

MPS NEWS

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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

President's Column

Defending Patient Care and Scientific Integrity in Psychiatry Amid Major Change

As our society undergoes profound shifts due to societal, political, and financial pressures, it becomes more important than ever for us, as psychiatrists and physicians, to advocate for the core values that define our profession. In this time of change, we must remain active in protecting the values of compassion, scientific integrity, and individualized patient care.

History has shown that during times of uncertainty, anti-humanistic forces often rise, threatening the fundamental principles that guide us. Lessons learned include values of compassion can get eroded and fears in society can supersede individual welfare. Whether in the form of policies that prioritize finances over quality care or movements that undermine the well-being of vulnerable populations, these forces hide in the backdrop of every society. History tells us that we must be eternally vigilant, willing to defend those in a weaker position, and use our own professional voice.

Our ultimate goals as mental health professionals are clear: to alleviate suffering, to protect the dignity and safety of our patients, and to provide care rooted in evidence-based science. However, these objectives can be eroded if we do not remain alert. We must be cautious of policies that could undermine our ability to provide personalized care or that censor discussions that offer inconvenient narratives. The health of our society, and by extension the health of our patients, depends on our collective willingness to safeguard these core values.

One of these core values is the belief that

all people, regardless of their background or identity, deserve compassionate treatment and are entitled to the expectation of safety and fairness in society. We must focus on protecting the mental health of those who have often been silenced—for example children, immigrants, black and brown individuals, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. We have both a moral and professional obligation to ensure their needs are heard and addressed.

As [mental health providers](#), we know the science—whether it's the proven effectiveness of antidepressants in both children and adults, the long-lasting trauma that families experience when abruptly separated, supporting individual identity is important in suicide prevention, and the importance of a culturally informed approach to patient care. We understand that our patients are diverse, with individual needs, life experiences, and cultural backgrounds which must be considered in treatment planning. Ignoring this diversity compromises patient care and perpetuates inequities. That is science.

In considering the science of medicine, we must also protect our professional freedoms. We cannot allow the conversation around mental health to be dictated by those with the loudest voices or by ideologies that seek to suppress inconvenient truths. Free speech is an essential part of both scientific progress and patient care. We need the ability to discuss complex issues openly, without fear of censorship or retribution. Scientific research must remain unimpeded by political pressures.

Continues on next page

The MPS Council will meet by videoconference on March 11 at 7:30 PM. All members welcome!

President's Column Continued

There are many ways we can have an impact as psychiatrists. First, we can educate others about the science around evidence-based mental health care. We can speak out, not just in clinical settings but in the broader public sphere to educate medical trainees, lawmakers, and others in our community. Second, we can educate ourselves and support each other by sharing resources for patients and ourselves. Third, we can insist that our leaders in APA and AMA defend the needs of our patients and the values of our profession. Healthcare should never be viewed as a commodity; the patient-physician relationship must remain rooted in care and trust, not in transactional exchange. We must safeguard the sanctity of the therapeutic relationship, where the patient's needs come before anything else, and where the physician's role is to advocate for the best interest of those in our care.

Members of the CPD Coalition suggested some measures for that group that I'd like to extend as a request to all members. We must ensure that in the face of rapid societal and political change, we continue to provide evidence-based, individualized treatments and to safeguard our professional values and integrity. This where I ask for your help. If you know of useful resources for patients in our community or scholarly works that we can learn from, [please send them to us](#) so the information can be distributed to our membership; and we can all benefit.

Theodora Balis, M.D.
MPS President

Nominations for MPS Lifetime of Service Award

At the March Council meeting, nominees will be considered for the annual Lifetime of Service Award to be given at the April MPS annual meeting. Council welcomes suggestions from member for this recognition. The award is given annually to a senior MPS member who has shown a consistent, career-long pattern of unwavering dedication, commitment, and leadership to the organization. Other qualities to be considered include significant contributions to the mental health of our community through clinical work, teaching, administration, or research. Nominees must have life membership status. View past recipients [here](#). Nominations should be submitted no later than March 10. Names and any supporting reasons you wish to include can be submitted by email to mfloyd@mdpsych.org.

FINAL 2025 MPS DUES ALERT! Members who have not yet paid 2025 dues will be dropped from both MPS and APA after March 31!

Payment options for 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.
- 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.

REMEMBER TO VOTE!

The 2025 MPS election begins March 1

Electronic ballots are used for voting again this year for all members who have an email address on file.

This is one of the easiest and most vital ways you can participate in the organization. MPS elections are very competitive and every vote counts!!!

