

MPS NEWS

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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

President's Column

MPS Legislative and Advocacy Efforts

As many know, the advocacy done by the Maryland Psychiatric Society is one of the most valued services of the organization. Whether it be via ongoing meetings with collaborating organizations, position statements, advocacy meetings with legislators or providing written or oral testimony during the Maryland General Assembly, advocating for Maryland psychiatrists and patients is a key component to the work done at MPS. Honestly, it was the work done in the legislative committee that hooked me into more involvement with the organization many years ago.

Currently, we are in the midst of the Maryland General Assembly, which proves to be a busy time for many MPS members (and WPS members who also join our legislative efforts). The legislative committee meets weekly to discuss any mental health bill that is introduced, deciding if we will lend our support to the bill or work to oppose it. For most, we submit written testimony, and for a smaller subset, we volunteer to present oral testimony during session. The content of that testimony must be prepared by various volunteers of the committee, and Meagan Floyd then works to refine, standardize and submit testimony for consideration. We also work closely with our lobbyist team at Harris Jones and Malone, who join our weekly meetings to guide us on the political nuances of the legislative process and ensure that we are aware of key timelines.

This year, we have offered written testimony on twenty-five pieces of

legislation thus far. Topics range from practical issues such as the utilization of AI, to procedural issues such as the longevity of emergency petitions and even to financial issues such as reimbursement for crisis services. The committee members come together, committing every Wednesday evening, to determine if and how we will make our opinions known on these matters. The dialogue is incredibly stimulating and always educational.

This month, I [interviewed Dr. Michael Young](#). He is co-chair of the legislative committee along with Dr. Cynthia Lewis. Dr. Young not only highlights the work done thus far in the committee but also discusses his reasoning for joining and leading the committee. In particular, we spend some time discussing the [psychologist prescribing bill](#) that was introduced this year and our efforts to mount an opposition against the legislation.

Many thanks to all the committee members who volunteer to endure the long discussions each Wednesday. MPS is lucky to have your time and knowledge, knowing that it contributes to the betterment of psychiatric care in Maryland.

*Ronald Means, M.D.
 MPS President*

The MPS Council will meet via Zoom on March 10 at 7:30 PM. All members welcome!



REMEMBER TO VOTE!

The 2026 MPS election began 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 11:59 PM on March 31, 2026.

Look for an email from Maryland Psychiatric Society with "Vote Now: 2026 Maryland Psychiatric Society Election" in the Subject line of the message.

Candidate biographies are included with the online ballot, or can be [viewed here](#). If you have questions, email Meagan Floyd at mfloyd@mdpsych.org.

Maryland ICE Detention Centers — Contact Your Elected Officials

The message below (draft by MPS President, Ronald Means, MD) was sent to Maryland congressional representatives in mid-February regarding local immigrant detention. Given the timely visit of Sen. Raskin to a detention center last month, we thought it was important to communicate the impacts of detention from a mental health standpoint as well as offer local Maryland resources. If you would like to send this message (or one using your own words) please click here to contact your elected officials:

[Contact your US Congressional Representative\(s\)](#)
[Contact your local Maryland Senator/Delegate](#)

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) is the state medical organization whose physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed over seventy years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, MPS works to ensure available, accessible and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens, and strives through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland excluding the D.C. suburbs, MPS represents over 780 psychiatrists as well as physicians currently in psychiatric training.

I am writing to offer support in your efforts against the harmful detention of immigrants in Maryland. I feel that it is particularly important to lend our voice to the cause as psychiatrists who serve the people of Maryland. As treating providers of those who are abused and mistreated, we know firsthand the impacts of such detentions upon individuals. It is potentially traumatizing for individuals to be detained and particularly egregious if housed in ill-equipped facilities without adequate services to care for medical and mental health needs. It is inevitable that many of those who are taken from their communities will be psychologically harmed, thus resulting in mental illness. Also, the additional indirect harms to families and communities are innumerable.

In December 2025, the American Psychiatric Association issued a [Position Statement on Protecting the Mental Health of Immigrant Children \[linkprotect.cudasvc.com\]](#). The statement highlighted the detrimental mental impacts caused by family separations, prolonged detentions, and deportations and the resulting increased incidence of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety. These human rights violations will most certainly cause psychological harm to children and "disrupt critical developmental processes." As the Maryland Psychiatric Society, I am dedicated to advocate for all Maryland residents in the prevention and treatment of mental illness and want to be of assistance in serving Maryland immigrants who need our support. Please let me know if/how I can be of assistance.

