Editor’s Comments

James Flax, MD, MPH, DFAPA

THANK YOU to all those who have contributed to this issue of eSynapse! Please scroll through everything below as there are many items you will find interesting and useful throughout.

You will find a synopsis of our meetings, events and NYSPA meetings so all readers will have an idea of district branch business. But, it’s only a synopsis. You have got to come to a meeting to appreciate the rich discussions. PLEASE JOIN US April 4th @ 12 Noon for the Executive Council meeting open to all.

I comment on fee information available on the web. Dr. Tobe has written of local issues of interest to all members. Among other issues, he mentions CMS altering plans to restrict access to psychotropic medications for Medicare beneficiaries. Click here to view a video of a recent interrogation by Congressman Tim Murphy of CMS on the proposed Medicare Part D Drug Rule changes that relies strongly on the APA documentation. This result is a victory for our patients, for practitioners, and an example of effective and timely coordinated action by your APA.

Dr. Abdullah has again sent us a new article in his long line of historical articles & erudite observations on aging. There is news from the APA. There are a variety of ads at the end of this issue for jobs in Orange and Rockland, offices for rent in Rockland, Depression Support Groups, research subjects at NKI, and malpractice insurance that may interest you. Please scroll all the way to the end to see it all. And, if you are not receiving the MSSNY eNews, here’s a link where you can read about issues of interest to all of medicine in New York State: http://www.mssny.org.
PRIVATE PRACTICE: FEES

Here is a link to a legal public site where you can look up fees for a given zipcode. This site was developed (my understanding) after the NY attorney general sued health insurances for having a conflict of interest in setting "usual and customary" fees to reimburse their members. So this site was designed to be an "independent party" to determine "usual and customary fees". I did not look up how the fees are determined. But they do vary by zipcode. In general, the “usual and customary” fees seem to be quite high.

http://www.fairhealthconsumer.org/

PRIOR AUTHORIZATIONS

If you are frequently bothered with cumbersome and seemingly unnecessary requests for prior authorizations, the APA is eager to hear from you. I suspect Seth Stein at NYSPA would also be willing to address this bureaucratic and wasteful process if he hears from enough of us. The contact person at APA is

Ellen Jaffe
Director, Practice Management HelpLine/Medicare Specialist
Office of Healthcare Systems and Financing
American Psychiatric Association
(703) 907-8591
ejaffe@psych.org
Practice Management HelpLine (800-343-4671)
email at hsf@psych.org.

LIST-SERV

I have written in previous issues about the creation of a list-serv where a member can notify the entire list of a patient needing care, their requirements (location, insurance, expertise, etc) and any one who is a member of the list can reply (on or off list) if they have an opening. Before his death this past fall, Ivan Goldberg, MD (of Psycho-Pharm listserv fame) graciously agreed to host this list at Psycho-pharm.com and we are going to try it out but need enough of our clinicians (private practice and clinics) to participate to make it work. This list-serv could work for other communication as well. So far 15 have indicated an interest. We don’t have a “critical mass” for this list-serv to work well. If you want to be included in this listserv and keep this project alive, please email me at drflax@aol.com.
IT'S A FREE LUNCH!
Next Executive Council Meeting
Il Fresco Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY
Journal Club (15 minutes) PROMPTLY at 12 Noon
Followed immediately by Business Agenda
Friday, April 4th @ 12 Noon at Il Fresco in Orangeburg, NY.

Please contact Dr. Russell Tobe, MD (rtobe@NKI.RFMH.org) (845) 398-6556 if you are planning to attend.

If you speak to your colleagues who are not members of the APA, remind them to become members. If members, tell them you've received your eSynapese and ask if they received theirs. If not, tell them to email Liz Burnich at westhudsonpsych@gmail.com with their email address so they can be added to the list.

While some have indicated it is too costly to join the APA, the link below will remind you of the many benefits. The West Hudson Psychiatric Society Membership is one of the least costly in the nation and we hope to keep it that way. The benefits are numerous. http://www.psychiatry.org/join-participate/member-benefits

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

Russell Tobe MD (russell.tobe@gmail.com)

Dear West Hudson Psychiatric Society (WHPS) membership, colleagues, and friends:

After a terrible winter, it seems (perhaps) signs of relief and thaw are coming into focus. With this have come a series of significant policy decisions to which the APA and West Hudson Psychiatric Society have contributed.