Ballots will be emailed March 1 and all votes must be cast or postmarked by 11:45 PM on March 31, 2025.

Look for an email from Maryland Psychiatric Society with "Vote Now: 2025 MPS Election" in the Subject line of the message.

Candidate biographies are included with the online ballot, or can be [viewed here](#).

February 11 Council Minutes

February MPS Council Meeting Highlights

Dr. Balis welcomed everyone on the call to the first MPS General Membership Meeting. After introductions the following MPS Committee Chairs provided brief updates on the work being done by their respective Committees:

- Dr. Traci Speed: Academic Psychiatry
- Drs. Elias Shaya, Anne Hanson and Brian Zimnitzky: APA Assembly Delegation
- Dr. Ann Hackman: Community Psychiatry and Diversity
- Dr. Balis: Distinguished Fellow (comments submitted by Karen Swartz, MD, Chair)
- Dr. Bruce Hershfield: Editorial Advisory Board
- Drs. Joanna Brandt and Ronald Means: Ethics
- Drs. Cynthia Lewis and Mike Young: Legislative
- Dr. Ronald Means: Membership
- Dr. Virginia Ashley: Book Club
- Dr. Balis presented an update on the Program & CME and Subspecialty Committees.

An open discussion on MPS activities, upcoming meetings and education efforts was had by those on the call. After the discussion Dr. Balis informed those on the call that the official Council meeting would begin next and reminded everyone that Council meetings are open to all members.

Dr. Balis provided an update on activities that support MPS Strategic Priorities. She reported that since January MPS has:

- Held a RFM Trivia Night with food, drinks and prizes was a great free event. Approximately 45 attendees competed in 6 teams. Thanks to our meeting supports PRMS and Sheppard Pratt
- Solicited support for MPS Annual Dinner
- Sent multiple vendor outreach efforts, including December ad sale, new 2025 ad rates, package offerings, and home page ads.
- Coordinated targeted outreach to ECPs, RFMs, MS about annual contest deadlines

Dr. Balis next presented the Executive Committee report. She reported that regarding member support, the MPS published information regarding Optum transition updates, provider alerts and more in the MPS News. The Executive Committee met with Behavioral Health Administration officials in early February to discuss AOT implementation, Perkins investigative report, legislation and more. Despite posting multiple appeal requests for a new MPPAC Chair there were no volunteers. The Executive Committee agreed to put this committee on hold and Dr. Balis will serve as acting chair after her term as MPS President is complete, until a chair is found. Planning efforts for a MPS Family picnic/event in the summer of 2025 are underway.

Surrounding MPS efforts to unify the voice of psychiatry in Maryland, Dr. Balis reported that the Executive Committee is

continuing to collaborative meetings with other Maryland stakeholders, including a recent meeting with Baltimore City Medical Society

MPS continues to have a strong focus on advocacy. In early February an in-person advocacy day was held in Annapolis. MPS members met with over 30 state Senators and Delegates throughout the day. Dr. Balis thanked those who were in attendance. The MPS has submitted written and/or oral testimony on over 30 bills thus far.

Dr. Balis reminded those in attendance that the MPS Election Ballot Update was approved at the January Council meeting. Online voting begins March 1. Committee Chair appointments will begin this month and Dr. Balis report that the Distinguished Fellowship Committee will meet in March to begin nominations for 2025. MPS staff is working on closing out the year end accounting to prepare for the CPA review, fourth quarter financials, as well as the CPA's report will be presented at the Council meeting in March.

Secretary/Treasurer Report

Dr. Hightower provided an update on the MPS reserve accounts. The current MPS emergency reserve (cash) account at Cetera has approximately \$181k. The minimum amount we need in that account to maintain compliance with our bylaws is \$156,008. That is a difference of \$24,000.00. (round numbers). Additional reserves are being held in the PNC money market account (\$158,383.53) at a current rate interest of 3.65%. The MPS currently has an overage of \$69,825.00 across all accounts that could be moved into the portfolio - yielding a higher return.

The MPS Executive Committee would like to move forward with putting \$70,000 into the investment portfolio:

- Move \$20,000 from the emergency fund to the portfolio at Cetera.
- Move \$50,000 from the PNC money market account to the portfolio

After a brief discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee Report

Drs. Young and Lewis present a brief update on the work done thus far by the MPS Legislative Committee. Dr. Young reported that several Committee members provided oral testimony in support of [SB509/HB592: Prohibited Possession of Firearms - Assisted Outpatient Treatment Respondents](#), the bill that MPS drafted. The Committee continues to meet weekly and so far has reviewed over 125 bills and taken a position on 37.