FINAL 2026 MPS DUES ALERT! Members who have not yet paid 2026 dues will be dropped from both MPS and APA after March 31!

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 jhritz@mdpsych.org with questions 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 that for 2026, employees must submit dues payments to MPS directly. You will then be reimbursed by SHPS. Once you send payment for MPS dues, email jhritz@mdpsych.org for an MPS receipt and submit it to Lauren Hopper at SHPS via email at lhopper@sheppardpratt.org who will process your request.

February 10 Council Minutes

Dr. Balis called the meeting to order at 7:34PM. She asked for anyone with a new conflict of interest to disclose it, and no one noted any conflict.

Consent Agenda

Dr. Balis noted the Council Minutes for the January meeting, the State of Psychiatry CME report and the Executive Director's Report were included in the consent agenda. After a few moments of review, Dr. Balis asked if there were any concerns or comments. Hearing none, the consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Support for Strategic Priorities

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

- Planning RFM Trivia Night with food, drinks and prizes - a great free event for March. All vendors have been secured
- Solicited support for MPS Annual Dinner
- Multiple vendor outreach efforts, including December/January ad sale, new 2026 ad rates, package offerings, and home page ads.
- Targeted outreach to ECPs, RFMs, MS about annual contest deadlines

Executive Committee Report

Dr. Means reported that since the January Council meeting the MPS has Published information regarding Published information regarding Carelon service updates, Medicare year end reports and stakeholder's legislative priorities in MPS News. He noted that **Dr. Young will be the new MPPAC Chair, and the paperwork is being finalized. MPS Election Ballot Update was approved at the January Council meeting. Voting begins March 1. The MPS Distinguished Fellowship Committee will meet in March to begin nominations for 2026, and Committee Chair appointments will begin this month. Dr Means encouraged Council to attend the** upcoming MPS advocacy day in Annapolis, and reported that the to date, the MPS has submitted written testimony, as well as in person testimony on approximately 20 bills in the General Assembly. He then updated Council on several upcoming MPS CME programs including the joint meeting with the Southern Psychiatric Association, which will take place in September 2026 in Baltimore. 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 which will be presented at the Council meeting in March.

Membership Committee Report

Ms. Floyd shared two requests for dues relief that was submitted by current members. After reviewing the requests, Council agreed to approve, and recommends that APA does the same. Ms. Floyd will notify the members and APA of the Council's decision. She also shared the current drop list with Council and urged them to contact those on the list and encourage them to pay, the list is very long this year.

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 have agreed to provide oral testimony in support of the bill AOT handgun restriction bill that MPS drafted, as well as several others. The Committee continues to meet weekly and so far, has reviewed over 125 bills and taken a position on over 35.

Announcements

- February 18 Advocacy Day in Annapolis RSVP to mfloyd@mdpsych.org
- March 3rd: Trivia Night for RFMs (Council members welcome!) RSVP to jhrtiz@mdpsych.org
- Next Council meeting March 10th at 7:30 PM via Zoom
- [MPS 2026 Annual Meeting](#): April 30th at Mt Washington Tavern

FREE NAMI MARYLAND ANNUAL MEETING TICKETS AVAILABLE

NAMI Maryland has offered MPS 3 free tickets to their Annual Meeting on March 21st 2026 from 4-6pm. The meeting will be held at the Wilde Lake Cetner in Columbia, MD. Tickets will be reserved on a first come first served basis. Please email jhrtiz@mdpsych.org if you are interested in attending or with any questions.

MPS Legislative Committee Updates

The 2026 General Assembly has reached the halfway point. With over 3000 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. Key pieces of proposed legislation are noted below.

Support:

SB 942/HB 1306 - Prohibited Possession of Firearms - Assisted Outpatient Treatment Respondents: This bill would prohibit a person from possessing a regulated firearm, rifle, or shotgun if the person is currently a respondent subject to a court order to comply with certain assisted outpatient treatment; and requiring a court to promptly report certain information through a certain data portal if the court orders a person to comply with certain assisted outpatient treatment. The bill does not alter any other law that would ordinarily exclude people from owning guns (eg. violent felons, insanity acquittees, habitual substance users, IST defendants, etc.) This legislation fills an important gap in our current mental health and public safety framework. By temporarily restricting firearm access for individuals under court-ordered treatment, we can reduce preventable deaths while supporting recovery.