First, APA strongly supported legislation to permanently repeal the flawed sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula through introduction of the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 (H.R. 4015). This bipartisan legislation brought with it the promise of improved physician payment (in the looming context of 24% payment cut on 4/1) and patient access to care while eliminating the need for SGR patches (totaling, to date, 157 billion dollars). Ultimately passed by a vote of 237 to 182 in the U.S. House of Representatives, sadly a policy to delay the Affordable Care Act’s individual mandate for five years was attached by Republican lawmakers in an attempt to offset the budget required to implement H.R. 4015. This, of course, prevents mandates developed to encourage all citizens to obtain health care coverage. Accordingly, APA does not support this and suggests lawmakers should go back to the table in a bi-partisan fashion. If not resolved, the ongoing need for SGR patches will remain and the 24%
payment cut on 4/1 continues to loom. Accordingly, APA is still advocating for sensible immediate legislation.

Second, APA supported action against a Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rule to eliminate antidepressant and antipsychotic medication from protected coverage status. This action by CMS would have limited beneficiary access to “all or substantially all” medications in those classes. On 3/11, it was reported that CMS agreed to withdraw the proposal to eliminate antidepressant and antipsychotic medications from protected coverage status.

With respect to other activities, WHPS recently completed another DSM training dinner in Central Valley. This made an opportunity for Orange, Sullivan and Delaware county members to join and participate. While I was able to fumble through the talk without the luxury of my DSM-partner-in-crime (Dr. Nigel Bark), it was a fun occasion with a bit more time for casual conversation and collegial discussion than our more intensive educational dinners. Speaking of which, our next educational dinner will be April 25th, with Dr. Ann Sullivan, who is the new Commissioner for NYS OMH. It should prove to be an interesting lecture from a very gracious, knowledgeable, and kind speaker. The fall speaker is still being arranged. So please forward requests and suggestions.

Finally, I want to invite everyone to our next Executive Council Meeting on April 4th. We will be spending a significant amount of effort critically appraising the website for WHPS. We would love to have as much feedback as possible as this is still very much a work in progress. If you are unable to attend, please send suggestions for improvements. As always, forward suggestions and comments to make our branch more efficient and helpful for the membership. Sincerely,

Russ

Summary from Executive Council Meeting
Friday, March 7, 2013


Journal Club – Dr. Jim Flax presented an interesting article from the American Journal of Psychiatry (Dec 1, 2013 issue) about assisting people with serious mental health disabilities return to work.

DSM-5 Workshop – We decided to have our DSM-5 Educational Meeting in Orange County to make it more convenient for our Orange County members and hopefully attract more members from that area. It is scheduled to take place on Wednesday March 12 at 6pm at Cosimos Brick Oven of Woodbury in their wine cellar. So far, 20 people have responded that they will attend. Dr. Nigel Bark will be unable to attend so Dr. Russ Tobe will be the sole speaker. He will follow the same outline as the DSM-5 workshop from July 2013 at RPC. We are grateful to Lisa and Nick Batson for borrowing
the projector and screen from Crystal Run Healthcare for this presentation and look forward to more holding more meetings in Orange County in the future.

**Spring Educational Meeting** – Dr. Ann Sullivan, the OMH Commissioner will be the speaker for our Spring Meeting. It is scheduled to take place on Friday, April 25, 2014 at 6pm at La Terrazza Restaurant in New City. Liz has booked the larger room at La Terrazza and is coordinating the topic and CME details with Dr. Sullivan’s assistant. Mailing for this event will go out at the end of March.

**Fall 2014 Educational Meeting** – Potential speakers and topics were discussed. Russ reached out to Dr. Paul Appelbaum and the incoming APA President Dr. Paul Summergrad to see if either of them would be interested in speaking on a topic of their choice for our Fall Meeting. Jim also suggested asking Pat Bloom to speak on the topic of meditation if Drs. Appelbaum or Summergrad were not available.