New Business

Dr. Balis asking Council to approve the newest MPS interest group, "Climate, Environment and Disaster Psychiatry." The focus of the interest group will be to:

February 11 Council Minutes Cont.

- Discuss ways in which psychiatry and climate or environmental disasters are related
 - Discuss the role of psychiatrists in educating trainees, patients, and the public on the effects of climate change
 - Prepare members to respond to disaster emergencies
 - Give policy recommendations related to climate change
- She reminded Council that interest groups are open to all MPS members. After a brief discussion the motion to approve passed unanimously.

New MPS Interest Group: Join Now!

The MPS is excited to launch its newest interest group, "Climate, Environment and Disaster Psychiatry." The focus of the interest group will be to:

- Discuss ways in which psychiatry and climate or environmental disasters are related
- Discuss the role of psychiatrists in educating trainees, patients and the public on the effects of climate change
- Prepare members to respond to disaster emergencies
- Give policy recommendations related to climate change

Interest groups are open to all MPS members. To be added please email mps@mdpsych.org. Be sure to check out all our current [MPS Committees](#) and [Interest Groups](#), we're always looking for more members to participate!

Refer a Colleague and Support the MFP

The Professional Risk Management Services, Inc. (PRMS) "Refer a Colleague" program resulted in a recent \$110 donation to the Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry! For each referral to its medical professional liability insurance program, PRMS donates to the referring physician's district branch or foundation (regardless of whether insurance is purchased). This is an easy way to help boost financial support for research, education, and public awareness activities in Maryland.

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.

New 30-Year and 50-Year Members

Congratulations to the following members who reach 30 and 50 years of MPS/APA membership in 2025!

NEW 30-YEAR MEMBERS

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Marcelo Batkis, M.D. | Sarah Iacobovici, M.D. |
| Laura Gaffney, M.D. | Carolien Poblete, M.D. |

NEW 50-YEAR MEMEBRS

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Jay Phillips, M.D. | Michael Spodak, M.D. |
| Jesse Hellman, M.D. | William Wimmer, M.D. |
| Jonathan Book, M.D. | David Pickar, M.D. |
| Bruce Regan, M.D. | Robert Kolodner, M.D. |
| Cecilia Schocket, M.D. | |

Congrats Area 3 RFM Merit Awardee!

Following nomination by the MPS, APA Area 3 Council recognized the following Resident-Fellow Member (RFM) with a 2025 Merit Award:

Celia Quayum, M.D. (UM/SP)

Dr. Quayum is being honored for outstanding leadership, service, and contributions to psychiatry. Well deserved!

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

- Tooba Qadir, M.D.
- Douglas C McWilliams, M.D.

Reinstatement

- Travis Klein, M.D.

Transfer Into Maryland

- Heba Elnaiem, M.D.
- Heather Theibert, M.D.

Medical Students

- Matthew Kelly
- Jacob Shaw



Legislative Committee Updates

The 2025 General Assembly has reached the halfway point. With 3211 bills submitted to date, members of the MPS Legislative Committee (LAC) have spent countless hours reviewing legislation, writing testimony, participating in weekly meetings, traveling to Annapolis and more. The MPS would like to thank the LAC for their efforts and continued diligence during this unusually busy session.

The MPS LAC, comprised of members from diverse geographic, practice, and ethnic backgrounds, votes on bills of interest during their weekly meeting, where MPS Executive Committee members are present during both the discussion and vote. The LAC carefully reviews the specific language of proposed legislation to determine how it may impact the practice of psychiatry in Maryland, focusing on the details of the bill as written rather than overarching ideas. We welcome consideration of all sides of the serious issues we are debating.

The MPS recognizes that members will not always agree with MPS' official positions on bills. We encourage members to contact their elected officials to share their thoughts about any bill. Members should refrain from speaking on behalf of the MPS when expressing their own opinion or clarify that their opinions are their own and do not reflect those of the organization. Please contact MPS Executive Director [Meagan Floyd](#) with questions regarding MPS positions.

Support:

[SB 900/HB 1146: Maryland Behavioral Health Crisis Response System](#): Requiring each crisis communication center in the Maryland Behavioral Health Crisis Response System to coordinate with the 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Network to provide supportive counseling, suicide prevention, crisis intervention, and referrals to additional resources; and altering the evaluation of outcome of services the System is required to include.