SB 490/HB 808 – Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance - Step Therapy, Fail-First Protocols, and Prior Authorization - Prescription to Treat Serious Mental Illness: This bill will prohibit the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, health maintenance organizations, and managed care organizations from applying a prior authorization requirement, step therapy protocol, or fail-first protocol for prescription drugs used to treat certain mental illnesses of certain insureds and enrollees. Psychiatric

patients often suffer from complex illnesses whose treatment often doesn't follow the rote rules of prior authorization/step-therapy. They are often only tentatively engaged in treatment and are especially prone to frustration and vulnerable to interruptions of care. Because of this, such policies, applied to psychiatric patients, can lead to recurrent illness, and possibly harmful consequences.

SB 738 - Required Coverage - Mobile Crisis and Crisis

Stabilization: This bill would require Maryland Medical Assistance Program and certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, health maintenance organizations, and managed care organizations to provide coverage for mobile crisis and crisis stabilization services. Behavioral health crisis response services provide much-needed support to police officers whose training has oftentimes left them ill-equipped to respond to incidents where individuals are experiencing mental health crises. This bill would take a positive step toward improving psychiatric crisis management and community mental health treatment in the state by requiring these often lifesaving treatment costs to be paid.

Oppose:

SB 568/HB 1021 - Licensed Psychologists - Prescriptive

Authority: This bill would grant licensed psychologists prescriptive authority by the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. There are substantial and meaningful differences in the level of education, training, and experience between professionals trained for medical care versus non-medical care. Physicians study and train to effectively diagnose and treat illness, injury, and conditions impacting the entire human body. Clinical psychologists study social and environmental processes and related behaviors and provide important services. However, psychologists do not attend medical school and therefore do not have critical science requirements in areas like anatomy, biology, genetics, physiology, pathology, and pharmacology that psychiatrists and other prescribing professionals receive. Even with postdoctoral training, clinical psychologists do not have the scientific - medical foundation important to safe prescribing and, more importantly, they will not have the supervised clinical training that psychiatrists and other physicians receive in residencies. The curriculum of clinical psychology education is focused on behavioral health as opposed to the comprehensive medical education of the human body.

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 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.

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

Debra Heck, M.D.

NEW 50-YEAR MEMEBRS

Pedro Coto, M.D.

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.

Calling All Members! 2026-2027 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 Tyler Hightower, M.D., MPH 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](#).

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 Member
 Deborah Rose, M.D.

Member Publications

James Aluri, M.D. published a paper titled "[The prevalence and correlates of prescription stimulant diversion in a large, multi-institutional, cross-sectional sample of US post-secondary students regularly taking prescription stimulants](#)" in *Addiction*. The study evaluated the rate of diversion (the selling, trading, or giving away of prescription stimulants) using a larger sample size than prior studies.

Member Shoutout

Allison Brandt, M.D. was awarded a \$150,000 grant from the Johns Hopkins Medicine/Kaiser Permanente Research Collaborative to carry out a project examining how clozapine prescribing patterns have changed as a result of the new deregulation. Congratulations!

Member Spotlight Submissions

Recently published a paper, worked on an exciting research project, were featured in a news article or in the media? We want to share your accomplishments with our membership! Email jhritz@mdpsych.org with any recent achievements and we will share your responses on social media and in our newsletter.

The Physicians Foundation Fellowship Program

The Physicians Foundation announced the opening of applications for its esteemed [fellowship program](#). This leadership opportunity is for new and early-career physicians to work on health policy and care delivery innovations, particularly those related to addressing Drivers of Health. For more information about The Physicians Foundation's Fellowship Program and to **apply by March 17, 2025**, [click here](#).

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.

