

# MPS NEWS

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Deadline for articles is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Please email [heidi@mdpsych.org](mailto:heidi@mdpsych.org).

MPS News Design & Layout  
Meagan Floyd

**The MPS Council  
will meet by  
videoconference on  
March 9 at 7:30 PM.  
All members welcome!**

## President's Column

### A Year of COVID-19

We have now been dealing with the pandemic for one very challenging year. I wonder about its long-term impacts. Global events leave their imprint on the generations coming of age during those times. We also know the effects of trauma can be passed down to future generations. Over 500,000 Americans have lost their lives to the virus, leaving many grieving family members and friends. The pandemic has upended our lives in many other ways. Children have attended school virtually and have been isolated from their friends. Many people lost their jobs. Others have worked primarily from home. Many have been separated from family members for long stretches of time. Colleges closed campuses. In addition, instead of uniting to face this common foe, dealing with the pandemic became one more partisan battle in our deeply divided country. This partisan division culminated in the traumatic experience of watching fellow Americans storm and invade the Capitol to overturn our democracy.

This past year has also presented many challenges to our healthcare system. Caring for the 28 million Americans infected with the virus and for those hospitalized with the virus has taken a significant physical and psychological toll on healthcare workers. Physician wellness had been a major concern prior to COVID-19 and has become even more important since. There have been high profile cases of frontline physicians taking their own lives due to the stresses brought on by the pandemic. The [Physician Support Line](#) where some MPS members volunteer was developed to try to address this concern.

The effect of the pandemic on medical ed-

ucation and training has gotten less attention. Due to concerns about transmission of the virus, most medical students were removed from clinical rotations for at least a few months, if not more. Medical schools adapted to this by providing more online learning, and after developing videoconferencing capability, students often attended rounds in the hospital virtually. While schools did the best that they could do under this evolving situation, most of the medical students graduating this spring have had significantly less in-person clinical exposure than past graduating classes. There are concerns about how ready the students will be as they enter residency programs in July. Recently the ACGME, AAMC, AACOM, and ECFMG sent a joint email stating that they are developing a toolkit for medical schools and residency programs to help ease the transition of these medical school graduates to residency.

The pandemic has also affected residency training. In addition to the increased stress of caring for patients during a pandemic, residents have also had their training altered. Residents in procedural specialties have had significantly fewer procedures to perform as healthcare organizations mobilized to take care of patients affected by COVID-19. In our own specialty, many inpatient psychiatric facilities reduced their census to enable single occupancy rooms. As a result, many residents have seen significantly fewer patients than in the past. On outpatient rotations, many residents have never done therapy in person and have done very few in-person outpatient diagnostic evaluations. It is not clear in what way, if any, these changes will affect their ultimate practice of psychiatry.

Some of the changes forced by the pandemic will have a positive impact.

(Continued)

Trainees are all adept at providing Telepsychiatry services. Medical schools and residency programs have developed and expanded on their ability to provide online education. Virtual conferences are recorded and allow for larger audience participation.

As I said, this has been a challenging year. We will have to wait to find out what its long-term impact will be.

*Mark J. Ehrenreich, M.D.*

**REMEMBER TO VOTE!**

**The 2021 MPS election begins March 1**

Electronic ballots are being used for voting again this year for all members who have an email address on file. Others will receive and return a paper ballot to vote.

**Ballots will be emailed March 1 and all votes must be cast or postmarked by 11:45 PM on March 31, 2021.**

Look for an email from Maryland Psychiatric Society with "2021 MPS Election" in the Subject line.

Candidate biographies are included with the online ballot.

If you have questions, email Meagan Floyd at [mfloyd@mdpsych.org](mailto:mfloyd@mdpsych.org).

**Time is Running Out!  
Renew Your 2021  
Membership THIS MONTH!**

If you haven't already, please pay your 2021 MPS dues now. Dues notices have been sent periodically since October. Members who do not pay MPS and APA dues or schedule a payment plan will be dropped as of **March 31**. We want to help members remain in good standing! Please [contact the MPS](#) with questions, or to discuss dues relief options or payment arrangements.

**Membership**

**Reinstatement**

Katherine Jou, M.D.

**Curbside Conversations**

A new resource exclusively for MPS members launched in late 2020: **Curbside Conversations** is members with in-depth knowledge of specific areas having informal chats with other MPS members seeking that information. The discussions are not formal consultations, but rather a collegial resource offered voluntarily to others in the MPS community.

Contact information for volunteer experts is available (only to MPS members) for the categories below. Please email [mps@mdpsych.org](mailto:mps@mdpsych.org) for details.

- Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, including infants ECT/TMS
- First Episode Psychosis
- Geriatric Psychiatry
- Psychopharmacology
- Substance Use Disorders/Addiction
- Women's Mental Health/Perinatal Psychiatry

There are other categories with limited participation so please ask if this list doesn't include your need. Remember to consider this option whenever you're looking for information related to patient care!