[SB140/HB690: Overdose Awareness Day](#): Requiring the Governor annually to proclaim a certain day as Overdose Awareness Day.

[SB 696/HB962: Public Health - Pediatric Hospital Overstay Patients](#): Specifying that the scope of the Maryland Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Registry and Referral System includes both private and State inpatient and outpatient mental health and substance use services; requiring the Maryland Department of Health, in coordination with the Department of Human Services, to ensure pediatric hospital overstay patients are placed in the least restrictive setting possible.

[HB 713/SB 577 Public Safety - Distribution of Literature to Purchasers of Firearms and Ammunition](#): Requiring the Maryland Department of Health to prepare certain literature relating to firearms and ammunition and to distribute the literature to all county health departments in the State; requiring each county health department to

distribute certain literature to all establishments that sell firearms or ammunition within the county; requiring establishments that sell firearms or ammunition in the State to make certain literature visible and available and to distribute the literature to purchasers of firearms and ammunition; etc.

Oppose:

[SB926/HB1328: End-of-Life Option Act \(The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings and the Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass Act\)](#): Authorizing an individual to request aid in dying by making certain requests; establishing requirements and prohibitions governing aid in dying, including requirements related to requests for aid in dying, consulting physicians, mental health assessments, the disposal of drugs prescribed for aid in dying, health care facility policies, and the effect of aid in dying on insurance policies; authorizing a pharmacist to dispense medication for aid in dying only to certain individuals under certain circumstances.

[HB1399: Health Occupations - Cross-Sex Hormone Therapy for Minors - Prohibition \(Protect the Kids Act\)](#): Prohibiting a licensed health care practitioner from prescribing, dispensing, or administering a cross-sex hormone or otherwise providing cross-sex hormone therapy for the treatment of certain mental health diagnoses to an individual who is a minor.

[HB 867: State Board of Physicians - Naturopathic Doctors - Prescriptive Authority and Administration of Medication](#): Repealing the Naturopathic Doctors Formulary Council within the Board of Physicians; altering the drugs that may be administered by a naturopathic doctor; and altering the methods by which a naturopathic doctor may administer medication.

Calling All Members! 2025-2026 MPS Opportunities

ALL members are invited to step up with MPS and make a difference in how psychiatry is practiced in Maryland
The annual MPS leadership cycle begins again next month with the installation of Ronald Means, M.D. as President. The MPS offers multiple ways for members to be involved, including volunteering for [committees](#), joining an email [interest group](#) and other ways that members request. **Engage with us to represent psychiatry. This is your chance to have a say!**

Your energy and ideas can help the MPS effectively focus on issues that are important to you! Participation from members is essential to accomplishing our goals. To review the options and sign up, [please click here](#).

FDA Announces Elimination of Clozapine REMS

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [announced](#) that it will no longer expect prescribers, pharmacies, and patients to participate in the risk evaluation and mitigation strategies (REMS) program for clozapine. This includes the requirement that prescribers report results of absolute neutrophil count blood tests before pharmacies can dispense clozapine.

The announcement follows a November 2024 meeting of the FDA's Clozapine REMS advisory committee, which [voted 14-1 to eliminate](#) key provisions of the REMS after prescribers and patient advocacy groups, including APA, testified that the REMS creates significant administrative and logistical burdens for prescribers and pharmacies, sometimes causing life-threatening treatment interruptions for patients.

The FDA still recommends that prescribers monitor patients' neutrophil count according to the frequencies described in the prescribing information. Information about severe neutropenia will remain in the prescribing information for all clozapine medicines, including in the existing boxed warnings. [Click here to read more.](#)

Advocacy Alert: Protect Critical NIH Research Funding

The Trump administration recently announced a new policy to cap facilities and administration costs associated with National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants at 15%. This cap could significantly hinder vital biomedical research across the country, including mental health and substance use disorder research. The courts have issued a pause on the administration's plan, but your elected officials [need to hear from you!](#)

New SUD Resource

Many staff, patients, and participants at SUD treatment and harm reduction programs have been fearful and uncertain since the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) earlier this year rescinded guidance that previously limited immigration enforcement actions in "sensitive locations," including health care settings. To help treatment programs navigate this uncertainty, the Legal Action Center developed a [guide highlighting the particular legal and practical issues for programs covered by the federal privacy law for SUD treatment records](#), 42 USC 290dd-2 and 42 CFR Part 2. Along with their updated [letter that can be shared with law enforcement seeking information about a patient](#), staff can use the guide to prepare for potential immigration enforcement actions, provide accurate information to patients, and understand their legal obligations to maintain patient confidentiality. [Download it here.](#)

PRMS Case of the Quarter and Article on AI

Q4 2024 PRMS Case of the Quarter: Check out the latest "Case of the Quarter" column, a sample case study highlighting best practices in actual scenarios encountered through PRMS' extensive experience in litigation and claims management, with considerations for the year. Current and past cases can also be found on our website [here](#).

