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Editor: Meagan Floyd

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Deadline for articles is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Please email jhritz@mdpsych.org.
 MPS News Design & Layout
 Jora Hritz

The MPS Council will meet by videoconference on November 12 at 7:30 PM. All members welcome!

President's Column

The Winding Journey to Becoming a Psychiatrist: Overcoming Barriers

The path to becoming a psychiatrist is often anything but straightforward. For many aspiring psychiatrists, the journey is filled with obstacles that can be both daunting and transformative. As a new residency training director, I now have the privilege of reviewing over 1,000 personal statements from individuals who are desperately trying to become psychiatrists in the U.S. This experience has been profoundly humbling. Putting myself in their shoes, I am struck by the determination and resilience that many applicants display. Their narratives reveal not only a commitment to the field but also the personal struggles and sacrifices they have made along the way. Each story serves as an example of the passion that drives these individuals to pursue a career in psychiatry, often in the face of significant adversity. As a professional society, we need to recognize their strengths and celebrate the rich perspectives they can bring to our field and to the MPS.

Many personal statements that I've read describe the extra work and drive needed for some students who come from U.S. families and abroad where they are the first to complete college and medical school, had fewer opportunities for funding school, overcame challenging life experiences, and were often marginalized. For IMGs, some from war-torn countries or regions plagued by violence, poverty, or instability, they may have had experiences of fleeing their home and culture, overcoming trauma, and adjusting to a new place and a new life. They must find a way to fund their education, acquire credential verification, prepare for

language proficiency tests, go through an often lengthy application processes for residency spots, and sometimes even repeat already completed training.

The COVID-19 pandemic also significantly disrupted education and training for medical students, including those from the U.S. and abroad. Shutdowns affected clinical rotations and hands-on learning opportunities, hindering the practical experience essential for developing clinical skills and often delaying graduation. As medical education pivoted to virtual formats, many students faced challenges in acquiring the necessary competencies to excel in their future roles. When everything was virtual, they may also have had fewer opportunities to interact with mentors, professional and personal supports. The emotional toll of the pandemic, combined with the uncertainty of the residency application process, further complicated the journeys of aspiring psychiatrists.

Securing a residency position in psychiatry is a competitive process and has become even more so recently. The residency match system traditionally favors those with U.S. medical degrees who come from affluent families. This support allows these students to spend time doing volunteer work and research, rather than needing that extra time to pay for school. This leaves many talented students feeling marginalized, often trying over and over for years to be recognized, each passing year becoming more invisible. They must often go the extra mile—participating in observerships, networking, and gaining U.S. clinical experience to bolster their applications. Resilience becomes a defining trait for those navigating this

Continues on next page

Presidents Column Continued

complex path. The ability to adapt, learn from setbacks, and maintain a focus on long-term goals is essential. But many emerge from their experiences not only as competent physicians but also as empathic physicians who bring valuable perspectives to the field of psychiatry.

As the United States becomes increasingly diverse, it is essential that our psychiatric workforce reflects this diversity. A broad range of cultural perspectives enriches the practice of psychiatry and enhances the quality of care provided to patients from varied backgrounds. The experiences of underrepresented graduates, particularly those who come from different cultural contexts or have faced adversity, are invaluable in creating a more inclusive and effective mental health system. A diverse pool of psychiatrists can better understand and address the unique needs of a multifaceted patient population, ultimately improving outcomes in mental health care. But we have to intentionally seek them out for training, work, and our professional organizations.

The importance of support networks cannot be overstated. Community support, mentorship from experienced psychiatrists, and participation in organizations that advocate for psychiatrists like MPS can make a significant difference. As we focus on increasing interest and securing new membership from residents and early-career psychiatrists (ECPs) in the MPS, it is vital to keep in mind the diversity and unique needs of all those entering our field. Our events and initiatives should be designed to be welcoming and accessible; provide a sense of belonging for diverse trainees and ECPs.

As the mental health landscape continues to evolve, the MPS must foster an environment that values the experiences of all psychiatrists and medical graduates. I'd like to begin by asking each MPS committee to consider what they would like to do to increase diversity within our organization. Although this is something we do each year, I'd like for us to focus on how to specifically encourage diverse trainees and ECP's to join us. I'd like to challenge each committee to find a way they can uniquely contribute to this MPS goal. One project I'd like to call attention to as an example is the wonderful speaker series that Dr. Vani Rao has so successfully added to our Community-Diversity Coalition meetings. Please consider coming to the next one: "The Color of Wellness" by Dr. Farha Abbasi on Thursday, 11/21/24 at 6:15 pm via Zoom. If you would like to attend, please [email Jora](#) for the meeting link.

By creating an inclusive environment, we can encourage more individuals from various backgrounds to engage with our organization, share their experiences, and contribute to the richness of our MPS community.

*Theodora Balis, M.D.
MPS President*

2025 MPS Dues Notices

The 2025 MPS dues invoices were emailed the first week of October and were sent via USPS at the end of October.

To pay your MPS dues:

- Send your check to the MPS office (1211 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD 21201), which reduces our credit card processing costs.
- Pay via Zelle: 410-625-0232 which also helps to reduce credit card processing costs. (See QR code on this page.)
- You can also pay dues via credit or debit card or PayPal at www.mdpsych.org (Select "Contact" and scroll to the "Pay Now" button).