THE MARYLAND PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY

2026 *Annual Meeting*

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

April 30, 2026
6:00 until 9:00

AT THE MT WASHINGTON TAVERN

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

PURCHASE TICKETS HERE

GENERAL MEMBER TICKETS: \$85

EARLY CAREER PSYCHIATRIST (ECP) TICKETS: \$50

RESIDENT-FELLOW TICKETS: \$35

Thank You to Our Sponsors

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- Sheppard Pratt●
- Dr. Jimmy Potash●
- MindWork Group●

Maryland News

FY25 MBP Annual Report

The Maryland Board of Physicians (MBP) [Fiscal Year 2025 Annual report](#) notes that of 860 complaints filed, the three most common allegations were: failure to meet the standard of care (329 complaints), unprofessional conduct (273 complaints) and failure to keep adequate medical records (54 complaints). Approximately 501 of the complaints filed came from patients or their families.

Thirty-three cases were referred to peer review. A total of 36 physicians lost their licenses, including 7 that were surrendered, and 35 had their licenses restricted. There were 71 non-prejudicial actions against physicians and 15 other prejudicial actions. Physician fines through disciplinary actions totaled \$123,000 and their administrative (CME) fines totaled \$10,000.

Actively licensed physicians in Maryland totaled 38,892, up from 37,585. There were 16,317 allied health practitioners actively licensed by MBP, up from 16,111. Total licenses issued via the [Interstate Medical Licensure Compact](#) were 925, up from 758. MBP processed 468 physician assistant delegation agreements. While there were 53 positive criminal history records checks for physicians, none of them were denied licensure or renewal.

MultiPlan Health Insurance Provider Litigation

MedChi has joined the lawsuit against MultiPlan, Inc. ("MultiPlan") and major health insurers to protect physician members and the patients who depend on them.

The lawsuit aims to show that MultiPlan collaborated with major insurance companies to create an unfair system that systematically drives down reimbursement rates for physicians providing out-of-network care. Rather than competing on out-of-network payment levels, major insurers share their pricing data with MultiPlan, which MultiPlan then uses to recommend the lowest possible reimbursement rates.

In joining the lawsuit, MedChi is seeking a court order to stop MultiPlan's anti-competitive conduct and restore a fair, competitive system for out-of-network payments on behalf of members.

[Click here for more detailed information and Q&A](#)

MedChi is hosting an informational webinar with the lead attorneys in the MultiPlan litigation as a benefit to our members who may be directly affected by the unfair practices of MultiPlan and major health insurers.

When: Friday, March 6, 2026 | 12:30 p.m.

Where: Via Zoom Conferencing

[Register here](#)

New Director of MIA Mental Health Parity and Network Adequacy

Maryland Insurance Commissioner Marie Grant has announced the appointment of Sharon Fountain as Director of Mental Health Parity and Network Adequacy. Fountain is joining the Insurance Administration after serving as a Senior Employee Benefits Specialist at the U.S. Department of Labor from 2021 to 2025. In that role, she worked closely with colleagues from the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Treasury Department on Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) regulations and many other MHPAEA-related projects, including reports to Congress and enforcement actions. At the Insurance Administration, Fountain will lead a unit in the Market Regulation and Professional Licensing Division that oversees enforcement of mental health parity and network adequacy requirements related to health insurance products. She will serve as the MIA's chief technical and subject matter expert for any issue related to mental health parity and network adequacy.

MDH Leadership Transition

Alyssa Lord, Deputy Secretary of the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), will leave her role in Maryland state service effective Feb. 20.

Under her leadership, which began in August 2023, BHA has made incredible strides to improve access to quality behavioral health care and services for all Marylanders. This includes BHA's progressive work to launch the inaugural Roadmap to Strengthen Maryland's Public Behavioral Health System for Children, Youth and Families; investments in the state's overdose efforts that have helped dramatically reduce overdose rates and save lives; expansion of urgent and crisis services across the state; and through partnerships with our local behavioral health authorities strengthened service delivery to ensure that the needs of Maryland's communities are advocated and supported.

Dr. Rachel Talley, BHA's Chief Medical Officer, will serve as BHA's interim leader during this transition.

[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.

Maryland News

The Maryland State Suicide Fatality Review Report

The Maryland State Suicide Fatality Review Team (SFRT) was established by law in 2022 and provides a unique opportunity to gain insight from in-depth case reviews of suicide deaths. The multidisciplinary team's first annual report of case reviews was released to the public in late February 2026. From October 2024 to September 2025, the team focused on reviewing suicides by firearm among Marylanders aged 19-24. The team identified themes across cases of traumatic experiences and un- or undertreated behavioral health concerns, challenges with major life transitions, loved ones who were uncertain about how to help young adults at risk of suicide, ready access to firearms, and a lack of documented follow-up for bereaved families and communities after a suicide. The team developed more than 50 recommendations to strengthen safety nets for Marylanders at risk of suicide.