PRMS Blog: "Risk Management: Artificial Intelligence in Clinical Practice": One of the [newest blogs](#), written by PRMS Director of Risk Management Donna Vanderpool, MBA, JD, is an excerpt from the Innovations in Clinical Neuroscience journal on the topic of artificial intelligence in the clinical practice from a risk management perspective. Catch up on the latest blogs at [PRMS.com/blog](#).

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) will hold **National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week[®]** (NDAFW), **March 17–23, 2025**. NDAFW is a national [health observance](#) inspiring dialogue about the science of drug use and addiction among youth. [Click here](#) to register an event.

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! Email jhritz@mdpsych.org to join

Engage with Digital Options

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

Curbside Conversations is a listing of MPS members with expertise in specific areas who facilitate informal chats with fellow 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.

THE MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY

2025 Annual Meeting

Join us as we celebrate our MPS achievements made this past year!

SHERATON BALTIMORE NORTH HOTEL

APRIL 24, 2025

6:00PM until 9:00PM

Help us turn over the gavel to Ronald Means, M.D., incoming MPS President and welcome Tyler Hightower, M.D., MPH as the MPS President-Elect and Michael Young, M.D. as treasurer.

PURCHASE TICKETS HERE

General Member Tickets: \$80
Early Career Psychiatrist (ECP) Tickets: \$45
Resident-Fellow Tickets: \$35

Maryland News

FY24 MBP Annual Report

The Maryland Board of Physicians (MBP) [Fiscal Year 2024 Annual report](#) notes that of 1018 complaints filed, the three most common allegations were: unprofessional conduct (263 complaints), failure to meet the standard of care (300 complaints) and failure to keep adequate medical records (40 complaints). Approximately 560 of the complaints filed came from patients or their families.

Twenty Six cases were referred to peer review. A total of 52 physicians lost their licenses, including 8 that were surrendered, and 32 had their licenses restricted. There were 50 non-prejudicial actions against physicians and 8 other prejudicial actions. Physician fines through disciplinary actions totaled \$147,000 and their administrative (CME) fines totaled \$9,700.

Actively licensed physicians in Maryland totaled 37,585, up from 36,390. There were 16,111 allied health practitioners actively licensed by MBP, up from 15,277. Total licenses issued via the [Interstate Medical Licensure Compact](#) were 758, up from 672. MBP processed 772 physician assistant delegation agreements. While there were 75 positive criminal history records checks for physicians, none of them were denied licensure or renewal.

Maryland Health Secretary Resigns

Maryland's state health secretary, [Dr. Laura Herrera Scott](#), is resigning her position at the end of this February after leading the Maryland Department of Health for two years. Herrera Scott will be replaced by [Dr. Meena Seshamani](#), who most recently led the Medicare program for the federal government. More information [can be found here](#).

WPS Virtual Advocacy Series

The Washington Psychiatric Society is hosting a virtual program titled *Transforming Community Mental Healthcare: A Policy Perspective on the Rise of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)*. Speakers include Amir Afkhami, M.D., Ph.D., Alex Graf, MPP, and Ramia Gupta, M.D. Todd Cox, M.D., WPS President-Elect will be moderating.

Webinar Objectives:

- The historical and legislative background leading to the Excellence on Mental Health Act.
- The scope of CCBHCs including their capacity to provide comprehensive, integrated services

The political strengths and weaknesses of the program, and the key milestones ahead

[Register Here](#)

Updated Behavioral Health Administration Licensing Application

Effective February 10th BHA launched a [new online licensure application submission process](#). This new system was developed in response to a number of pain points identified by providers as well as a review of our current paper-based licensing system. This review included the following elements:

1. BHA conducted a data analysis of the volume of applications submitted and the quality of application submission to identify challenges with the current licensing process.
2. BHA conducted a comparative analysis of its licensing practices in comparison to other administrations that license healthcare providers in Maryland.
3. BHA researched and implemented change management strategies to improve the quality of the application process through the development of new workflows for application review, training of staff, solicitation of feedback from the provider community and the local behavioral health authorities.
4. BHA utilized COMAR 10.63.01.05 to develop a streamlined application process that will improve compliance in provider application submissions.