**Additional Educational Meetings** – Liz Burnich advised that she has been in communications with the Executive Director of the NJ Psychiatric Association about a joint event focusing on our ECPs with possible speaker from PRMS and possible venue at Bergen Regional Medical Center.

**Mental Health Coalition Update** – from Dr. Lois Kroplick

- The Coalition Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday April 3 at 12 noon at the Robert Yeager Conference Room Building F
- The Coalition is working with NAMI on school projects for teachers, staff and parents.
- Lois stressed that the MHC is looking for more psychiatrist volunteers to be involved. Please contact her at DrKroplick@aol.com if interested in volunteering.
- The Coalition will hold a comedy night fundraiser on April 25.
- Lois was extremely honored to accept the NYC Osteopathic Physician of the Year Award. She is the first psychiatrist ever to win this award!

**NYSPA Spring Meeting** – Dr. Nigel Bark advised that the next New York State Psychiatric Association Area/Council Meeting will take place on Saturday March 22 at 10am at the LaGuardia Marriott in East Elmhurst, NY.

**Disaster Training with the American Red Cross** – Liz Burnich has been looking into WHPS partnering with the American Red Cross for Disaster Psychiatry. The American Red Cross is looking for 8-10 (or more) interested psychiatrists associated with WHPS to be trained is Disaster Psychiatry (training includes online course and in person group course at Fireman’s Training Center in Pomona). We would then obtain special IDs to allow trained members to be able to assist with various types of disaster in the mental health capacity. American Red Cross will prepare an email that Liz will forward to our members to determine interest and availability.

**Next Executive Council Meeting** - Friday, April 4, 2014 at 12 noon at Il Fresco, Orangeburg, NY. We will not have Journal Club at this meeting. The meeting will start
with a short business discussion and will mainly focus on reviewing our new website & making recommendations for improvement, etc.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Editors note: I vowed when I started this publication to publish anything sent to me. Please send me announcements, news, notices, rumor, recipes, innuendo, ads etc).

My Trek Up The Ramapo Mountain

Syed Abdullah, MD

One day I picked up enough courage to ask Larry: “Tell me how one gets to be a perfected human being like you?”

With his usual humility and self effacement Larry answered “I am not a perfected human being by any means. I am under the guidance of a perfect man who is a great spiritual Master of our times. I am still evolving into an obedient disciple of his.” After a pause for reflection, during which he seemed to have drifted into the realm of the unseen, Larry said in a slow measured way “If your thirst to know more persists I will take you to him after seeking his permission.” Larry then described his Master in these words: a spring of pure water/ in the desert of our time.

I was about fifty years old and Larry was a youthful seventy five. His face lightened up as he extended the invitation to me that was going to change my life forever. Several days later to Larry’s question as to how I was, I replied “Very thirsty!” Larry smiled and offered to take me to his mentor as soon as it could be arranged. Soon thereafter I found myself on the plane to Zurich with Larry. On that first encounter I returned with the seemingly simple task of getting rid of all traces of arrogance, intolerance, bigotry, envy and anger. “Kick them out of your heart. These create hell in this life.”

I returned from that encounter without any outward change in me, just an inner urge to see the Master again. Then followed several trips to various cities around the world. Paris, Zurich and Istanbul etc were part of my repeated excursions, sometimes with Larry and sometimes alone or with my wife. It was gratifying to note how she took a leap into the unknown leaving me way behind. I was just nurturing my thirst as well as I could.

Finally I met the Master here in New York. This time I was given a special assignment: “Go up the Ramapo mountain where in a cave you will find, an escaped prisoner. The chains of bondage will still be on him, he will be in the grips of terror and will not trust you. Despite his resistance bring him to me.”

I was given a rough map of the location and set out for the cave where the prisoner was hiding. I located the cave and found the man in chains, dressed in rags and very fearful. To
my invitation to come with me he said “I will never do that, you will hand me over to my captors who will throw me back in their dungeon for more torture and abuse. Just leave me here and go away.”