**Dr. Akinsanya is New Area 3 ECP Dep**

Congratulations to **Adefolake Akinsanya, M.D.** on her new role as Area 3 Early Career Psychiatrist Deputy (ECP) Representative! Dr. Akinsanya, who works at Sheppard Pratt, completed her child fellowship in 2019. While she has been in Maryland for just a year, she has served actively in leadership roles in other states. She will represent ECPs in at Area 3 and the APA Assembly.

**MPS Members Out & About**

Drs. **Nicole Leistikow, Jennifer Payne and Lauren Osborne** co-authored an article published January 20 in MDedge *Clinical Psychiatry News*, "[Give women's mental health a seat at the health care table](#)," about why women's mental health should be granted subspecialty status.

**APA Annual Meeting**

The APA's online 2021 annual meeting will be held Saturday to Monday, May 1 to 3. **Discounted early-bird registration ends March 1**. Participants can earn up to 13.5 CME credits through live sessions. [Learn more](#).

## February 9 Council Highlights

Support for MPS Strategic Priorities

Dr. Ehrenreich reviewed the [MPS priorities](#) set in 2019. He said the January 14 advocacy training event was well attended and very worthwhile. To further engage members in advocacy, surveys were sent to RFMs and ECPs.

Executive Committee Report

Dr. Ehrenreich said he reached out to WPS leadership to plan for expedited turnaround of a position on physician assisted suicide legislation, which was not filed this year after all. Using a list from APA, MPS reached out to former APA Fellowship participants to encourage their involvement in MPS efforts. He reported that Drs. Stephanie Knight and Eric Weintraub (alternate) will represent the MPS on a new BHA Crisis System Advisory Workgroup. The MPS signed on to the [Maryland Behavioral Health Coalition statement](#) on the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health System of Care Process.

Dr. Ehrenreich reported on development of a new category of membership for medical students who are interested in pursuing psychiatry. The concept is a promising way to engage potential new members and develop future leaders. Following a discussion, Council voted unanimously to approve adding the Medical Student Member category.

Dr. Ehrenreich explained that member data on race and ethnicity need to be updated so MPS can assess initiatives on diversity and inclusion. He requested Council input on what categories to use. Recognizing Black History Month, he asked Council for thoughts about how to develop an MPS Black History for next year's observance. He presented the revised proposed changes to MPS Vision Mission and Values submitted by the Community Psychiatry & Diversity Coalition. Council shared concerns and suggested alternative language but did not complete the revisions during the meeting so changes will be sent prior to the March meeting. Dr. Ehrenreich referred Council to the plans submitted by MPS committees to address structural racism, anti-racism and inclusion and requested that everyone review the document in detail before the next meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Bunes said she met with the CPA for the annual financial review. The [RFM Trivia Night](#) will be March 16 this year with a virtual format. A trivia vendor, Charm City Trivia, has been secured and we have confirmed financial support from Centurion, PRMS and APA, Inc. APA dues will increase 4% in 2022.

Legislative Committee Report

Dr. Hanson said the last several hundred bills dropped over the weekend so everything for the 2021 session is now filed. The General Assembly will consider 2100 pieces of legislation this year. The MPS committee has many bills yet

to review but there has been great participation by a diverse group of members who have provided remote oral testimony and crafted amendments to address MPS concerns. Some of the priority bills address veterans mental health first aid, reducing the age of consent to care, emergency petitions, and others. Dr. McGuire recognized Dr. Hanson's exceptional work as chair.

Membership Committee Report

Dr. Lacap discussed the membership renewal cycle and said 114 members still need to pay dues, but 63 are on a group bill that is in process. Members with unpaid dues will be shared at the next meeting so colleagues can contact them and hopefully keep them as members.

Assembly Representatives' Report

Dr. Hanson reviewed the January Area 3 meeting. She said APA is developing online training for members who deal with the media. The topics are integrated care and scope of practice. Concerns have been raised that only the Executive Summary of the consultant's report analyzing structural racism within the APA has been released. Interviews with APA staff who have left will hopefully clarify their concerns. Results of a member survey on MOC are to be released. Some have objected that the APA relationship with ABPN presents a conflict.

Two Action Papers authored by Area 3 Chair William Greenberg, M.D. were endorsed by Area 3 and some of the Area 3 DBs. MPS Assembly Reps agreed that MPS Council should be asked to endorse them. "Formally studying psychiatrists declining to accept patients' health insurance" calls on APA to survey private practice psychiatrists about their participation decisions and to compile Medicaid reimbursement rates by state. "Tracking the numbers of active psychiatric practitioners of various disciplines" tasks the APA with tracking numbers of different types of psychiatric practitioners each year and projecting future workforce needs, with a focus on psychiatrists. Council voted unanimously to endorse both papers. Dr. Shaya thanked Dr. Hanson for her expertise in the work of the Assembly.