Priority recommendations included:

- Developing and disseminating firearm safe storage messaging to firearm owners
- Equipping communities with universal education about suicide prevention and 988
- Implementing long gun purchasing restrictions for individuals under age 21
- Providing follow-up services (including screening for suicide risk/lethal means access) for individuals and families who experience sexual violence and/or domestic violence
- Providing community-based case management for individuals receiving frequent care for suicidal behavior in emergency rooms
- Expanding clinical training for providers to screen for lethal means access and Extreme Risk Protective Orders (ERPOs)

The full report is available through the [Maryland Department of Legislative Services website](#). Findings will be discussed at the **Governor's Commission on Suicide Prevention meeting on March 18, 2026, from 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm**. The livestream of the meeting will be open to the public and available on the [MDH Office of Suicide Prevention Facebook page](#).

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.

Maryland's Office of Overdose Response Annual Conference

Maryland's Office of Overdose Response is hosting this in-person conference on Tuesday, March 31, 2026. This all-day event will bring together leaders, practitioners, individuals with lived experience, and community partners to strengthen our collective efforts to reduce overdoses across Maryland and to increase pathways to substance use recovery. The theme of this year's conference is "From Evidence to Impact." There is no cost to attend. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. This conference will feature various breakout sessions on important topics related to substance use and overdose in Maryland.

Event Details

- **Date:** Tuesday, March 31, 2026
- **Time:** 9 am–5 pm (doors open at 8:30 am for registration, speakers begin at 9 am)
- **Location:** Crowne Plaza, Annapolis (173 Jennifer Rd, Annapolis, MD 21401)
- **Registration:** <https://forms.gle/TR5Qvoe1bQfG88VGA>

The Workgroup to Study the Rise in Adverse Decisions

[The Workgroup to Study the Rise in Adverse Decisions](#)

announces an initial upcoming virtual meeting on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm, where the Workgroup will introduce its members, discuss the Workgroup's submission to the Senate Finance and House Health and Government Operations Committees for 2025.

To read more about the workgroup, click [HERE](#).

Workgroup Meeting 2: **Monday, March 2, 2026 from 2 - 4 PM**

ZoomGov link: <https://maryland-insurance.zoomgov.com/j/1607182552>

Dial-in: (646) 828-7666 US

Webinar ID: 160 718 2552

Press Conference on Proposed Behavioral Health Budget Cuts

At a [press conference on February 24](#), behavioral health advocates called on the General Assembly to restore funding for key behavioral health programs to ensure Marylanders receive the mental health and substance use care they need. Members of the Maryland Behavioral Health Coalition highlighted three key funding areas:

- Provide a 3% funding increase for community mental health and substance use care
- Reverse a proposed \$20 million cut from annual school mental health funding
- Restore funding for expansion of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

APA News & Information

APA Advocacy Updates

Announcing the 2025 Advocacy Challenge Winners

This past year, we held our 2025 Advocacy Action challenge, where members gained points for their participation in various actions to support APA's advocacy work! [Click here to read more.](#)

APA Files Suit Against EmblemHealth Challenging its Use of Ghost Networks

APA is suing EmblemHealth in the Southern District of New York, alleging the insurer obstructed New Yorkers' access to care by falsely listing mental health clinicians and providers as in network. [Click here to read more.](#)

APA Provides Guidance on Telehealth Flexibilities

APA provided guidance on the latest telehealth flexibilities including the extension of the DEA prescribing of controlled substances which were extended until December 31, 2026. [Read the full blog here.](#)

SAMHSA Grants Terminated then Restored

On January 13, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) sent a letter to numerous agency grant recipients stating that certain grants had been terminated. It was estimated to affect around 2,000 grantees totaling \$2 billion in funding for mental health and substance use disorder programs. [Click here to read more.](#)

SUPPORT Act Signed into Law

On December 1, President Trump signed the *SUPPORT For Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act* into law. This critical legislation reauthorizes and bolsters prevention, treatment and recovery services for individuals with substance use disorders and mental health needs. [Click here to read more.](#)