If you have any questions, please contact bha.licensingcompliance@maryland.gov. Please [click here](#) to view the full release on the BHA website.

Empowering Excellence Panel Discussion

Join the Center for a Healthy Maryland for an in-depth panel discussion—**“Empowering Excellence: The Impact and Future of Black Physicians in Healthcare.”** The panel aims to shed light on the experience of African Americans in the medical field, from education and training to professional practice. This is a virtual event on March 6 at 6:00PM. [Register here](#).

Discussion Topics:

1. Barriers to entry in medical education
 2. Experiences during medical training
 3. Challenges in professional practice
 4. Changes in diversity in medicine over time
- Importance of a Mentor

Intended Audience: This event is open to the community. Students, education professionals, upcoming physicians, and friends of the Center are encouraged to attend!

Maryland News

New Carelon Provider Training Videos

Carelon announced six new provider training videos aimed to help behavioral health providers set up their *Provider Digital Front Door* access and navigate [ProviderConnect](#).

These trainings specifically highlight how to submit authorizations and manage workflows within ProviderConnect. The formats include a mixture of recorded live webinars and step-by-step instruction.

Providers can view the videos by clicking the Carelon Behavioral Health *Vimeo* links below. They can also be viewed on the Carelon website via the Behavioral Health Providers [Training & Education](#) webpage under [System Set Up](#) (topics 1 and 2) and [Authorization Training](#) (topics 3-6).

The topics include:

1. [Registering for ProviderConnect](#)
2. [Creating a Single Sign On](#)
3. [ProviderConnect Uninsured Eligibility Workflow](#)
4. [Submitting Mental Health Authorizations in ProviderConnect - Higher Levels of Care \(HLOC\)](#)
5. [Dept. of Rehabilitation \(DOR\) Counselors Workflow in ProviderConnect](#)
6. [ProviderConnect - Outpatient Authorization Submission](#)

Overdose Prevention Team Program Inventory

Maryland's Office of Overdose Response is pleased to share their latest update to the [Overdose Prevention Team Program Inventory](#). The program inventory tracks the implementation of programs related to substance use and overdose across Maryland's 24 local jurisdictions. This update also includes an overview of qualitative input from their OPT partners regarding their successes from multiagency coordination and common challenges. You can find a copy of the program inventory on their website: StopOverdose.maryland.gov/resources.

Youth Behavioral Health Support for Providers

The Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration has resources for providers and health care workers supporting mental health and substance use programs and services. To learn about behavioral health resources and services for children and adolescents, visit health.maryland.gov/youthbehavioralhealth.

TCRC Best Practices Conference

The Maryland Tobacco Control Resource Center is hosting the 19th Annual TCRC Best Practices Conference on March 27, 2025. This FREE meeting provides 5.0 CME credits and brings together clinical, public health, and behavioral health professionals to discuss tobacco control efforts. [Click here](#) for the conference agenda and additional details. [Free Registration](#).

MHCC/MedChi Winter Summit

The Maryland Health Care Commission and MedChi are hosting a free virtual event, *Optimizing the Role of Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs)*, on March 14 from 12:30PM to 1:30PM. The program will Define Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs) and their role in health care, highlight key benefits and success stories, and share actionable strategies for effective implementation. Attendees will receive 1.0 CME credit. [Register here](#).

BALTIMORE CITY MEDICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

WHAT WOULD YOU DO???

2025

BCMS
Baltimore City Medical Society

“If you suspect your patient is involved with and/or confided to you in being a victim of human trafficking?”

Speaker: Sophie Aron, Research and Program Coordinator, University of Maryland SAFE Center

**Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
via ZOOM**

REGISTER TODAY BY PHONE OR EMAIL:
410-625-0022 OR INFO@BCMEDICALSOCIETY.ORG

Member Publications

Carol Vidal, M.D., PhD, MPH published her own single-author book, [Status and Social Comparisons Among Adolescents: Popularity in the Age of Social Media](#). It examines the differences in the perception of social status and how they impact youth mental health and well-being

Roger Lewin, M.D. recently published [The School on Magnolia](#), a book about a rag tag alternative school in Cleveland, Ohio in the 1970's that tried to find ways with teenagers who were not always so easy. More of his personal writing can be found [here](#).