**Have You Published Lately?**

The MPS would like to highlight recent journal articles published by its members. If you have published within the past year, please email the title, publication, date and preferably a link to [mps@mdpsych.org](mailto:mps@mdpsych.org). Please also include a photo and a sentence or two summary, if possible.

### Members to Vote on Ethics Committee Composition

The 2021 MPS election ballot includes a request to change the composition of the MPS Ethics Committee as outlined in the Constitution, based on a recommendation from the committee that was approved by Council in January. In June 2020, Council approved a proposal by the Community Psychiatry and Diversity Coalition that [committed the MPS](#) to questioning our practices, listening to people of color in our community and designing a plan with specific actions that create meaningful solutions for change. In September, Council approved Coalition recommendations that all MPS committees and Council conduct self-assessments and set goals to be combined into a full-fledged plan for MPS to move forward with its work on tearing down structural racism and promoting anti-racism and inclusion.

In November, the Ethics Committee assessed its practices and discussed how it can contribute to the goals set by Council. The committee would like to include more minority members but is constitutionally limited to eight members, three of whom must be past MPS presidents. As a result, the committee voted to ask members to approve a change to the [MPS Constitution](#) aimed at increasing diversity by increasing the size of the committee to ten members and reducing the number of required past presidents to two. This change recognizes the steep learning curve for deciding on ethics complaints and allows the mix of forensic/adult/ child/academic/ public/private practitioners currently serving on the committee to remain intact. The specific changes are as follows:

ARTICLE IV STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 5. ETHICS COMMITTEE: The Ethics Committee shall consist of ~~three~~ **two** former Presidents plus as many as ~~five~~ **eight** but not less than ~~three~~ **six** other members appointed annually by the President. If necessary, additional members may be designated by the President to serve on the Ethics Committee for cases when regular members of the Committee are unable to do so. In its work, the Committee shall function in accord with American Psychiatric Association Procedures for Handling Complaints of Unethical Conduct.

Ballots will be emailed to voting members on March 1. Please contact [Heidi Bunes](#) with questions.

### Congratulations!

Two MPS Resident-Fellow Members (RFM) have been recognized with APA Area 3 RFM Merit Awards for outstanding leadership and contributions to psychiatry. Well deserved!

**Courtnie Beaubian, M.D.**  
PGY2 at Johns Hopkins

**Jamie Spitzer, M.D.**  
PGY4 at University of Maryland/Sheppard Pratt

### Calling All Members! 2021-2022 MPS Opportunities

#### Engage, Network, and Make a Difference in How Psychiatry is Practiced in Maryland

The annual MPS leadership cycle begins again in April with the installation of Ginger Ashley, 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 we haven't imagined yet. **This is your organization representing your profession. Here is your chance to help shape it!**

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

### Member Spotlight Opportunity

Have you recently worked on an exciting research project? Reached a milestone in your career and want to share it with other MPS members? Have some good advice for younger psychiatrists who are just starting their careers? Submit a short article and photo through this [Google Form](#) to showcase your experiences with the MPS community.

### Would You Like to Receive Printed MPS Newsletters?

Members can receive printed black and white copies of *MPS News* (12 issues) and *The Maryland Psychiatrist* (3 issues) mailed to them in an envelope by first class mail for an additional \$50 annual fee.

Print subscriptions must be paid in advance, renewable annually and non-refundable. Members are responsible for notifying the MPS promptly of address changes.

To order, please send a check with a brief note to: MPS, 1101 St. Paul Street #305 Baltimore, MD 21202. Please email [meps@mdpsych.org](mailto:meps@mdpsych.org) if you have questions.

### Vote in 2021 MPS Election!

On March 1, voting MPS members will receive an email with a link to the online ballot (or a paper ballot if we have no email on file). By making it easy, we hope to see more voter participation. No stamps required and no mail delays! With just a few clicks you have a say in who will make MPS decisions on your behalf. Every vote counts!!!

## Maryland News

### BHA Provider Guidance during COVID-19

The Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) is offering guidance based on responses from hundreds of behavioral health providers who responded to the first two BHA surveys about behavioral health services in Maryland during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Survey results are posted on the [BHA COVID webpage](#).] BHA identified the following common challenges reported in the results.

- Considerable **fear about going out in public**, which is complicating the scheduling of first appointments, adherence with in-person appointments, and maintaining treatment plans.
- Some **barriers to the utilization of telehealth** continue.
- Many **schools are using virtual learning**.
- Decrease in patients accessing or continuing **SUD treatment services** and associated increase in the relapse rates and fatal overdoses
- **Significant disruption in daily activities** and associated challenges for those with behavioral health conditions

[Click here](#) for BHA-recommended ways that providers can address these challenges.