Please email mps@mdpsych.org with questions or call the office at 410.625.0232. Thanks for your continued support of the Maryland Psychiatric Society!

Attention Sheppard Pratt Employees

If you are a Sheppard Pratt employee who is eligible to have your MPS and APA dues paid by your employer, please note the change in processing payment of your 2025 MPS and APA invoices. For 2025 employees must now submit dues payments to MPS directly and you will then be reimbursed by SHPS. Once you submit your payment for MPS dues please submit proof of payment receipt to [Lauren Hopper at SPHS via email](#) and she will process your request.

Are You Interested in Becoming Chair of the MPPAC?

The Maryland Psychiatric Political Action Committee (MPPAC) is looking for new members and a new Chair in 2025! If you're interested in attending political fundraisers, working to solicit contributions from Maryland psychiatrists and help advocate for the practice of psychiatry within our state, we want to hear from you! Please email mppac@mdpsych.org for more information.

Ikwunga Wonodi Award Application Now Open!

The [Ikwunga Wonodi Social Justice and Health Equity in Psychiatry Award](#) is now open for application submissions. Announced in March 2024, the Wonodi Award will honor a Resident, Fellow, or Early-Career Psychiatrist who has demonstrated distinction in advocating for human rights and equity in psychiatric care. For more information on the award and application guidelines, [click here](#) or [visit the MPS website](#). The deadline to apply is December 15, 2024. A winner will be announced prior to the Annual Meeting in April 2025. Any questions can be directed to jhritz@mdpsych.org.

October 6 MPS Committee Chair Meeting Highlights

Attendees introduced themselves and talked about their committees' activities:

Community Psychiatry & Diversity is pleased to report that they have had several new members join their committee over the past year. They have brought in numerous speakers which has helped to revitalize the Committee and encourage new ideas. They are working to increase collaboration and advocacy with organizations within the state. The Committee developed an award in honor of Dr. Wonodi – and applications are now open for the cash prize, which will be awarded in 2025.

Legislative finalized the annual MOU review with Washington Psychiatric Society that outlines how we will coordinate the voice of psychiatry with the General Assembly and pay for representation by Harris Jones Malone. Several issues of interest to psychiatry were prominent in 2024 and MPS is working before the next session to submit an amendment for the newly passed AOT bill pertaining to gun ownership. A newly designed LAC Board will be available to Committee members this year – which will have increased security and enhanced features.

Editorial Advisory Board publishes two or three issues of [The Maryland Psychiatrist](#) per year and welcomes articles submissions from committees, members, and others. The next issue will be out this fall. In response to the survey question about what topics are of interest, members requested personal stories, interviews with psychiatrists, case studies and clinical services at institutions.

Program & Continuing Medical Education is holding virtual programs based on member preferences from the survey. A psychopharmacology update is planned for November. Depending on the topic, MPS will consider including psychologists and other physicians among attendees. When possible, junior researchers are being asked to present to assist early career members in their career path. An interview with Dr. Treisman was held in September, which was held in person. A joint CME with MRCAPP was held in May, which focused on college mental health. The costs of accreditation remain high – even with virtual events. However, the Committee still feels as though free, or reduced cost CMEs are valuable to MPS members.

Ethics is now working with a new APA procedure. To improve consistency of how APA Principles of Ethics are applied across the country, complaints against members are now considered by the APA committee, which will forward them for investigation to the District Branch where the member belongs if warranted. The committee is considering a CME in the winter for 2025 on dual agency and the physician rehabilitation program/procedures.

MPPAC sent out a large scale, paper solicitation in May. It was sent to members, non-members and WPS members with a Maryland address. Dr. Herman is nearing the end of his 5-

year term and urged those in attendance to consider a contribution to the PAC, whose main purpose is to solicit contributions from Maryland psychiatrists and purchase tickets to legislative fundraisers/send contributions to legislators.

Subspecialty is the newest MPS Committee, and they are still getting organized and defining their goals and objectives. They are interested in getting more specialties involved. The Committee is entertaining the idea of hosting an "Ask the Experts" virtual event, and participating in the upcoming MPS career and practice fair.

Dr. Balis then reviewed the role of committee chairs and the MPS [Vision, Mission & Values](#). She noted the continuing [MPS Strategic Priorities](#) and the 2024 MPS member survey results and asked how the organization can continue to work toward the priorities while also responding to the survey input.

- Hold an MPS "community day" where members join together once a year to address a need via an event or activity planned by the MPS.
- Podcast interview series featuring psychiatrists.
- Expand the career fair to include psychiatrists in interesting roles who share their experience with attendees.
- Reach out to a larger group of members to involve them in grass roots lobbying, especially when their legislative priorities are at stake.
- Hold 1-2 general membership meetings annually where members can hear quick committee updates and discuss 1-2 topics. Potentially at the end of a Council meeting.
- Collaborate with local organizations who share common goals
- Organize MPS teams for local walks/runs for NAMI, Suicide awareness, etc.
- Can we work more closely with the psychologists, social workers, etc. to cross-promote meetings, etc.?
- Look for ways to increase input from younger members on the MPS survey
- Hold more networking events, including an annual diversity focused CME meeting
- Highlight the work of MPS Committees in MPS News, etc.
- Host short, lunchtime CME meetings

Dr. Balis then reviewed [MPS Goals for Addressing Structural Racism and Inclusion](#) and asked each chair to revisit with their committee the initial goals that it set and either affirm or update them. The website will be updated, including the current chairs. This is part of the continuing process of MPS examining its practices and addressing structural racism as an organization. If committees have already accomplished what they set out to do, please think of ways to expand on that or branch out into new areas.