Scott T Aaronson, M.D., Andrew van der Vaart, M.D., Ph.D., and Margo Lauterbach, M.D. published "[Single-Dose Psilocybin for Depression With Severe Treatment Resistance: An Open-Label Trial](#)." The study observed the safety and efficacy of psilocybin in patients with severe treatment-resistance depression.

Manan J Shah, M.D., Adefolake Akinsanya, M.D., Ronald H Lee, M.D., and Arachhige P Muthukuda, M.D. edited the publication, "[Clinical Considerations in Psychiatric Inpatient Care of Children and Adolescents](#)." It includes an assortment of articles that highlight the challenges and advances in the psychiatric care of children and adolescents.

Chad J Lennon, M.D. and Arachhige P Muthukuda, M.D. published "[Unique Nature of Inpatient Care on Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Units](#)" in the *Clinical Considerations in Psychiatric Inpatient Care of Children and Adolescents*. The article discusses that despite the controversy of inpatient units for child and adolescent psychiatric care, it should continue to be a valued part of the options to help young patients.

Member Shoutouts

Josh Chiappelli, M.D. was awarded a two-year grant from the NIMH to investigate changes in white matter structure as assessed with diffusion tensor imaging before and after a brief period of exposure to music. The study aims to lay a foundation for development of this type of treatment by establishing that people with schizophrenia have intact potential for white matter development with learning, and by probing clinical and neurobiological factors that may impact such plasticity.

*From the 'University of Maryland Department of Psychiatry':
February Newsletter Issue*

Allison Brandt, M.D. has been selected for the Hopkins Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR) K12 Clinical Research Scholars Program to further study people with schizophrenia, based on how they fare with clozapine and other antipsychotic medications. Kudos to Dr. Brandt on being chosen for this program!

From 'Cheers from the Chair'

CLIMATE CORNER

Maryland General Assembly is in full swing, and will wrap up in April, so March is the perfect time to contact your legislators and let them know what is important to you. To find contact information for your representatives, go to <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/members/district> and click "Lookup" to enter your address. In [January](#) and [February](#) I highlighted several bills that would like public mental health benefits, please refer to those columns for action alerts and scripts.

This month, I will continue to highlight important climate and health related bills under consideration:

The Coal Dust Cleanup and Asthma Remediation Act ([SB 882/HB 1088](#)) aims to address the health impacts from air pollution that is released by transporting coal via uncovered rail trains. The bill specifically mentions pulmonary health, but I have previously highlighted the detrimental impacts of air pollution on children's behavioral and cognitive outcomes as well as on adults' dementia risk. This bill will establish a 60-cent fee per million BTUs on coal transport, generating \$300 million annually that can fund climate and health programs. 40% of the funds will support underserved communities affected by coal transport. If you support the bill, sign this [action alert](#).

Responding to Emergency Needs from Extreme Weather (RENEW) Act of 2025([SB0149](#), [HB 128](#)) would require Maryland-related polluting companies that have emitted over a billion tons of greenhouse gas emissions between 1994-2023 to pay a one-time fee that will fund a Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Fund, which will help Maryland address the fall-out from this pollution. This is a one-time fee that is requested of the largest polluters. The non-partisan Institute for Policy Integrity analyzed the bill and determined that it would not impact Marylanders' consumer costs because smaller producers will not be affected by this bill. If you support this bill, sign this [action alert](#).

Removing PFAS from Agricultural Chemicals ([HB0386/SB0345](#)). PFAS (aka "forever chemicals") have many deleterious health effects, including on neurodevelopment and brain health. There is no action alert for this but you can contact your legislators directly. Here is a news [article](#) about the bill.

Elizabeth Ryznar MD MSc
elizabeth.ryznar@sheppardpratt.org

APA News & Information

APA Urges Congress to Protect Medicaid

In response to recent policy proposals to cut funding to Medicaid, APA joined a coalition of mental health advocacy organizations urging Congress to protect Medicaid. Individuals with mental health (MH) conditions and substance use disorders (SUD) make up 40% of nonelderly adults on Medicaid and would be disproportionately affected by any cuts to Medicaid funding or benefits, or the imposition of work requirements. Without access to quality, affordable care, the nearly 80 million Americans who rely on Medicaid, could be forced to forego MH or SUD treatment and risk their conditions worsening. [Read the full letter to Congress here.](#)

APA Urges New Administration, Congress to Prioritize Mental Health

In letters to President Donald Trump and the 119th Congress, APA has submitted a series of bipartisan policy recommendations that would improve access to mental health care, ensuring patients receive the treatments they need to live healthy, productive lives. [READ MORE](#)

Lifestyle Psychiatry in Clinical Practice

Join the APA for the [Virtual Immersive: Lifestyle Psychiatry in Clinical Practice on March 18th](#) and unlock the key pillars to enhancing mental well-being. This dynamic live event will guide you through the crucial elements of Lifestyle Psychiatry—Toxic Exposures, Nutrition, Stress, Sleep, Exercise, and Connectedness—and show you how to apply them in clinical practice to help your patients thrive.