After much assurance and promises I failed to convince him that it was in his best interest to come with me. “Here I am offering you fresh air and freedom, but you are showing preference for the darkness of the cave.” I said with some frustration and a touch of anger. My words had no effect on the frail prisoner. At that point I used some cajoling and gently forcing him, practically dragged him with me down the mountain and into the presence of the Master.

The prisoner still had the chains and shackles on him, his face was covered with grime and he was trembling with fear. After a few kind and tender words the Master proceeded to remove his chains and fetters with his bare hands with great ease. As the man emerged out of the chains a strange thing happened: the fellow looked more and more like me! The removal of his chains made me feel lighter and free. As if the existential loads of a lifetime were being removed from me. The prisoner and I became one.

I was instructed by the Master to wash up and return to him. After a thorough ablution I returned to the room where the Master was seated surrounded by many of his disciples including Larry. They were all smiling and beaming. The Master asked me to approach him and taking hold of my neck drew my face close to him and planted a blissful kiss on my forehead. Those present in the room congratulated me on my acceptance into the fold of the perfected Master. I still carry the mark of that kiss on my forehead. What is not visible is the spiritual irradiation that zapped through my being that glorious day.

APA Sets Record Straight on HIPAA Compliance of DSM Code Sets

In response to misinformation circulating on the Internet indicating that DSM-IV and DSM-5 do not provide HIPAA-compliant code sets and may not be used in HIPAA standard
transactions, APA has issued a statement correcting those claims. For information concerning DSM-5 and ICD codes, see "understanding icd-10-cm and dsm-5: a quick guide for psychiatrists and other mental health clinicians" on APA's website.

Call for Applications: APA Medical Student Senior Elective in HIV Psychiatry

APA members who work with fourth-year medical students (particularly from racial and ethnic minorities) are encouraged to invite them to apply for APA’s clinical or research elective in HIV psychiatry. The month-long elective begins with an intensive two-day training in Washington, D.C. Students then travel to training sites for their clinical or research experience in September. The deadline for applications is March 31; click here for more information and an application. Additional information can be obtained from Diane Pennessi at (703) 907-8668 or dpennessi@psych.org.

London's Calling: International Congress of the Royal College of Psychiatrists

http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/traininpsychiatry/eventsandcourses/internationalcongress2014.aspx The 2014 International Congress of the Royal College of Psychiatrists will take place in London June 24 to 27. This year's theme is "Psychiatry: Medicine's Heartland." With a projected attendance of over 1,500 delegates from more than 40 countries, the congress will offer numerous networking opportunities as well as a full program that includes a presentation by APA President Elect, Paul Summergrad, M.D.

Medicaid ACOs: Program Characteristics in Leading-Edge States

In this brief, the CHCS and the Commonwealth Fund are encouraging states to leverage investments in managed care and primary care to guide the development of Medicaid accountable care organizations (ACOs). This new resource presents key features and requirements for ACO programs in seven of the states participating in the Medicaid ACO Learning Collaborative: Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon, and Vermont. The details from these seven ACO programs can help inform additional states as they consider their own ACO approaches. Read more.
APA’s Annual Meeting Highlights

ADVANCE REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Friday, April 4.

Standard Registration Includes admission to:
• Approximately 450 Scientific Sessions (excluding Courses)
• Exhibit Hall
• One (1) $10 Exhibit Hall food voucher
• Shuttle Bus Service from official meeting hotels to the Javits Center
• Applicable CME credit

Courses require an additional fee.

Gold Registration
Includes the APA Annual Meeting on Demand with a Standard Registration. A $10 US shipping or $45 International shipping fee will be added.

Residents Will Find Resource Center Their Home Away From Home

The central hub of APA’s 2014 annual meeting for residents is the Resident Resource Center, which will be located in the Javits Convention Center in the 3D glass room on the Third Floor. It will be open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (just follow the signs).