APA Opposes Written Informed Consent Act

Alongside physician and mental health organizations, APA led efforts to express concerns with the *Written Informed Consent Act*. This bill would require written informed consent for five classes of psychiatric medications prescribed through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): antipsychotics, stimulants, antidepressants, anxiolytics and narcotics. [Click here to read more.](#)

APA, Mental Health Groups Support Veteran Suicide Prevention Effort

APA joined mental health organizations in supporting the *Saving Our Veterans Lives Act*, important legislation to prevent veteran suicide. This bill would build upon critical work at the VA to provide secure firearm storage devices to veterans, increasing the time and distance between a veteran in crisis and lethal means. [Click here to read more.](#)

Community Engagement Letter

In July of 2025, H.R. 1 was signed into law that included community engagement requirements provisions for individuals enrolled in Medicaid. This provision requires individuals to complete 80 hours per month of qualifying community engagement activities (e.g. work, school, community service) to remain eligible for Medicaid, with exemptions for certain individuals with disabling mental health conditions or substance use disorders. [Click here to read more.](#)

APA Pushes for Stronger Mental Health Parity Enforcement

In light of ongoing litigation, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Treasury announced they would not enforce the 2024 final rule amending regulations implementing the *Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA)*. [Click here to read more.](#)

APA Advocacy Alert

Protect Patients from Harmful Step Therapy Protocols! Step therapy, otherwise known as "fail first" therapy, is a harmful medical protocol whereby insurers require patients, sometimes even those stable on a certain medication, to try and fail medications before agreeing to cover the initial therapy prescribed by the health care provider. Not only are these protocols unnecessary and ill-advised – they are harmful to patients and limit the ability of physicians to provide quality, individualized care.

[Please urge your member of Congress and Senators](#) to support H.R. 5509/S.2903, the Safe Step Act, to require health insurance companies to provide clear exemptions to harmful step therapy policies and expedite the timeline in which these are granted.

Joint Statement on Impact of Racism

Last month the APA released a joint statement addressing the [mental health impact of racism](#). Released during a time of accelerated increase in racist speech and behavior, this important statement has been widely applauded. Please also see: [APA Position Statement Against Racism and Racial Discrimination and Their Adverse Impacts on Mental Health \(2024\)](#)

APA News & Information

Rahn Kennedy Bailey, MD as APA President-Elect

American Psychiatric Association members have selected Rahn Kennedy Bailey, M.D., as the organization's president-elect. Bailey is a board-certified psychiatrist whose career spans clinical care, forensic practice, academic leadership, and national advocacy. He is currently Assistant Dean for Health Equity at Louisiana State University Health Science Center (LSUHSC, New Orleans) and Psychiatric Medical Director of Orleans Parish Criminal Justice Center.

For more than three decades, Bailey has worked in inpatient wards, courtrooms, classrooms and national associations to ensure that psychiatry is seen not only as a medical discipline but as a field that shapes public life. He has engaged with issues of equity, violence, and accountability, which remain central to his professional identity.

Early in his career, Bailey practiced and taught in Houston. He led a schizophrenia inpatient service, supervised clinical trials in psychopharmacology, and developed a forensic practice that included both criminal and civil evaluations. He has chaired three departments of psychiatry during critical periods of growth and renewal. At Meharry Medical College, he strengthened psychiatric education within a historically Black medical school. At Wake Forest University, he created an Addiction Psychiatry Fellowship in 2017 at the height of the opioid epidemic. At Louisiana State University, where he became chair in 2021, he has rebuilt programs, expanded faculty, and guided the department to Aesculapian Awards for teaching in 2024.

He has authored 68 peer-reviewed academic articles in over 20 journals, addressing psychotic illness, mood disorders, forensic psychiatry, confidentiality, risk management, and the psychiatric consequences of incarceration. His books- "Health Disparities" (2013), "Gun Violence: A Psychiatrist's Perspective" (2018), and "Intimate Partner Violence: A Forensic Review" (2020) - extend psychiatry into debates about inequity and violence.

Bailey's term as president-elect will begin this May at the conclusion of the [APA Annual Meeting](#), when current President-Elect Mark Rapaport, M.D., begins his one-year term as president.