### Mail Delays and Insurance Payments

The Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA) is aware that mail delivery delays have resulted in cancellation or non-renewal of insurance policies for non-payment of premium. Sometimes this is because bills are not being delivered on time and sometimes it is because payment is not being delivered on time. While insurers will often work with consumers to address late payments resulting from mail delays, [take steps](#) to protect yourself. Contact the MIA at 1-800- 492-6116 for assistance regarding insurance problems due to delays in USPS mail delivery.

### Accessing MH/SUD Treatment Using Private Insurance

The Maryland Insurance Administration (MIA) hosted a webinar on January 12 to provide information about how people can access mental health and substance use treatment using their private insurance. A recording of the webinar is available [here](#). The MIA has also published answers to questions that were raised by attendees at the webinar. [Click here](#) for the FAQ document.

### BHA MedChi Webinars

The Behavioral Health Administration and MedChi webinar series, *Helping the Helpers and Those They Serve*, is for Maryland behavioral health and medical health care providers of all disciplines in both community and hospital settings. They enhance health care worker self-care as well as the care they provide by addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, social justice issues, and other stressors that can potentially impact care. CMEs are available at no cost. Webinar recordings and slides are archived on the [BHA/MedChi webinar webpage](#). March programs are from **5 to 6 PM** as follows:

**March 11:** [Self-Compassion and Self-Care as Buffers Against the Stress of the Pandemic](#) by Monica Neel, Psy.D.

**March 25:** [The Stigma for Health Care Workers Seeking Behavioral Health Care](#) by Crystal Greene, DNP and Megan Buresh, M.D.

If you would like to deliver a presentation, serve as moderator, or suggest self-care topics/presenters, email [Steve Whitefield, M.D.](#)

### President Ferguson and Speaker Jones Announce Racial Impact Statement Pilot Project

Senate President Bill Ferguson and Speaker of the House Adrienne A. Jones announced a pilot project to conduct racial impact statements as a part of legislative analysis for the Maryland legislature. Maryland will be the fourth state in the country to conduct this type of legislative analysis, following Connecticut, Iowa and New Jersey. Florida, Oregon and Minnesota have conducted outside reviews on select types of bills.

During the 2021 legislative session, the Department of Legislative Services will work with Bowie State University and the University of Baltimore Schaefer Center to compile the data needed to complete the nonpartisan racial impact analysis related to major criminal justice reform legislation. The information will be available to the members of the Maryland General Assembly and the public to consider during policy debates. The Department of Legislative Services has created an internal staff team to work with the racial impact data compiled by Maryland universities. The racial impact statements will be provided in addition to the regular fiscal analysis on the bills selected for the first phase of implementation this year.

## Maryland News

### 2021 General Assembly Update: Bills of Note for MPS Members

The 442nd session of General Assembly will be in session through April 12, 2021. As of the end of January more than 1350 pieces of legislation have been filed. The MPS Legislative Committee has been hard at work since December (looking through pre-filed bills) screening bills, preparing testimony, etc. To date the Legislative Committee has reviewed more than 60 bills.

The MPS has taken a favorable position on 18 bills including:

- [Workgroup on Black, Latino, and Other Underrepresented Mental Health Professionals](#)
- [Public Safety – Access to Firearms – Storage Requirements \(Jaelynn’s Law\)](#)
- [Telehealth Services – Expansion](#)
- [Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Health Insurance – Coverage and Reimbursement of Telehealth Services](#)

The MPS has taken a position of opposition on 7 bills including:

- [Corrections – Restrictive Housing – Serious Mental Illness](#)
- [Health – Mental and Emotional Disorders – Consent \(Mental Health Access Initiative\)](#)
- [Family Law – Custody Evaluators – Qualifications and Training](#)

You can find a complete list of bills on the [MPS website](#). Thank you to the invaluable members of the MPS Legislative Committee for all their hours of work so far during the 2021 session!

### PHE Likely to Continue through 2021

In a January [letter to Governors](#), Acting HHS Secretary Norris Cochran stated, “The current PHE [public health emergency for COVID-19] was renewed effective January 21, 2021, and will be in effect for 90 days. To assure you of our commitment to the ongoing response, we have determined that the PHE will likely remain in place for the entirety of 2021, and when a decision is made to terminate the declaration or let it expire, HHS will provide states with 60 days’ notice prior to termination.” The PHE declaration has been critical for allowing many of the telehealth flexibilities granted during the pandemic to continue. Having 60 days heads up is reassuring given the work required to realign policy and procedures when the federal PHE ends. The Maryland Behavioral Health Administrations updated its [Telehealth FAQs](#) on January 19.

### MHCC Telehealth Survey

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) is conducting an environmental scan to assess use of telehealth in outpatient practices during the COVID-19 public health emergency. **Findings will help inform future telehealth policy in Maryland.** A brief questionnaire asks about telehealth use in your practice before and during COVID-19, including perceived benefits and challenges as well as planned use thereafter. It takes about five minutes to complete. The MHCC will collect responses through the end of February and will share its information brief with the MPS this spring. Please contact [mhcc.telehealth@maryland.gov](mailto:mhcc.telehealth@maryland.gov) with any questions.