Enjoy New York at Reduced Prices
Here’s another reason to attend this year’s annual meeting: APA has made arrangements for Annual Meeting attendees to enjoy exclusive discounts on Broadway shows and popular restaurants. Many of the prices on this website are 10% to 20% off the regular price, and $1 from each sale will be donated to the 2014 annual meeting charity, the Doe Fund. To check out the offerings, click here. If you encounter any problems with the website, contact fit@broadwayinbound.com. Prices are available from May 1 to 10.
The Daily Bulletin is the official Annual Meeting publication that highlights meeting events, attractions and scientific sessions. A digital preview issue will be distributed the last week in March and will promote scientific sessions, highlight special events, and prompt early registration. A link to the preview issue will be emailed to all APA Members but will also be accessible via APA’s website, Psychiatric News outlets, and APA’s social media formats. Three print issues will be available at the meeting on Sat/Sun, Monday and Tuesday.

This year’s Annual Meeting mobile app will offer 24-hour access to unique, on-the-go meeting information but will also include additional interactive features such as access to APA’s social networks including: YouTube; Facebook; and Twitter (@APAPsychiatric, @WebsEdge_Health & #APAAM14). A “friends” icon will also allow users an opportunity to engage with colleagues. Make sure you visit psychiatry.org in early April for download instructions.

APA TV is your conference channel for the 167th Annual Meeting. Just like last year we are bringing you the latest news and views daily. Exclusive interviews with world renowned presenters and VIP guests to “behind the scenes” coverage of special events. APA TV provides major meeting highlights and updates you don’t want to miss. Where to Watch APA TV? APA Annual Meeting YouTube channel (download Annual Meeting app for easy access) and screens all over Javits Convention Center and the New York Marriott Marquis.

Women Psychiatrists: A Place to Gather, Share, and Learn!
https://www.tphousing.com/r2/startres.aspx?EICode=2794&Attcode=72 Women members are invited come to the APA Women's Center at the annual meeting to connect with friends and colleagues, dialogue about issues of importance to them, and exchange career advice, practice tips, and hard-earned pearls of wisdom. Refreshments will be available. Hours and location: Sunday, May 4: 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., Rooms 2D06/07, Javits Convention Center; Monday, May 5: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Madison Suite, Second Floor, New York Hilton Midtown; Tuesday, May 6: 11:45 a.m. to 3 p.m., Rooms 2D06/07, Javits Convention Center. Also, there will be a lactation room in Room 2D16 in the Javits Convention Center. The key to the room may be picked up in the APA Meetings Office in Room 1E03.
**ADVERTISING**

**Orange Regional Medical Center** Department of Psychiatry is seeking a Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, Full Time for our growing outpatient division. Above average pay and excellent benefits. Call Carlos Rueda, MD at 845-333-2240.

**Valley Behavioral Medicine**
We are seeking a BC/BE part-time Psychiatrist to join our established group practice as an independent contractor. Excellent financial opportunity. Our facility is located in Goshen, Orange County, New York. Interested candidates should fax their CV & cover letter to: 845-294-3785.

**Psychiatry/Psychotherapy Office for Rent**
Saturday all day, Sunday after 10:30
Route 45, Pomona
Shared Waiting Room, Wheelchair Accessible, Wall-to-Wall Windows, Private Bath, Full Sound Insulation, Separate Entrance/Exit
Call Lorraine Schorr, MSW 354-5040

**Depression Support Group**
Depression support group meets 2 times a month in Pomona, NY. We are inviting new members at this time. We are moderated by a clinical social worker. This is not a therapy group but social support for people fighting depression. Call Kathy for more information (914) 714-2837.

**Rockland County Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance**
peer-to-peer run support group for people with depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder or any related mood disorder & their friends & family. The support group meets every Thursday night from 6:30 - 8:30 at St. John's Episcopal Church, located at 365 Strawtown Road in New City. Reservations are not required. There is no fee for attending the support group meetings. This is a very warm and welcoming group run by people who have been there and can help. Any questions please call Leslie or Leonard at 845-837-1182
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Remy Palumbo
Senior Account Manager

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TheProgram@prms.com
www.PsychProgram.com

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For more information, please call NKI Clinical Trials Support:
Nayla Scaramello 845-398-6624
Santha Vaidian 845-398-6573