Other newly elected members of APA's Board of Trustees include:

- **Treasurer:** Gia Merlo, M.D., M.B.A., M.Ed.
- **Trustee-at-Large:** Vincenzo Di Nicola, M.Phil., M.D., Ph.D.
- **Area 2 Trustee:** David Roane, M.D.
- **Area 5 Trustee:** Heather Hauck, M.D., M.B.A.
- **Resident-Fellow Member Trustee-Elect:** Karthik V. Sarma, M.D., Ph.D. *The results of the election are not official until the APA Board of Trustees confirms them at its March meeting.*

New APA Communities App

The APA is excited to announce the launch of the new APA Communities app! This app provides a more streamlined, user-friendly mobile experience that complements existing email and web access, making it easier than ever to connect, collaborate, and stay engaged. It is intentionally focused on Communities, and is not a broader, all-purpose APA app.

While the current version centers on community interaction, we are exploring ways to expand its capabilities in the future. How to Download:

1. Search for "APA Communities" in your device's app store:
 - Apple App Store
 - Google Play Store

2. Log in using your existing APA credentials (the same ones used for my.psychiatry.org).

If you need help navigating Communities, check out the FAQ page: <https://community.psychiatry.org/help/faq>

Apply for 2025-26 APA Fellowships

The [APA/APAF Fellowships](#) application is open through March 17, 2026. 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

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

MPS Members Presenting at the APA Annual Meeting

Many of our MPS members will be giving talks, presenting posters, and participating in panels at the upcoming 2026 APA Annual Meeting. See the following list of members who will be part of the APA Annual Meeting's sessions.

James Aluri, M.D.: *Empowering Campus Psychiatrists: Opportunities for Career Development and Psychiatric Leadership in Student-Facing Mental Health Clinics*

David Goodman, M.D.: *Advances in the Practical Diagnosis and Management of Adult ADHD*

David Gorelick, M.D., Ph.D.: *Psychedelics as Psychiatric Treatment: Hope or Hype?*

Vedrana Hodzic, M.D.: *Community Connections: From Faith to Healing*

Zofia Kozak, M.D.: *Bridging Traditions: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Psychodynamic Therapy for Process-Oriented Care and Evidence Based or Evidence Biased? Jerome Frank and the Common Features of Psychotherapy in the Age of Brand-Named Treatments*

David McDuff, M.D.: *Introduction to Operating an Outpatient Sports Psychiatry Practice and Ethical Considerations When Treating High-Profile Patients and Training the Next Generation: Building the Field of Academic Sports Psychiatry Education*

Ronald Means, M.D.: *Hippocrates Revisited: Psychiatric Ethics in Modern Clinical Practice*

William Narrow, M.D., MPH: *Administrative Psychiatry Award: Beyond the Status Quo: A Population Health Approach to Psychiatric Care Delivery*

Paul Nestadt, M.D.: *Preoperative Anxiety and Risk of Substance Use Disorder and Healthcare Utilization After Total Hip Arthroplasty and "With this Public Sacrifice": NYC Taxi Drivers' Perspectives on Public Discourse Surrounding Driver Suicides in the 2020s Labor Activism Movement*

Brandon Newsome, M.D.: *From School to the Emergency Room: The Threat Continuum and Before A Breath: The Mental Aftermath Following a Stillbirth*

Anne Ruble, M.D., MPH: *Evidence Based or Evidence Biased? Jerome Frank and the Common Features of Psychotherapy in the Age of Brand-Named Treatments and Yes You Can! Empowering the Psychiatric Workforce through Teaching and Bolstering Psychotherapy Skills for Substance Use Disorders*

Elizabeth Ryznar, M.D., M.Sc.: *Neuropsychiatric implications of micro- and nanoplastics: a scoping review*

Akira Sawa, M.D.: *The IMG Effect: Strengthening U.S. Psychiatry through Global Talent*

Steven Sharfstein, M.D.: *From Moral Injury to Moral Empowerment: Psychiatric Strategies for Healing and Advocacy for Healthcare Workforce*

Jonathan Shepherd, M.D.: *Healing in Hostile Spaces: Mental Health Strategies for Marginalized Medical Trainees*

Harsh Trivedi, M.D., MBA: *Debate: From Silos to Synergy: Evolving Practice Models in Mental Health Care*

Michael Young, M.D.: *Autism Meets Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: A Psychiatrist's Guide to Differentiating and Empowering the Diagnostic and Treatment Gray Zone and Empowering²: Equipping Psychiatrists to Empower Autistic Patients — From Acceptance to Appreciation and Beyond and Hippocrates Revisited: Psychiatric Ethics in Modern Clinical Practice*

Register Today for the 2026 Annual Meeting

[APA's Annual Meeting](#) is returning to **San Francisco, May 16-20**, bringing together psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers, and allied professionals for 4.5 days of collaboration and clinical growth.

