



West Hudson Psychiatric Society
of the American Psychiatric Association
serving Rockland, Orange, Sullivan & Delaware Counties



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The address above has been changed to:
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eSynapse

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Editor's Comments

James Flax, MD, MPH, DFAPA

Please join APA's New **FREE** 'Find a Psychiatrist' Database

Expect to be contacted by Liz Burnich, our Executive Director who will be encouraging our members to participate in the database offered by APA. This is a **FANTASTIC** new service that will replace the Information manual and database that your district branch has offered for years without the cost & hours of labor required to keep ours up to date. You will be invited to join this new database being added to APA's website that will enable individuals seeking psychiatric care to locate psychiatrists practicing in their area. The goal is to populate the database in the coming weeks before it goes live on APA's website. To join the database, click [here](#). To view the functionality of the database, click [here](#). This is a service that will be of value to psychiatrists with private practices and to anyone looking to find a psychiatrist.

If you have a practice, please join this Psychiatrist Database. The APA needs a critical mass to make this a success. There is no cost to you and it's a wonderful service to the public and all psychiatrists.

You will find below a synopsis of our meeting so all readers will have an idea of district branch business. But, it's only a synopsis. Please **come** to a meeting to appreciate the rich discussions.

There is an article on the services in Rockland County. We are hoping to have information that reviews more of the services in Orange, Sullivan, Delaware and Rockland in future editions of eSynapse. Dr. Abdullah has again sent us a new article in his long line of erudite essays. There is another poem. There are ads and announcements 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>.

IT'S A FREE LUNCH!

**Next Executive Council Meeting
Il Fresco Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY
Friday, September 18th, 2015
Journal Club (15 minutes) PROMPTLY at 12:30
Followed immediately by Business Agenda
Please contact Mona Begum, MD (drmonabegum@gmail.com) if you are
planning to attend.**

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Mona Begum, MD [drmonabegum@gmail.com]

Dear West Hudson psychiatric society members, colleagues and friends:

As a continued initiative to better understand the mental health services provided in Rockland County, Michael Leitzes, commissioner of mental health was invited to our most recent executive council meeting. It was an excellent opportunity for us to learn about various local resources we have available, including Behavioral health response team [BHRT]. This is a free service provided by Rockland paramedic services [RPS] through grant funding from New York State Office of Mental Health [NYSOMH] and Rockland County. Outreach and support provided for mental illness and crisis intervention on a 24/7basis by calling their helpline at 845-517-0400. The BHRT team is an interdisciplinary team of mental health clinicians and technicians. Mr. Leitzes also discussed overview of three other projects, which I'll not elaborate since there is a synopsis of his talk in this issue of Synapse. I encourage you to read this for more specific details. I thought it is extremely valuable information for the practicing Psychiatrists of our district branch.

My impression is that even though there are varieties of mental health services provided in the county, these are mostly short term, crisis intervention type of services. Only a handful of Clinics are in existence. Therefore, I am concerned that access to outpatient mental health services for seriously and persistently mentally ill remains limited and inadequate.

This is a huge challenge for us clinicians who are advocates for the chronic psychiatric population who require close supervision and ongoing treatment. This particular segment needs more attention through policy and fiscal changes that require political will. We psychiatrists need to work collectively towards that goal in collaboration with other advocacy services like NAMI and the New York State Psychiatric Political Action Committee, Inc.

Finally, Dr. Donald Goff is our speaker for the fall educational dinner meeting scheduled for October 2nd 2015. He is an expert in Schizophrenia research and treatment. I strongly encourage all of you to mark your calendar for the above date. Flyers will be mailed out in mid-August. Our district branch is small but efficient and we are always looking to expand our membership. I invite all non-member Psychiatrists and especially early career psychiatrists to come and attend

our monthly lunch meetings. I welcome your ideas and exchanges. Our next meeting is on Sept 18th at 12: 30pm in Il Fresco restaurant in Orangeburg.

Have a great rest of the summer!

Summary from Executive Council Meeting Friday, July 24, 2015 Il Fresco, Orangeburg, NY

Attendees Present: Mona Begum, Jim Flax, Raj Mehta, Nigel Bark, Les Citrome, Lois Kroplick, Dom Ferro, Scott Wiener and Liz Burnich.

