced in a wave of gun bills. After additional due process amendments, the legislation sailed through both chambers and became law in April 2018

**Conversion Therapy (SB 65):** Signed by the Governor on March 16, this Bill makes it unprofessional conduct or a ground for discipline for individuals granted a certificate to practice medicine to engage in conversion therapy with a child or to refer a child to a practitioner in another jurisdiction to receive conversion therapy.

**Novel Legislation: Experimental Treatment (HB 319):** This legislation was signed by the Governor on June 16 and is designed to create an efficiency in bringing experimental treatments like tomosynthesis to patients more quickly and consistently among insurance plans.

**Physician Assisted Suicide/Medical Aid in Dying (HB160):** The Delaware End of Life Options Act was on the House agenda but did not have the votes necessary to be worked. PSD and MSD jointly opposed this bill as antithetical and a detriment to the entire care delivery system in Delaware. Our position has and continues to be that aid in dying should not be part of a treatment plan; doctors should be distinct and apart from intentionally ending life and doing so should always be unacceptable to the house of medicine. PSD supports efforts to improve and expand access to palliative care for the terminally ill.

**Marijuana Legalization (HB110 & HCR 52):** With both its House and Senate sponsors retiring, marijuana legalization came to a vote on the House floor. Thanks to a concerted opposition effort which included addiction, travel, and health advocates, the bill failed to receive the votes needed, falling well-short even after the sponsor amended the bill to lower its necessary vote total to 25.

### EDUCATION

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Psychiatric Society of Delaware Symposium will be held on Saturday, September 22, 2018 at MSD Conference Center in Newark, Delaware. PSD members as well as non-member psychiatrists, other physicians and mental health professionals are invited to attend. Lectures include: "Mission to Mars: Exploring Cognitive, Behavioral and Psychiatric Risks for the Long Journey," "What's Next for Ketamine Research and Clinical Practice?" "Tardive Dyskinesia: Recognition and Management," and "Clinical and Legal Issues in Tele-Behavioral Health."

### STANDARDS, QUALITY OF CARE AND HEALTH ECONOMICS

On May 15, 2018, the Behavioral Health Consortium (BHC) released its initial report aimed at confronting Delaware's major addiction and mental health challenges. The report outlines a multiyear strategy to combat addiction, increase integration of services, develop a strong workforce pipeline, eliminate the stigma of behavioral health, and prevent future Delawareans from struggling with addiction and a lack of needed services. In July, the BHC announced a partnership with Pew Charitable Trusts to improve access to addiction treatment in the state.

### STRENGTH OF ORGANIZATION

Member engagement, outreach and recruitment of non-member psychiatrists, advocacy and building and maintaining collaborative relationships will continue to be organizational priorities. PSD will continue to build upon the successes of its current programs and initiatives moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,

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