Lastly, she asked how the Executive Committee can support the work of the MPS chairs and committees.

Maryland News

Maryland Behavioral Health Workforce Assessment Report

Last month the [Maryland Behavioral Health Workforce Assessment Report](#) was just submitted to the Maryland General Assembly pursuant to legislation developed and passed in 2023. [SB 283/HB 418](#) (2023) established the Maryland Behavioral Health Workforce Investment Fund and required completion of this report to inform establishment of the Fund. Section 1 of the report provides a landscape analysis of the current behavioral health workforce in Maryland. Section 2 estimates the extent of the workforce shortage and Section 3 examines the supply of behavioral health talent produced by Maryland colleges and universities since 2014.

The second half of [the report](#) draws on the findings from quantitative research and input from over 150 frontline professionals, employers, policy leaders, and educators through semi-structured interviews and regional input sessions to recommend a framework for statewide action. Section 4 includes suggested core values – equity, collaboration, and outcomes – and six recommended strategies to address the workforce shortage. Section 5 lays out the recommended size, funding structure, and initial programs of the Behavioral Health Workforce Investment Fund, while Section 6 reviews key implementation considerations for setting up and administering the Fund. The six recommended strategies for an overarching behavioral health workforce initiative in Maryland include:

1. Provide competitive compensation
2. Increase awareness of behavioral health careers
3. Support paid education and training
4. Promote timely and effective licensing
5. Invest in job quality
6. Expand the impact of the current workforce

MACS Survey

As part of an ongoing effort to understand the landscape of buprenorphine access, the Maryland Addiction Consultation Service (MACS) is surveying prescribers across the state.

We would greatly appreciate your assistance with this effort by taking a few moments to complete this voluntary survey. The survey can be accessed online by clicking this [link](https://umaryland.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vODw9tINQVPVum) (https://umaryland.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vODw9tINQVPVum). Instructions to return this survey via mail or fax can be found by accessing the survey link.

MACS provides free support to prescribers and their practices in addressing the needs of their patients with substance use disorders and chronic pain management.

Maryland Overdose Data Dashboard

Maryland has a new tool for combating the opioid crisis. The new [Overdose Data Dashboard](#) was created with extensive feedback from community partners about what they need to respond quickly to trends and save lives.

ASO Transition Information

The Maryland Medicaid Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (ASO) will transition to Carelon Behavioral Health on January 1, 2025. Information regarding the transition is posted to [this webpage](#). Please see these helpful links for more information:

- [Provider Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [View the Carelon Provider Orientation and Training Calendar](#)
- In preparation for the Behavioral Health ASO transition, providers are reminded to ensure their details are up-to-date in MMIS. Having up-to-date information in this system will help to prevent delays in receiving communications and documentation.

Please note; Optum is unable to update details in ePREP. Providers must update their information directly in ePREP.

Optum Maryland: Updates have been made to the **Crisis Services Billing Manual**. The most up-to-date copy of this billing manual can be [viewed here](#).

Navigating New Prior Authorization Laws

Last month, MedChi co-hosted a [YouTube video](#) titled "Navigating Prior Authorization Laws" with Danna Lubrani Kauffman, partner at the law firm of Schwarz, Metz, Wise and Kauffman. These new laws go into effect on January 1st.

2024 New Maryland Laws Video Updates

Last month MedChi released its [third in a series of 2024 New Laws Videos](#), featuring legislation reforming the Maryland Physician Assistant (PA) law which was passed in the 2024 Session. MedChi also posted videos on the [non-compete law](#) and the [prior authorization reform bill](#).

MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY

2024 Career Night



November 7, 2024



6:00PM until 8:00PM



MedChi
1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201



Confirmed Exhibitors Include:

PERMANENTE MEDICINE
Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group



Johnson & Johnson

abbvie

Sheppard Pratt Solutions



Participate in round-table discussions, meet with employers, connect with Maryland psychiatrists, receive practice resources, and more!

Heavy appetizers, wine, and beer will be provided

REGISTER NOW

Contact: jhritz@mdpsych.org

CPD Guest Speaker

Join the Community Psychiatry & Diversity Coalition on **November 21st** at 6:15M to hear guest speaker Dr. Farha Abbasi present *The Color of Wellness*. Email jhriz@mdpsych.org for the Zoom link.

Dr. Abbasi is a psychiatrist and a leader in mental health for minorities and newcomers. She is the founding director of the Annual Muslim Mental Health Conference. In 2024, the sixteenth conference will be held at Stanford University. She is also the managing editor of the Journal of Muslim Mental Health and Director of the Muslim Mental Health Consortium at Michigan State University. Dr. Abbasi has received numerous awards for her community service and mental health promotion. Dr. Abbasi was an honoree of the National Alliance of Mentally Ill, the American Psychiatric Foundation Award for Promoting Minority Mental Health, and the Globie Award winner, Office of International Students Services. She has served on many boards and committees, including the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities American Psychiatric Association. Secretary Becerra recently named her as one of the top 15 women in the nation on the frontlines, celebrating women's faith leaders. She currently chairs the Mental Health Task Force for the Mayor of Lansing, Michigan.