Karen Nolan 845-398-6572
Date: March 3, 2014
Job Title: Medical Director
Program: Medical Services
Full/Part Time
Responsibilities: Coordinates, provides and ensures mandatory compliance of all Medical policies and services of the agency’s direct medical programs. This position provides professional (and clinical) supervision and leadership to medical staff and medical and psychiatric clinical services to individuals recovering from mental illness and/or substance abuse. The Medical Director conducts physical assessments, determines physical health needs, provides treatment and counseling; performs diagnostic assessment to evaluate medication and overall health needs of clients; prescribes medication in order to eliminate or reduce symptoms using safest possible products with fewest side effects; monitors clients for side effects of medications; provides medication education to all individuals seen and engages them as partners in the treatment process; stays abreast of current information on both new and older medications;
consults with patients, their families, and other interested persons to interpret clinical findings and provide coordinated care; conducts group and family therapy sessions; participates in meetings as needed; executes paperwork requirements including documentation of all clients and collateral contacts, referral forms, entitlement reviews and annual psychiatric evaluations in a timely manner; schedules and provides backup for other program physicians, evaluating designated clients in emergency or during vacations; and additional related duties as assigned.

Requirements: Possession of a license to practice medicine, issued by NYS and completion in an approved residents training in psychiatry. Administrative experience in a mental health, clinic or related program preferred. Must obtain a federal DATA 2000 waiver (buprenorphine-certified) within four months of employment. The Medical Director will also need to have or obtain a board certification in addiction psychiatry or the equivalent from either: the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American Society of Addiction Medicine, American Board of Addiction Medicine, or the Addiction Medicine from the American Osteopthic Association. Experience working with a diverse population and experience as a psychiatrist in a mental health, clinic or related program preferred. Computer skills and familiarity with WORD, EXCEL and other software programs required. A current driver’s license is required. If interested please send resume including salary requirements and full or part time interests to:

Mental Health Association of Rockland County, Inc.  
Attention: Human Resources  
140 Route 303  
Valley Cottage, NY 10989  
Fax #: 845-267-2169  
E-Mail: dumontn@mharockland.org

EOE Due to the high number of applicants, only successful candidates will be notified.
on both new and older medications and incorporates this knowledge into treatment; consults with patients, their families, and other interested persons to interpret clinical findings and provide coordinated care; conducts group and family therapy sessions; participates in treatment planning meetings and meets with other clinical and treatment staff for case review and input; orders medical lab tests and health referrals as needed; executes paperwork requirements including documentation of all clients and collateral contacts, referral forms, entitlement reviews and annual psychiatric evaluations in a timely manner; provides backup for other program physicians as needed; and additional related duties as assigned.

Requirements:
Possession of a license to practice medicine, issued by the State of New York and completion in an approved residents training in psychiatry. Experience working with a diverse population and experience as a psychiatrist in a mental health, clinic or related program preferred. Strong written, verbal, and organizational skills needed. A current driver's license is required. If interested please send resume including salary requirements and full or part time interests to:

If interested please send resume to:

Mental Health Association of Rockland County, Inc.
Attention: Human Resources
140 Route 303
Valley Cottage, NY 10989
Fax #: 845-267-2169
E-Mail: dumontr@mharockland.org

Due to the high number of applicants, only successful candidates will be notified.
March 6, 2014

West Hudson Psychiatric Society  
152 Prospect Street  
Nanuet, NY 10954

To Whom It May Concern:

I am contacting your organization in hopes that you can disseminate the following information to your members.

The Rockland County Department of Mental Health is seeking a part time psychiatrist to perform evaluations on inmates at the local jail four days a week (Thursday through Sunday). The psychiatric evaluations will focus on risk factors in a jail setting as well as pharmacological treatment of psychiatric conditions and substance abuse. In addition to a paid hourly rate, candidates would be eligible to receive health insurance benefits.

All inquiries concerning this position should be directed to me. I can be contacted via phone (at 845-364-2383) or email (Padillar@co.rockland.ny.us). Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

C. Rita Padilla, M.D.  
Medical Director

The Rockland County Department of Mental Health is committed to providing barrier free access to individuals who attend meetings or programs. If you require assistance to participate because of your disability, please call 364-2378 at least one week in advance so that we may be able to accommodate you.