### New Clozapine Prescribing Project

The University of Maryland Psychiatric Research Center invites physicians and their teams interested in learning more about clozapine to participate in their new CHAMPION-ECHO project. It offers free resources and education, such as virtual experts, tele-mentoring groups, and case to case consultation, to help clinicians improve prescribing of clozapine for individuals with schizophrenia. Please complete the [Enrollment Form](#) or email [CHAMPION-ECHO@som.umaryland.edu](mailto:CHAMPION-ECHO@som.umaryland.edu) to apply to be one of the 600 clinicians 60 sites involved.

### Q3 2020 Overdose Report

On January 13 the Maryland Opioid Operational Command Center released a [report](#) with July 1 – September 30, 2020 data. Those who suffer from addiction and substance use disorders have faced some of the most intense struggles during the pandemic, which has increased despair and uncertainty, made support systems less accessible, and economic opportunity more difficult to attain. Maryland experienced 2,025 unintentional intoxication-related deaths during the first nine months of 2020, an **increase of 12% over the same period last year**. Opioids are responsible for over 90% of those deaths. [Click here](#) to review the report.

### Special Enrollment Period Extended

To prioritize health and safety in response to coronavirus, Maryland Health Connection extended the emergency special enrollment period for uninsured Marylanders through Saturday **May 15**. To enroll, visit [MarylandHealthConnection.gov](http://MarylandHealthConnection.gov) or download the free “Enroll MHC” mobile app and select “Coronavirus Emergency Special Enrollment Period.” [Free consumer assistance](#) is available at 855-642-8572 weekdays from 8 AM to 6 PM.



## 2021 Maryland Psychiatric Society Annual Meeting

**Thursday April 22, 2021 7-8:30 PM**  
*This won't be your usual virtual meeting!*

This once-a-year [program](#) is FREE of charge!

Door prizes will be given in three categories:

- Resident Fellow Members
- Early Career Psychiatrist Members (within 7 years of starting practice)
- All other members

We have a lot to celebrate! [Join with your colleagues](#) in this interactive event that will include some fun in addition to information about the past year in Maryland psychiatry and a vision for the future.

We will welcome **Virginia Ashley, M.D.** as 2020-2021 MPS President. **Jessica Merkel-Keller, M.D.** will become MPS President-Elect and **Carolina Vidal, M.D., M.P.H.** will become Secretary-Treasurer.

- The 2021 MPS Lifetime of Service Award Winner will be honored.
- Best Paper Contest and Resident/Fellow Poster Competition awards will be presented.
- The 2021 Maryland Foundation for Psychiatry Anti-Stigma Advocacy Prize will be given.
- We'll recognize new Fellows, Distinguished Fellows, lifer members and more!

**[Register today!](#)**

### CME Webinar on Prescribing Benzodiazepines

On **March 5** at noon, a free SMI Adviser CME webinar will answer, "How Much Benzodiazepine Prescribing Is the Right Amount of Prescribing?" It will review the epidemiology of benzodiazepine prescribing as well as evidence about the benefits and risks associated with these medications and how to taper a benzodiazepine. [Click here](#) for details or to register.

### PRMS Resources

#### Regulatory Waivers for Telepsychiatry

Refer to the PRMS document [Telepsychiatry: Keeping Up with Your Regulators' Waivers](#) to keep track of waivers from HHS, the DEA, and state licensing boards. Federal and state regulators each have specific requirements and different waiver end dates that psychiatrists need to understand.

#### Risk Management 101

PRMS is holding a virtual event, [PRMS Psych-cess: Risk Management 101](#), via Zoom on both Saturday, **March 20**, 12:00-1:30 pm EST, and Tuesday, **March 23**, 7:00-8:30 pm EST. (Content is the same so select the date and time that works best.) This program, targeted to resident, fellow, and early career psychiatrist members, will be led by David Cash, JD, LLM, PRMS Associate Director of Risk Management. It combines PRMS' 30+ years of experience managing psychiatric risk with relevant topics and timely issues (e.g. telepsychiatry, psychopharmacology, social media) to help attendees proactively manage their own risks. Please use the [registration link](#) to sign up for free.

### Outpatient Insurance Participation Survey

Please take [this survey](#) to help us understand your outpatient practice, your experience participating in health plan networks, and what issues are most important to you. Responses will help APA and MPS advocate on your behalf with health plan payers, legislators, and regulatory agencies. Thanks in advance!

### March 6 Health Care for the Homeless Virtual Movie Night

Enjoy the premiere of an original documentary and a complement of short films. See the power of family and home through Q Robinson, a Baltimore mom building the life she wants for herself and her daughter. [Click here](#) for info.

### Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign

This year, Children's Mental Health Awareness Week will be celebrated May 2-8, with events throughout the Spring. The 2021 [Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign](#) goals are:

- raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health and substance use
- reduce stigma of mental health
- connect families, educators, and providers throughout Maryland with resources to support children
- Visit the [website](#) to learn more and check out their [resources](#).

## APA News & Information

### APA Condemns Pepper-Spraying, Handcuffing of Girl by Police

The APA [denounced](#) the treatment by Rochester, N.Y., police officers of a 9-year-old girl who was pepper-sprayed, pushed into the snow, and handcuffed when they responded to a family disturbance. The girl is believed to have been experiencing a mental health crisis.

### APA Unveils New Strategic Plan on Mental Health Equity

The APA Division of Diversity and Health Equity (DDHE) has launched a new strategic plan to work toward achieving diversity and mental health equity, [Charting Excellence Through Partnerships: Strategic Goals for the Division of Diversity and Health Equity](#). The plan articulates a framework that supports shared responsibility for a more equitable and just mental healthcare landscape. The vision is: *"That members of the APA represent a diverse and culturally responsive community of psychiatrists that promote mental health equity through the provision of quality mental health care to all persons regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religious orientation and/or disability status."*

The [strategic plan](#) is a dynamic document with the expectation that priorities will be adjusted, and accommodations will be made for emerging needs of both APA members and the diverse patient populations served by the organization. It has been shared with a wide selection of APA members who provided valuable feedback and insight. The strategy builds on past successes while advancing new and innovative efforts to achieve diversity and mental health equity. DDHE efforts will focus on five priority areas:

- Promoting awareness of the mental health needs of diverse underrepresented and underserved populations.
- Developing strategic partnerships with other medical and nonmedical organizations to address mental health and substance use disorder inequities.
- Fostering an inclusive professional development pathway for psychiatry trainees.
- Supporting and expanding APA member diversity
- Strengthening the division's program management to demonstrate impact.

### FREE APA March Course of the Month

'**Buprenorphine Update and Evolving Standards of Care**' will describe recent changes in the epidemiology of opioid use disorder, including the current epidemic of fentanyl, carfentanyl, and other fentanyl analogs. [Click here to access the Course of the Month and sign up for updates about this free member benefit.](#)

### APA Urges Vaccine Access for People With SMI, SUDs

The APA appealed to state public health officials to ensure that people with serious mental illness (SMI) and/or substance use disorders (SUDs) are prioritized along with individuals with other high-risk medical conditions in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. People with SUD and SMI are not only at an increased risk of contracting COVID-19 but are also more likely to be hospitalized and experience serious complications.

### Lack of Diversity in Academic Workforce

Structural racism has led to a lack of diversity in the psychiatric academic workforce that needs to be addressed, panelists said in the fourth [APA town hall meeting](#) hosted by the [Presidential Task Force to Address Structural Racism Throughout Psychiatry](#). Panelists also discussed the effect of the 'minority tax,' described as extra, financially uncompensated duties that minorities are asked to perform to increase diversity at their institutions, such as serving on a search committee that would otherwise be all white, but that are not factored into advancement decisions. Click [here](#) to view a recording of the event. The next town hall will take place **May 1 from 4 to 5:30 PM** as part of the virtual [2021 APA Annual Meeting](#).

### Physician Leadership CME Program

This FREE 4 credit CME is geared toward early career psychiatrists who may be taking on administrative roles for the first time or more experienced psychiatrists who want to brush up on their leadership skills. Created by APA and the American Association of Psychiatric Administration and Leadership, the [Physician Leadership Program](#) has these modules:

- Career Development and Negotiation
- Leadership Theory
- Influence and Working Within a System
- Fiscal Management in Healthcare
- Quality Improvement and Leading Change

### New Schizophrenia Guideline Resources Now Available

Resources to accompany the APA Practice Guideline on the Treatment of Patients with Schizophrenia are now available, including a guide on the treatment of tardive dyskinesia, information for patients and their families, and CME-related activities. Visit the practice [guidelines page](#) for links.

## No Surprises Act to Begin in 2022

According to [AMA News](#), provisions to take effect January 1, 2022 ensure patients will be protected from unexpected medical costs, while out-of-network physicians, other clinicians and facilities will have a process available to challenge inadequate out-of-network payment from commercial health insurance companies. [Per the [National Law Review](#), protections apply “to both emergency care and certain non-emergency situations where patients do not have the ability to choose an in-network provider.”]

Patient protections included in the [No Surprises Act](#) include:

- A provision that patients may not be billed beyond the recognized in-network cost-sharing amount.
- If a patient relies on erroneous network directory information to choose a physician, the plan cannot impose a cost-sharing amount greater than in-network rates and it must count toward the patient’s in-network out-of-pocket-maximum and in-network deductible.
- Unless notice and consent requirements are met in non-emergency situations, if a provider submits a bill to a patient in excess of in-network cost sharing and the patient pays, the provider must refund with interest.
- If a provider contract is terminated without cause, a “continuing patient” can continue for either 90 days or the date when no longer a continuing patient, whichever is earlier.