Nominations for Anti-Stigma Advocacy Award

The [Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry](#) presents an annual award to recognize a worthy piece published in a major newspaper or on public media that accomplishes one or more of the following:

- Shares with the public their experience with mental illness in themselves, a family member, or in the community.
- Helps others to overcome their inability to talk about mental illness or their own mental illness.
- Imparts particularly insightful observations on the general subject of mental illness.

The article should be published or produced during the period from January 15, 2024 to January 9, 2025. A Maryland author and/or newspaper or major media outlet is preferred. [Click here](#) for past winners and published articles.

The award carries a \$500 prize, which is given at the Maryland Psychiatric Society annual meeting in April. Please send nominations to mfp@mdpsych.org by **January 10, 2025**.

The MFP is organized for educational and charitable purposes. For more information, please visit the [website](#).

MPS Best Paper Awards

The MPS established annual "best paper" awards to recognize outstanding scholarship by young psychiatrists in Maryland. Previous winners are listed [here](#). The Academic Psychiatry Committee is currently soliciting nominations for the 2024 Paper of the Year Award in two categories:

Best Paper by an Early Career Psychiatrist Member (ECP): Eligible psychiatrists are ECP members who are first authors of papers published or in press in 2024. Thanks to generous funding from the Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry, the winner will receive a **\$200 cash prize** as well as a complimentary ticket to the MPS annual dinner in April 2025.

Best Paper by a Resident-Fellow Member (RFM): Eligible psychiatrists are Resident-Fellow members who are first authors of papers that were written, in press, and/or published in 2024. Thanks to generous funding from the Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry, the winner will receive a **\$200 cash prize** as well as a complimentary ticket to the MPS annual dinner in April 2025.

Best Paper by a Medical Student Member (MSM): Eligible students are Medical Student Members who are first authors of papers that were written, in press, and/or published in 2024. Thanks to generous funding from the Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry, the winner will receive a **\$200 cash prize** as well as a complimentary ticket to the MPS annual dinner in April 2025.

Scholarly work of all kinds (e.g., scientific reports, reviews, case reports) will be considered. If you would like to nominate a paper and author, including your own, please email the paper to either of the co-chairs below by **January 31**. Please include a brief explanation of why you believe the work is worthy of special recognition.

*Matthew Peters, M.D. mpeter42@jhmi.edu
Traci Speed, M.D., Ph.D. speed@jhmi.edu
Academic Psychiatry Committee Co-Chairs*

Poster Contest for Residents & Fellows

The MPS poster competition for our Resident-Fellow Members will be held again this year, with all entries displayed at our annual meeting in April 2024! Thanks to generous funding from the Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry, the winner will receive a **\$200 cash prize** as well as a complimentary ticket to the meeting. Two finalists will also be selected and will receive **\$100 each** in addition to complimentary tickets.

Winners in past years are listed [here](#). Please [click here](#) for complete details about the process and requirements. **The deadline to enter is January 31**. Electronic copies of posters are due **February 10**. For more information, or to apply [please click here](#).

Proposed Extension of Telemedicine Flexibilities

The Drug Enforcement Administration has filed a rule for a "[Third Temporary Extension of COVID-19 Telemedicine Flexibilities for Prescription of Controlled Medications](#)" with the Office of Management and Budget. While the rule is not yet finalized, we are monitoring the situation and will share more information as it becomes available. The [current extension](#) is set to expire **December 31**. [READ MORE](#)

Training and Technical Assistance Center

The [ESMI TTA](#) Center is a new national training and technical assistance center funded by SAMHSA to address early serious mental illness (ESMI). The ESMI TTA Center provides education, training, and technical assistance on evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising practices related to the identification, assessment, and treatment of ESMI.

New Federal Rule Strengthens Mental Health Parity

The Biden administration recently issued [new rules](#) to provide additional clarity and help prevent health insurance companies from continuing to routinely violate the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act. The law, which was enacted in 2008, requires health insurers to treat benefits for mental health and substance-use disorders similarly to how they treat medical and surgical benefits.

The 2008 law requires, in part, that health insurers not impose additional or more restrictive rules on coverage for mental health or substance-use disorder treatments in similar categories—for example, by requiring prior authorizations or copays for mental health or substance abuse treatments where the requirements do not exist for medical or surgical conditions.

The new rules clarify and emphasize the existing provisions of the law, while also requiring the collection of data and analysis to ensure compliance. They also prohibit the use of biased methods that make it harder for patients to access mental health or substance-use disorder treatment and enforce the ending of the opt-out phase of the law. [Click here](#) to read more.

MPS Membership

The following individuals have applied for membership. Unless any current members have evidence that an applicant does not meet the criteria for ethical and professional standards, these actions will be approved 14 days after publication.

New Members

Rajeev Krishna, M.D., Ph.D.
Carlos Rico, M.D.

Transfers

Kamal Bhatia, M.D.

Reinstatement

Roger Lewin, M.D.

Advertise Position Openings and Office Space with MPS!