Journal Club: In lieu of Journal Club this month, Michael Leitzes, Rockland County Mental Health Commissioner was our guest speaker. He gave us an overview of mental health at both the state and county levels and an update on the newly created Mobile Crisis Team. Please see the article below.

Fall 2015 Educational Meeting Update:

- Don Goff, M.D. has agreed to be our presenter for our fall dinner meeting.
- It will take place on Friday, October 2, 2015 at 6pm
- We booked the back room at La Terrazza that can hold 40-50 people
- We are awaiting details from Dr. Goff on the topic and course objectives so that we can apply for CME and begin advertising for this meeting.

Spring 2016 Educational Meeting – Raj will ask the APA President-Elect, Dr. Maria Oquendo, if she would like to be our guest speaker for this coming spring – maybe on the topic of suicide.

Public Forum Update:

- Lois advised that the Public Forum will take place on October 21 at Rockland Community College on the topic of ADHD. Dr. Laura Antar will be the expert speaker and attendees will also hear from a patient diagnosed with ADHD.

Women's Meeting:

- The next Women's Meeting will take place on August 14 at Mona Begum's at 12:30pm.

Future Guests to invite to our Executive Council Meetings:

- Raj Mehta will invite Dr. John Kenny, Chief of Psychiatry at Rockland Psychiatric Center to attend our next meeting in September.
- Other future guests we would like to invite are Dr. K from Nyack Hospital, a Jawanio representative, an Orange Regional Medical Center representative and the person in charge of the Mobile Crisis Team.

Other Business Items:

- Liz advised that our APA Centralized Billing Contract is due on July 31 for the 2016 calendar year. Dues were discussed and voted on for 2016. It was unanimously decided that West Hudson dues will remain the same as last year.
- NYSPA has inquired if WHPS would be interested in co-sponsoring an educational event utilizing the VA grant. All members present agreed that this would be a good idea and Jim

suggested that we reach out to the Rockland County Medical Society for support with this event also.

- Les Citrome announced that he is reaching his 14-year term limit on the Board of Directors of MHA and would like to see if anyone would be interested in joining the board. Raj Mehta expressed interest and said he would consider it.
- Liz submitted an application to the APA for the 2015 Expedited Grant and we were just advised that we will be awarded \$2,678.57 to be used for membership growth and retention activities within the next year.
- Website – John emailed an update that the website developer will have a draft of the newly re-designed website ready in August.

Next Executive Council Meeting - Friday, September 18, 2015 at 12:30pm at Il Fresco, Orangeburg, NY. Raj will invite Dr. Kenny to join us as our guest and Raj will also present Journal Club.

Rockland County Mental Health Services

Michael Leitzes, MBA

Commissioner

County of Rockland Department of Mental Health

leitzesm@co.rockland.ny.us

(845) 364-2378/Fax (845) 364-2381

I appreciated having the opportunity to meet with the West Hudson Psychiatric Society to discuss the changes in the delivery of mental health services in Rockland County.

A major change in the reimbursement of all health care is a result of the NYS DOH DSRIP (Delivery System Reform Incentive payments) initiative.

DSRIP is an initiative of NYS DOH to better integrate care in order to achieve a goal of reducing unnecessary Medicaid inpatient hospitalization by 25% over the next 5 years.

In Rockland County NYS DOH has selected 3 healthcare organizations to implement the DSRIP initiatives.(Montefiore Medical center, Westchester Medical Center, Refuah Community Health Center)

There are three major DSRIP initiatives that impact the delivery of behavioral health services:

- Integrated Primary Care and Behavioral health
- Development of a Behavioral Health Community Crisis Stabilization Service
- Implementation of evidence-based Medication Adherence Programs in

community based sites

The DSRIP initiatives are the catalyst for the consolidation of health care services in NYS and have resulted in the joint ventures in Rockland County hospitals with Good Samaritan Hospital linkage with Westchester Medical Center and Nyack Hospital linkage with Montifiore Medical Center.

DSRIP will fund the initiatives listed above; however providers will have to meet quality targets to reduce hospitalization. DSRIP has a 5-year timetable and presently this is year number 1. 1.1 billion dollars will support this initiative. The goal at the end of the DSRIP initiative is also to develop a value based payment system as opposed to the present system of billing for individual units of service or procedures.