With **400+ sessions** across **40+ topic areas**, attendees have an array of opportunities to earn CME or CE credits while connecting with colleagues who bring diverse perspectives to mental health practice.

Expect new experiences such as the **Biological Sciences Hub**, returning favorites like the **Community Psychiatry Hub**, and relevant educational sessions like these AM25 highlights:

- [ADHD Across the Lifespan](#)
- [New Vistas in Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders](#)
- [Sleep: From Childhood to Aging](#)

Medicare Updates

RxDC Resources Updated

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released the RxDC reporting instructions and templates for the 2025 reference year. An updated version of the RxDC drug name and therapeutic class crosswalk will be posted mid-March, and you will be notified when it becomes available.

To view the documents, click on the links below. You may already have the link in your bookmarks. You may need to refresh your browser for the updated document to display.

- RxDC reporting instructions (PDF)
https://regtap.cms.gov/reg_librarye.php?i=3860
- RxDC templates and data dictionary (ZIP)
https://regtap.cms.gov/reg_librarye.php?i=3863

HIOS will begin accepting submissions for the 2025 reference year in mid-April. The deadline for submitting RxDC filings for the 2025 reference year is June 1, 2026

New Provider Complaint Form

The following is an online [Provider Complaint Form](#) for issues related to Medicare Advantage (MA) plans. This new form provides providers with a standardized way to submit complaints directly to CMS. Once submitted, complaints are routed to the HPMS Complaints Tracking Module (CTM) for CMS review and triage. Stakeholders may use the below link to reference or encounter in external articles and association communications: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/health-drug-plans/provider-complaints-form>

Another way to gain access:
Providers will access the online complaint using the following steps:

- Go to <https://www.cms.gov>.
- Select "Medicare" from the top left dropdown menu.
- Select "Health & drug plans" from the left-hand navigation.
- Select "Report a provider complaint about an MA plan."

Expand Your MPS Engagement

Engage with Digital Options

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

CLASSIFIEDS

OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

Ellicott City: Full/part time office space with amenities and active in-office listserv for Mental Health Practitioners. Easily accessible via routes 40, 29,32, 695. Contact Dr. Mike Boyle at 410-206-6070, psycmike@gmail.com.

Southern Psychiatric Association & Maryland Psychiatric Society 2026 Annual Conference

HOTEL REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

ROYAL SONESTA HARBOR COURT HOTEL
BALTIMORE, MD
SEPTEMBER 16 - 19, 2026

VISIT [HTTPS://BOOK.PASKEY.COM/E/51170216](https://book.paskey.com/E/51170216)
TO BOOK YOUR ROOM

CME TOPICS INCLUDE:

- ADHD in Later Life
- Intersection of Politics and Medical Recommendations
- OCD and Autism
- GLP-1s & Psychiatry
- Medical Marijuana
- Intensive Community Based Treatment for People with Complex Psychiatric Problems
- Forensic Psychiatry
- Assisted Outpatient Treatment as Alternative to Involuntary Hospitalization

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION DETAILS COMING SOON

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Jora Hritz
Maryland Psychiatric Society
JHritz@mdpsych.org

Janet Bryan
Southern Psychiatric Association
Janet.Bryan@sheppardpratt.org



Early-Career Psychiatrist WhatsApp

The MPS ECP WhatsApp Group is a way for members who are within 7 years of completing their training to communicate and collaborate with each other. This group is similar to our MPS Listserv but dedicated to *only* our ECP members.

[Fill out this form to join](#) and, once approved, we will send an invite link for access to the group.

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

The Center for Eating Disorders | Towson, MD

Psychiatrist

Child and Adolescent Inpatient | Towson, MD

Service Chief

Adult Service Line | Towson, 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, 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.*