Expert speakers will dive deep into evidence-based strategies to address stress management, nutritional psychiatry, the neurobiology of sleep, and the impact of exercise and connectedness on mental health. This immersive experience offers a comprehensive, interdisciplinary exploration of mental health that addresses clinical practice and whole-person care.

Psych News Launches Special Report Podcast

Join Editor-in-Chief Adrian Preda, M.D., as he interviews authors of Psych News monthly deep-dives into clinically relevant topics at the heart of psychiatry and mental health care. The first two episodes, which explore [nutrition's role in mental health](#) and the [psychiatric management of medically complex patients](#), are now online.

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 Announces Results of 2025 Election

APA members have chosen Mark Rapaport, M.D., as president-elect, subject to final approval at the March meeting of APA's Board of Trustees. Rapaport and other newly elected members of the Board of Trustees will take office at the end of the 2025 Annual Meeting. [READ MORE](#)

Deadline Soon: APA 2025 Fellowships

The [APA/APAF Fellowships](#) application is open through **March 17**. 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.

Jeanne Spurlock Congressional Fellowship

Established in honor of the late APA deputy medical director, the Jeanne Spurlock Congressional Fellowship provides the opportunity for two psychiatry residents or early career psychiatrists to work in a congressional office for 10 months and expand their knowledge of legislative healthcare issues. Read more about this fellowship as well as other ways you can get politically involved in PN's latest "[Voices in Advocacy & Policy](#)" column. The deadline for the Jeanne Spurlock fellowship—as well as eight other [APA/APA Foundation Fellowships](#)—is **March 17**. [LEARN MORE AND APPLY](#)

Medicare Updates

Provider Specialty: Telehealth Services

This is a [central location for all telehealth services information](#), including links to related Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) resources and references. General information regarding the Medicare program can be found using the topics down your left navigation bar or by using the search option in the upper right-hand corner.

Medicare telehealth services include remote patient face-to-face services seen via live video conferencing, non-face-to-face services that can be conducted either through live video conferencing or via store and forward telecommunication services, home telehealth services and remote patient face-to-face, interactive services.

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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.

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.

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.

HOW DOES KETAMINE WORK IN DEPRESSION?



JOIN A STUDY 1-877-646-3644

(1-877-MIND-NIH) TTY: 711

email: moodresearch@mail.nih.gov

This NIH research study is trying to better understand how ketamine (an FDA-approved anesthetic) works to provide rapid antidepressant effects and if taking perampanel (an FDA-approved epilepsy medication) with ketamine weakens or eliminates its antidepressant response.

The study is enrolling ages 18-70 with major depression who are free of serious medical conditions for up to 5 weeks as an inpatient and/or outpatient. Participants will be tapered off their psychiatric medications. Research procedures include:

- Blood draws, medical and psychological evaluations
- Brain scans (MRI & MEG), sleep studies, and/or TMS (transcranial magnetic stimulation)
- One low-dose ketamine infusion and perampanel and/or placebo
- Optional ketamine treatment at the end of the study

The study is conducted at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland and enrolls eligible participants from across all 50 states. Participation is free. Compensation up to \$1,475 is provided. Travel arrangements are provided and costs are covered by NIMH (arrangements vary by distance).



National Institute of Mental Health

Protocol #19-M-0107; Carlos A. Zarate, M.D., Principal Investigator



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:

Service Chief for Emergency Psychiatry Services

GBMC - A Sheppard Pratt Partner | Towson, MD

Service Chief

Adult Autism and Intellectual Disability Unit | Towson, MD

Service Chief

The Center for Eating Disorders | Towson, MD

Scan QR code to
see all openings



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- Cutting edge research and technology
- A generous compensation package with comprehensive benefits

For more information, scan the QR code or contact Kathleen Hilzendeger, Director of Professional Services, khilzendeger@sheppardpratt.org or 443-465-6142.

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.*

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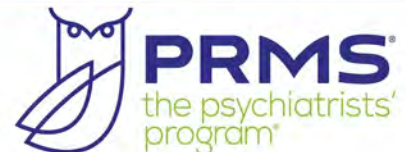


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