The MPS offers timely ads in [MPS News](#) (includes online post), [The Maryland Psychiatrist](#) and the [MPS home page](#). [Click here](#) for ad rates. Please help MPS generate non-dues income by using MPS ads to connect with psychiatrists.

Member Spotlight Submissions

Recently worked on an exciting research project, reached a milestone in your career, or have advice for younger psychiatrists? Submit a short article and photo [here](#) to showcase your experiences. We will share your responses on social media and in our newsletter. If you have any questions please call or text 410-625-0232.

Join the MPS Listserv

MPS members are encouraged to join the listserv to easily share information with colleagues. An email message sent to the listserv goes to all members who have joined. Posts can be questions, information, thought-provoking articles and more. To join the listserv, please go to: <http://groups.google.com/group/mpslist> or email mps@mdpsych.org. The listserv is open to members only so you will have to wait for membership approval and will be notified by email. If you have any trouble, please call or text the MPS office at 410-625-0232.



**FREE for all
MPS members**

**\$25 for non-
members**

**2.5 CME
Credits
Available**

PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY UPDATE: 2024

Thursday, November 14
7:00PM-9:30PM
via Zoom

Hosted by the Maryland Psychiatric Society

Presenters:

Christopher Welsh, M.D.
University of Maryland

Mary Elizabeth Yaden, M.D.
Johns Hopkins

David Neubauer, M.D.
Johns Hopkins

Program Objectives:

At the end of the meeting, attendees will be able to...

- Highlight both current and emerging pharmacologic strategies in the treatment of all common sleep disorders, ranging from insomnia to hypersomnia, and even sleep-disordered breathing.
- Describe the DSM-5 diagnosis of Gambling Disorder, screening tools, treatments and services available in Maryland.
- Understand ongoing clinical research in the psychedelic medicine, psilocybin, and considerations for future clinical use.

**CLICK
HERE to
register**

**Thank You to
Our Supporters**

*The Maryland
Foundation for
Psychiatry*

*Maryland Addiction
Consultation
Services*

*MindWork
Group*

*Professional Risk
Management
Services*

Accreditation and Designation Statement

In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by American Psychiatric Association (APA) and The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) APA is jointly accredited by the American Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

The APA designates this live activity for a maximum of 2 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

APA News & Information

APA October BOT Meeting Highlights

Report from the CEO Dr. Wills

Marketa Wills, APA CEO, has been focused on understanding the roles of various components and individuals in leadership. She is planning a new version of the previous business model to address revenue deficits, spending costs, and possible staff position revisions or cutbacks.

Some important updates she provided include:

- Advocating for health equity in mental health care and an increase in funding for graduate medical education (GME) in psychiatry.
- Ongoing discussions on legislation regarding prior authorization for psychiatric care.
- Integrate primary care and behavioral health, support telehealth and safety planning, and encourage the use of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) in ambulatory care settings.

Report from the Budget Committee/ Treasurer/Climate Change Committee

Concerns regarding revenue streams, operating costs, and climate change were discussed in detail. The budget deficit was examined, and insights from the Budget and Finance Committee were relayed to the BOT. The Treasurer proposed appointing a committee to focus on cost containment and revenue-generating strategies. The idea was to stay congruent with our strategic priorities.

Apply for 2024-25 Fellowships

The [APA/APAF Fellowships](#) application cycle begins **November 1st**. Fellowships provide psychiatry residents experiential learning, training and professional development to become leaders in the field. Fellows receive mentorship from APA member experts, get exclusive opportunities to be a part of APA leadership councils, and network with APA members from around the country. Fellowships include:

- APA/APAF Leadership
- Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- Community Diversity
- Diversity Leadership
- Edwin Valdiserri Correctional Psychiatry
- Jeanne Spurlock Congressional
- Public Psychiatry
- Psychiatric Research
- SAMHSA Minority

apafdn.org/futureleaders

APA Slate for 2024-25 Election

The 2024-2025 APA Nominating Committee reported the following slate of candidates (in alphabetical order) for the 2025 Election. This slate has been approved by the Board of Trustees and is considered official. The deadline for petition candidates is November 13, 2024. For more information on the election, please visit the [APA National Elections](#) website or email the [APA Election Office](#). (*MPS Member)

PRESIDENT-ELECT

RAHN BAILEY, MD
MARK RAPAPORT, MD
HARSH TRIVEDI, MD, MBA*

SECRETARY

GABRIELLE SHAPIRO, MD
ERIC WILLIAMS, MD

MINORITY/UNDERREPRESENTED REPRESENTATIVE (M/UR) TRUSTEE

MANSOOR MALIK, MD
KAMALIKA ROY, MD, MCR

AREA 3 TRUSTEE

KENNETH CERTA, MD
MANDAR JADHAV, MD

RESIDENT-FELLOW MEMBER TRUSTEE-ELECT (RFMTE)

CRAIG PERRY, MD
TARIQ SALEM, MD

Please feel free to contact the [APA Election Office](#) if you have any questions regarding the upcoming election.

Want to Help with Hurricane Relief?

In the wake of hurricanes Helene and Milton, it is worth remembering that psychiatrists provide valuable medical experience and expertise for preparing and responding to natural disasters. If you want to learn more, find opportunities for training in psychological first aid, and/or contribute to the APA Foundation's Disaster Relief Fund, check out APA's resource on [Disaster Mental Health](#).

