

PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY REPORT TO AREA 3
September 4, 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. We had six new Distinguished Fellows inducted at the Convocation of Distinguished Fellows in San Francisco (including our own Mary Anne Albaugh, MD, DFAPA). We are also currently reviewing our drop list and our residency program rosters to promote the 100% Club and to determine our best course of action in getting members back into the fold.

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 one educational opportunity and one social event in the fall: our fifth annual Addictions Symposium on September 14th at Jefferson and the Benjamin Rush Gala in Lafayette Hill on November 15th. Our Pittsburgh chapter has their extremely successful annual resident event on September 23rd. Our Central, Lehigh Valley, Northeastern and Western chapters will hold events this fall. For information, access our website at www.papsych.org.

The Society's annual scientific educational meeting will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2019 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 the bestowment of the PaPS Presidential Award (for lifetime achievement) to longtime Ethics Committee chair and former DB president Lawrence Altaker, MD, DLFAPA.

Advocacy: The Society continues to work closely with Representative Todd Stephens (R-Montgomery), 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. Unfortunately, with the national mass violence tragedies over the past few months, Governor Wolf and the entire state legislature is focused on gun violence efforts. This past Tuesday, the Society testified in front of the House Democratic Policy Committee on gun safety. The Senate Judiciary Committee will be holding two days of public hearings on gun control and mental health issues in late September. Dr. Certa will be testifying on behalf of the Society. The NRA continues to oppose proposed ERPO legislation based on ex-parte provisions. A large coalition of healthcare provider organizations, gun control advocates and public awareness groups have been meeting on a regular basis to develop a grassroots advocacy campaign to move this measure forward in both chambers.

Collaboration with our partners at the PA Medical Society (PAMED) and with our fellow medical specialty organization colleagues continues a variety of issues, including out of network (surprise) billing, prior authorization and the corporate practice of medicine.

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 has passed the Senate and resides in the House Professional Licensure Committee. 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. Taking advantage of an opportunity given to us by Dr. Certa, representatives from the APA and the Society met with our Office of Attorney General recently to provide an overview of the current mental health and substance use delivery system across the commonwealth. This meeting allowed us to explore issues related to network adequacy and narrowing networks.

We await additional discussions in the future. Lastly, at the request of APA past president Maria Oquendo, MD, PhD, we will be working with the University of Pennsylvania and the APA on proposed Collaborative Care legislation in PA. A conference call between stakeholders will be held next week. As the issue develops, we will provide updates.

Respectfully Submitted,
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