Provisions that help ensure fair compensation for physicians:

- Clarification that an upfront, initial payment or notice of denial is required from health plans to the physician within 30 days of when he or she has submitted a bill.
- An increase in the time for a physician to pursue independent dispute resolution (IDR), from two to four days.
- Prohibition against the arbitrator considering public program rates like Medicare, Medicaid and Tricare during the IDR process.
- Elimination of problematic timely billing provisions.

For more detailed information, see the [AMA Guide to Surprise Billing Provisions](#) in the Consolidation Appropriations Act 2021.

## New SAMHSA SUD Advisories

In January, SAMHSA issued several new advisories that summarize updated guidance and recommendations for substance use disorder (SUD) treatment. Titles include:

- [Comprehensive Case Management for SUD Treatment](#)
- [Using Motivational Interviewing in SUD Treatment](#)
- [Screening and Treatment of Viral Hepatitis in People With SUDs](#)
- [Screening and Treatment of SUDs Among Adolescents](#)
- [Addressing Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in SUD Treatment](#)
- [Treating SUDs Among People With HIV](#)
- [Group Therapy in SUD Treatment](#)
- [Prescribing Pharmacotherapies for Patients With Alcohol Use Disorder](#)
- [The Importance of Family Therapy in SUD Treatment](#)
- [The SUD Counseling Competency Framework: An Overview](#)
- [Integrating Vocational Services into SUD Treatment](#)

Click the links above to access or go to the [SAMHSA publications page](#).

## Upcoming SAMHSA Training

[School Mental Health Assessment, Research, & Training \(SMART\) Center 2021—Virtual Speakers Series](#)

Wednesday, March 3 at 11:30 a.m.

[Eating Disorders Series, Part 2: Symptom Substitution, Trauma and the Hidden Addiction of Eating Disorders—Webinar](#)

Thursday, March 4 at 11:00 a.m.

[Interpreting Urine Drug Screens—Webinar](#)

Thursday, March 4 at 12:00 p.m.

[Trauma and Its Impact—Webinar](#)

Wednesday, March 10 at 2:30 p.m.

[Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth in Schools: Understanding the School Experiences of LGBTQ+ Students—Webinar](#)

Thursday, March 11, 2021 12:30 p.m.

[Telebehavioral Health Best Practices, Session 2—Webinar](#)

Saturday, March 13 at 1:00 p.m.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Position openings and office space available are also posted on the MPS website!** Listings from each newsletter issue are displayed online for the month of the publication. If you can't find your newsletter in your email inbox, visit the [Classifieds page](#) to view employment and office space ads.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**PSYCHIATRY POSITIONS: MedStar Health** is seeking psychiatrists to work in the Baltimore area in a variety of settings. Our hospitals provide inpatient, outpatient, intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization and consult liaison services. We offer flexible hours with competitive comp plans and benefits including CME reimbursement, 7 weeks paid time off, holidays and personal leave, 403 B match, medical benefits and paid malpractice ins. and much more! Please email CV to [stephen.pasko@medstar.net](mailto:stephen.pasko@medstar.net).

Refresh Mental Health seeks General Psychiatrists and Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists: Busy Outpatient practices in the Greater Baltimore area. Excellent earning potential. Flexible hours – FT/PT opportunities available. Psychiatrists must be Board Certified, excellent communication, patient relations, time management skills and safety awareness. If interested, please email your CV to Antoinette Batts [abatts@refreshmentalhealth.com](mailto:abatts@refreshmentalhealth.com) or call (240)602-0399.

Spectrum Behavioral Health in Annapolis, Arnold and Crofton MD is seeking a psychiatrist for its growing private practice. Position includes attractive compensation, collegial multi-disciplinary staff, full administrative support, professional autonomy and premium windowed office space! This exciting opportunity offers a great income, stimulating teamwork, desirable location, and meaningful community impact. If interested please visit [www.spectrum-behavioral.com](http://www.spectrum-behavioral.com) or email Scott E. Smith, Ph.D. at [sbhgmt18@gmail.com](mailto:sbhgmt18@gmail.com).

White Marsh Psychiatric Associates, LLC (WMPA) is seeking an Adult Psychiatrist to join our practice. WMPA is an established multi-disciplinary outpatient practice conveniently located off I-95 in White Marsh. We offer a collegial work environment with an excellent support staff, internal billing, and potential for profit sharing. WMPA has contracts with most major insurance carriers that facilitates excellent referral sources and quick caseload development. We are seeking full or part-time providers to join other professionals in a setting that values quality patient care and the freedom that comes from outpatient clinical practice. Please send your resume and cover letter to [drfrank@whitemarshpsych.com](mailto:drfrank@whitemarshpsych.com) and/or call Travis Frank, PsyD., President @ 410-931-9280.

### OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

**BETHESDA:** Offices for rent in psychotherapy suite carefully following CDC guidelines for safe opening. Furnished and unfurnished space available. Flexible term. Free WiFi, beverages, color copier. Very friendly and professional clinicians. Contact Keith Miller: 202-360-9996 or [keith@keithmillercounseling.com](mailto:keith@keithmillercounseling.com).

## Chief Medical Officer



Brook Lane Health Services in Maryland is seeking a full-time board certified Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist (preferred C&A certified) to fill the position of Chief Medical Officer. Brook Lane Health Services provides a continuum of mental health services over four locations and telehealth for people throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. We offer a variety of behavioral health services for all age groups including Inpatient Hospital, Partial Hospitalization programs, Outpatient clinics, Residential congregate care, and Special Education Schools.

Requirements include Board Certification in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry meeting medical and allied clinical staff rules and regulations for active staff membership, a minimum of three to five years of relevant clinical and organizational leadership experience in a hospital or health care institution. Brook Lane is located just outside of the Baltimore/Washington DC metro area. Brook Lane offers competitive compensation and a benefits package which includes annual leave accrual, CME assistance and leave, Medical, dental, vision insurance, Basic life and disability insurance, 401(k) retirement plan and matching

Full description is available at [www.brooklane.org](http://www.brooklane.org) career opportunities. Online application and CV submission is available under Chief Medical Officer posting on the career center. If you prefer to apply by email, please send CV and letter of interest to [humanresouces@brooklane.org](mailto:humanresouces@brooklane.org).

# Rewarding Opportunities for Psychiatrists Across Maryland

SHEPPARD PRATT IS SEEKING PSYCHIATRISTS TO WORK ACROSS MARYLAND IN A VARIETY OF TREATMENT SETTINGS INCLUDING:

**Inpatient: Child & Adolescent Service Line Service Chief, Adult Service Line Service Chief, Trauma Disorders Service Chief, Adult, Child & Adolescent, Eating Disorders, and Geriatric**

**Crisis Assessment Services: Medical Director**

**Residential: Medical Director - The Retreat**

**Consultation-Liaison**

**Medical Education Services**

**Southern Maryland: Medical Director, Adult, Child & Adolescent**

## REQUIREMENTS

- Must be board-certified or board-eligible
- Must have a current license to practice in Maryland at the time of hire
- Individuals hired for inpatient, PHP, and residential school services participate in a call schedule

## WHY SHEPPARD PRATT?

- Physician-led organization
- Generous compensation package with comprehensive benefits, including medical, dental, vision, and life insurance; an extensive wellness program; and ample leave
- A network of the brightest minds in psychiatry
- Grand rounds, CME opportunities, on-site lectures
- State-of-the-art research and technology
- Cross-discipline collaboration

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For more information, please contact Kathleen Hilzendeger, Director of Professional Services, at **410.938.3460** or **khilzendeger@sheppardpratt.org**.

### About Sheppard Pratt

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



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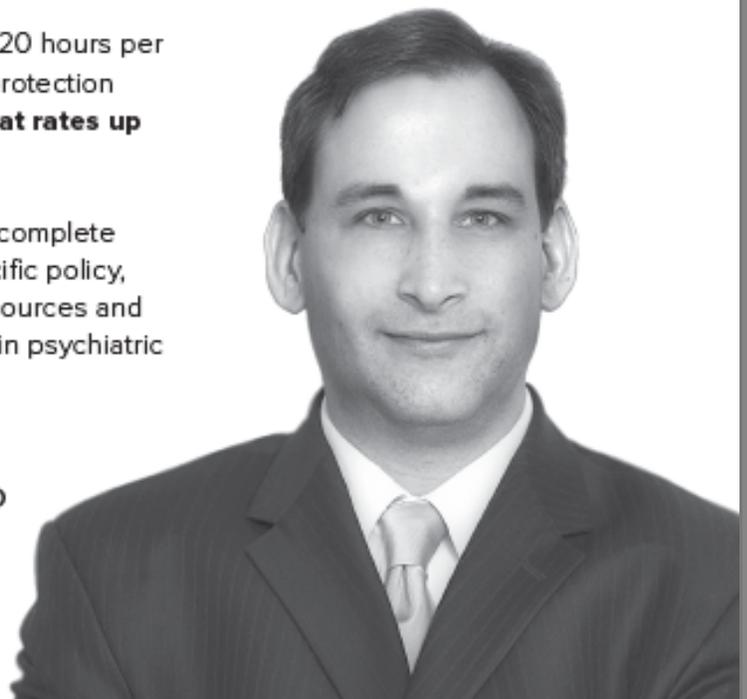
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