FREE APA Course of the Month

Each month, APA members have free access to an on-demand CME course on a popular topic. [Click here to access the Course of the Month and sign up for updates about this free member benefit.](#)

APA News & Information

Upcoming Virtual APA Meetings

Tuesday, November 5th 8:30AM - 5PM

[The Virtual Immersive: Innovations in Digital Psychiatry](#)

Thursday, November 7, 5:30PM

[APA Insider Session](#)

Join APA leadership for the next "Insider" webinar, which aims to foster transparency and clarity for members about APA's goals, progress, and organizational direction. More details are coming soon.

Wednesday, November 13, 2PM

[Updates in Diagnostics and Therapeutics in Alzheimer's Dementia](#)

The next Emerging Topics webinar will explore some advances in Alzheimer's biomarker and imaging research as well as review recently approved and upcoming therapeutics for this neurodegenerative disease.

Wednesday, November 20, Noon

[Update on 2025 Medicare Policies on Payment and Quality, Including Telehealth](#)

The next Policy & Practice webinar will highlight Medicare policies that will go into place in January 2025—including decisions related to telehealth, coverage and payment for new services, and updates to the quality payment program.

AI CME Course

San Diego Psychiatric Society is hosting their upcoming "AI" CME Course scheduled for Saturday, November 16, 2024. This course, "[Mind Meets Machine: Technological Innovations and AI in Psychiatry](#)" is offered both virtually and in-person in San Diego, CA. Course curriculum is packed with information and data about using artificial intelligence in mental health care. AI is a hot topic these days, so you don't want to miss this course.

APA and non-APA member pricing, plus Residents are complimentary. Register online at www.tix.com/ticket-sales/sdps/4662/event/1401049

APA Spanish Website Expands Offerings

LaSaludMental.org, APA's evidence-based resource website in Spanish, has expanded from its initial offering of information on five of the most common mental disorders to information on 17 mental health conditions. Recent additions include anxiety disorders, the connection between climate change and mental health, and Alzheimer's and dementia.

Attorney Consultation for IMG Members

Navigating immigration questions can be challenging. To support our International Medical Graduate (IMG) members, APA has partnered with two expert immigration attorneys who are offering a [free, one-time, 30–45-minute consultation](#). This is a unique opportunity to receive tailored guidance on your immigration-related questions.

APAF and Washington Commander Raise Mental Health Awareness

Join the APA Foundation on **Sunday, December 1**, at Northwest Stadium for the inaugural Raise Awareness for Mental Health game pitting the Commanders against the Tennessee Titans. Tickets include access to a pregame discussion panel with former NFL linebacker Marcus Smith, APAF Executive Director Rawle Andrews Jr., and more. A portion of each ticket goes to APAF to support its work to build a mentally healthy nation for all. [BUY YOUR TICKET](#)

Call for Volunteers

The window to nominate someone or self-nominate for an APA Council or Committee is now open through November 8th. Appointments will be announced in April 2025. Anyone whose term is ending in 2025 and is eligible for another term MUST REPLY using the application form found at the site below. Reappointments will no longer be automatic. Learn more about the opportunities [HERE](#). Please forward any questions about this process to appointments@psych.org.

One in three Americans (31%) anticipates having a heated political discussion with their family members this election season, according to the latest Healthy Minds Monthly poll from APA & Morning Consult. While most (71%) indicate that their family will weather the storm and get along about the same as the holidays come around, 12% expect an improvement in relations, and 6% said family relations will get worse. [Read More.](#)

New APA Exhibit Highlights Hispanic Leadership

A new exhibit in the Melvin Sabshin, M.D., Library and Archives entitled "[Líderes Audaces: Hispanic Pioneers in American Psychiatry](#)" recognizes Hispanic leadership in advocating for the mental health needs of the Latino community. The exhibit showcases the origins of the 1970 Task Force on Mental Health of Spanish-Speaking People in the U.S., the Committee of Hispanic Psychiatrists, and the establishment of the Simón Bolívar Award in 1975 to raise awareness of the mental health goals and challenges of Hispanic and Latino individuals.

Member Shoutouts

[Kennedy Krieger Institute](#) has been recognized as a 2024-2025 [Best Children's Hospital](#) by U.S. News & World Report. In the brand-new category of specialty behavioral health, U.S. News & World Report honors both Kennedy Krieger and Johns Hopkins Children's Center for their joint program in Pediatric and Adolescent Behavioral Health. Congratulations to **John Campo, M.D.**, the Division Chief, and **Carmen Lopez-Arvizu, M.D.**, the Director of outpatient psychiatry services.

Fernando Goes, M.D. was recently awarded \$3.5 million over five years from the National Institute of Mental Health to look at three regions central to the brain's mood regulating system, the anterior cingulate cortex, basolateral amygdala, and hippocampus. With the insights from this study, they aim to move us closer to developing novel treatment strategies and personalized interventions for depression.

'Cheers from the Chair'

Members Out & About

Scott Aarsonson, M.D. was featured on an episode of MedScape's podcast *InDiscussion*. He discussed the future for treating bipolar disorder with psychedelics and neuromodulation. [Listen to the podcast here.](#)

Many MPS members attended the American Academy of Child Psychiatry Annual Meeting and spoke at presentations and workshops during the conference. See below for the topics they presented:

John V. Campo, M.D. and **Robert Berg, M.D.**

- Clinical Case Conference 1: When It's Not Just Functional Neurological Symptom Disorder

Carol Vidal, M.D., Ph.D., MP

- Health Promotion and Prevention Committee
- Workshop 44: Applying Motivational Interviewing to Problematic Digital Media Use: Family-Based Strategies for Healthy Screen Use.
- Clinical Perspectives 90.4: Social Media and Social Contagion: Implications for Mental Health

Joyce N. Harrison, M.D.

- Infant and Preschool Committee
- Extended Workshop 3: Psychiatric Assessment of the Very Young Child in the Clinic
- Institute 8: Treatment of Preschoolers: Where Evidence Meets Practice

Shannon Barnett, MD, MBE

- Member Services Forum 14: Service Intensity: How to Navigate the Continuum of Care as a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Using a Measurement-Based Care Approach: The CALOCUS-CASII and the ECSII

Carmen Lopez-Arvizu, M.D.

- Symposium 24: From Impulse to Control: Clinical Markers, Diagnosis, and Treatment of Impulse and Disruptive Disorders in Youth

CLIMATE CORNER

Please see [October's issue](#) for a run-down on the importance of voting and [list](#) of Maryland's federal candidates and their environmental position. Environmental problems like climate change, air pollution, and plastics pollution require systemic solutions, so voting for candidates who understand the issues is of critical importance. You can identify your local [candidates](#) by county here and search for their campaign websites to identify their positions.

This month's column will highlight new studies about plastics. There are now two human studies proving the presence of micro- and nanoplastics (MNPs) in the brain. An [autopsy study](#) published in JAMA found microplastics in the olfactory bulb of 8/15 decedents in Sao Paolo (average age at death was 69). The experiment was carefully conducted in a plastic-free environment to avoid any contamination of the brain tissue. The detected particles and fibers corresponded to the most commonly used plastics polymers, especially polypropylene. This study suggests that inhalation of microplastics from the air could be a point of entry of microplastics into the brain. A limitation of this study is that it was only able to identify microplastics; nanoplastics were too small for the instruments used.

A second [autopsy study](#) was published as a preprint a few months ago and is currently under peer review. This study used a different spectroscopy method to analyze the presence of microplastics AND nanoplastics in the frontal cortex. Samples came from 27 decedents from 2016 and 24 decedents from 2024, all in New Mexico. The average age at death was 50-52 years. The presence of MNPs was significantly higher in the brain relative to the liver and kidney (the other human tissue sampled) and accounted for 0.5% of the brain tissue by weight. Concerningly, levels of MNPs in the brain were 50% higher in people who died in 2024 compared to those who died in 2016. The most common plastics polymer detected was polyethylene. For more information about my concerns about plastics, you can read this article in [Psychiatric Times](#) (co-authored with another Maryland psychiatrist, Margo Lauterbach), which also includes strategies to combat plastics pollution.

The other study making the news rounds concerned [chemicals leaching into our food](#). These chemicals usually come from plastics used in industrial food production and packaging. Many of these chemicals have known negative health effects (most concerningly as endocrine disruptors or neurotoxins). The authors conducted a systematic review with the goal of identifying which known food contact chemicals have been identified in human tissue and fluid samples. The FDA is currently reviewing the process of its post-market assessment of chemicals in food and is taking [public comments](#) through 12/6.

Elizabeth Ryznar MD MSc

Medicare Updates

2025 MIPS Virtual Group Election Period

A [virtual group](#) is one way clinicians can participate in the [traditional Merit-based Incentive Payment System \(MIPS\)](#). To receive approval to participate as a virtual group for 2025, submit an election e-mail to MIPS_VirtualGroups@cms.hhs.gov by **December 31, 2024**. [Click here](#) for more information.

A virtual group must submit an election to CMS for each year it intends to participate in MIPS. If your virtual group was approved and intends to participate in MIPS again as a virtual group in 2025, the group must submit an election to CMS.

A virtual group is a combination of 2 or more Taxpayer Identification Numbers (TINs) consisting of:

- Solo practitioners (defined as the only clinician in a practice) who are [MIPS eligible](#); and/or
- Groups that have 10 or fewer clinicians (at least one clinician within the group must be MIPS eligible). A group is considered to be an entire single TIN.

A virtual group has the flexibility to determine its own makeup; a solo practitioner or group can only participate in one virtual group per year. **Benefits of a Virtual Group include** collaborating, sharing resources, increasing performance volume to be reliably measured, and potentially increasing performance under MIPS. [Click here](#) for more information.

MIPS Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exceptions

Apply by December 31 for Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) **Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances (EUC) Exceptions for 2024**. Eligible clinicians may apply to reweight any or all MIPS performance categories if they've been affected by EUC, which are defined as rare events entirely outside of your control and the control of the facility in which you practice. These circumstances must:

- Cause you to be unable to collect information necessary to submit for a MIPS performance category;
- Cause you to be unable to submit information that would be used to score a MIPS performance category for an extended period of time (for example, if you were unable to collect data for the quality performance category for 3 months), and/or;
- Impact your normal process, affecting your performance on cost measures and other administrative claims measures.

[Please click here](#) for EUC exception details.

Apply for MIPS Hardship Exception

Several [exception applications](#) are available in 2024 to be exempt from meeting specific Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) program requirements and reweighting for the final MIPS score. The Quality Payment Program (QPP) automatically assigns special statuses to MIPS eligible clinicians, practices, virtual groups, and APM Entities who meet certain criteria. If you're assigned a special status, your reporting requirements may be affected. (Those already exempt from submitting Promoting Interoperability data don't need to apply. For The deadline to [apply for a hardship exception](#) is **January 2**.

Opioid Treatment Program

In a [report](#), the Office of the Inspector General found that Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) providers didn't always comply with federal requirements when they bill for opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment services, including intake activities. Review [OTP Billing & Payment](#), and learn how to:

- Bill for OUD services
- Use the correct G-codes

MidAtlantic Medicare Part B: FAQs

Be sure to review the [MidAtlantic Medicare Part B: FAQs](#), which are updated quarterly. FAQ topics are created from questions received during webinars, symposiums, and other provider organization meetings attended/hosted by our Provider Outreach & Education staff, as well as questions received from various departments within Novitas. These are reviewed and/or updated each calendar quarter.

[Curbside Conversations](#) is members with expertise in specific areas having informal chats with other MPS members seeking information. These are not formal consultations but a collegial resource offered voluntarily to the MPS community. Contact information for experts is available to MPS **members only** via email to mps@mdpsych.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

Ellicott City for Mental Health Practitioners seeking a professional and inviting space. Amenities: Wi-Fi, copier, fax, waiting rooms, staff kitchen, adequate parking, and handicapped access. Available Full/Part time with a comfortable and friendly atmosphere with Active in-office Listserv for referrals and consultations (40-50 current members). Easily accessible via routes 40, 29, 32, 70, and 695. Contact: Dr. Mike Boyle at 410-206-6070, psycmike@gmail.com for more details.

Ellicott City/Waverly Woods/Columbia: near Rt. 70, Rt. 32 and Rt. 29. Office and Group Room are in a beautiful suite ready for immediate occupancy. Daily and hourly rentals are available. Includes large fully furnished office with 2 windows, large beautifully decorated waiting room, receptionist/file room, 2 bathrooms, Kitchen and a warm community of other therapists who cross-refer. WiFi and fax available. Free ample parking. Contact Jenniferplassnig@gmail.com or 410-203-2411.



Expand Your MPS Engagement

MPS Interest Groups: Interest Groups are a way to connect with other psychiatrists around areas of mutual interest. Most communication occurs over email, but other options are possible. MPS members can opt in indefinitely to receive information and the opportunity to share news, ideas and concerns with participating members. Be sure to check out our new Collaborative Care Model interest group!

Engage with Digital Options

To stay informed, visit the MPS website regularly and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, X, formerly Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Psychiatrists with Immediate Patient Openings Available

The MPS maintains a list of members who can see new patients quickly. An *updated* "MPS Members Actively Taking New Patients: Appointments Within 1-2 Weeks" will appear on <https://mdpsych.org/> later this month. Please email mfloyd@mdpsych.org to be included (include name, patient types, insurances accepted, phone number/email, etc.) and/or consider referring patients to this resource. Patients can also try Find a Psychiatrist, but the wait time may be longer.

Are You Still Depressed?



NIH

National Institute
of Mental Health

JOIN A STUDY

Protocol #001602
Carlos A. Zarate, M.D.,
Principal Investigator

NIH Research Study Opportunity! If you have been treated for depression and still feel depressed, you may be eligible for this 12- to 14-week inpatient research study testing the effectiveness of an investigational new drug, HNK, which comes from ketamine.

If you are currently depressed even after trying antidepressants, are ages 18 to 70 years old, and otherwise healthy you may be eligible to participate. The inpatient study includes psychological and cognitive tests, IV medication, and brain scans. Some participants may have the option to complete parts of the study as an outpatient.

No cost to participate, health insurance is not needed. The study takes place at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, MD. We help make travel arrangements and pay for travel costs (arrangements vary by distance and circumstance).

1-877-646-3644

(1-877-MIND-NIH) TTY: 711
moodresearch@mail.nih.gov



ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES for Psychiatrists at Sheppard Pratt

Applicants must be board certified or board eligible and have a current Maryland-issued license at the time of hire. Some positions require an on-call schedule.

Current openings Include:

Psychiatrist, Adult Inpatient

The Retreat | Towson, MD

Service Chief, Inpatient

The Center for Eating Disorders | Towson, MD

Psychiatrist, Child and Adolescent (part time)

Sheppard Pratt School | Lanham, MD

Scan QR code to
see all openings



At Sheppard Pratt, you will be surrounded by a network of the brightest minds in psychiatry led by a bold vision to change lives. We offer:

- Robust resources to develop your career
- Cutting edge research and technology
- A generous compensation package with comprehensive benefits

For more information, please contact:

Emily Patrick, Director of Provider Recruitment, epatrick@sheppardpratt.org.

About Sheppard Pratt

Consistently ranked as one of the top ten psychiatric hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report*, Sheppard Pratt is the nation's largest private, nonprofit provider of mental health, substance use, special education, developmental disability, and social services. We employ more than 95 doctors who all share a passion for providing the best care to those we serve. Visit sheppardpratt.org to learn more about our services. *EOE*.