In April of 2015 the Rockland County Department of Mental Health awarded the contract for a Mobile Crisis Team to Rockland Paramedic Services. We are the first mobile crisis team in NYS to utilize an EMS team to provide emergency psychiatric evaluation in the community.

Rockland's mobile crisis team is called BHRT (Behavioral Health Response Team) and the phone number is 845-517-0400. The team is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The team is unique in that it consists of both a licensed behavioral health clinician (LCSW, nurse) as well as an EMT trained staff member. The team is trained to intervene with clients requiring both behavioral and medical intervention. The team members are also trained in Narcan administration.

The BHRT team should be called for all requests related to 9:45 (police letter) and the team is authorized to order emergency psychiatric evaluation and transport to the only 9:39 hospital in the county, which is Nyack Hospital.

Michael Leitzes, MBA
Commissioner
County of Rockland Department of Mental Health

(Editor: If you are wondering about the available services in Rockland you can check out this website: <http://rocklandgov.com/departments/mental-health/provider-agency-links/>.)

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).

The Legend of Diana

Syed Abdullah, M.D.

The Greeks made their gods in their own image. Theirs were gods and goddesses that loved and hated with a passion, were jealous and full of vengeance. They sang of peace and fought bitter battles. They plotted and schemed. Above all, they possessed incomparable beauty, complete with athletic figures and angelic faces. The Romans borrowed much of their mythology from the Greeks, assigning them Roman names and adding minor details to the legends. These Greco-Roman mythologies have pervaded the arts, literature, poetry, sculpture and other cultural artifacts of the West. Even when the great religions of the Near East came to the West they were embellished by the customs and traditions based on this mythology. In the field of psychology, terms like Oedipus, Electra, and the word “psyche” itself have origins in tales of the ancients. Let us consider here one of the legends pertaining to Diana (Artemis).

The Goddess Diana was the daughter of Zeus and Leto and the twin sister of Apollo. There was much marital discord between her parents until they were separated and Leto was banished to an Island. Diana who possessed unsurpassed beauty, was the role model and patron of the young maidens whom she helped in times of difficulties, sickness, and childbirth. Herself a virgin, she was also known for her fury and power to allure and endanger young men who dared to cast eyes on her unveiled beauty. She was a lover of wildlife and the woods where she is depicted as roaming with her bow and arrow slung on her shoulders. She was the protector of the young and the innocent and yet was reputed to have insisted on the sacrifice of a maiden before she would permit the Greek fleet to sail for Troy. Thus confirming the contradictions in the characters of the Greek gods and goddesses.

Actaeon, the son of Autonoe, was a great hunter in the prime of his youth. One day he was out hunting with his entourage and a pack of well-trained hounds. Tired and thirsty by midday, he decided to break away from his hunting party to cool off and rest at a fresh water pool. Unknown to him, Diana was just at that time getting ready to take a dip in the same pool. She had dropped her robe, laid aside her hunting implements, and was ready to get into the water when Actaeon had a chance encounter with her. He was held spellbound seeing the perfection of Diana’s maiden form. He stood there transfixed, much to the annoyance of the gentle goddess whose deadly fury was now aroused. She splashed a few drops of water in the direction of Actaeon. No sooner the drops fell upon him then he was transformed into a stag.

Actaeon’s blood thirsty hounds caught up with him, no longer recognizing him as their master, they attacked him from all sides as he ran for his life. Actaeon tried his best to stop them but to no avail, he had lost his human voice and was now powerless to control the hounds. His arms and legs were badly mauled until he died a miserable death - disfigured and maimed. He thus paid the price for having cast his eyes on Diana’s naked beauty. The Goddess, however, remained

Now let us consider the story of a modern day Diana, who also grew up in a family torn with discord. Her parents finally separated and the mother moved out to live in an Island off the shore of Scotland. This Diana was also of incomparable beauty and possessed a tender loving heart that lead her to a series of short lived affairs. She was also known for many acts of kindness at considerable personal risk. For example, she walked the minefields where children were maimed by exploding land mines, and comforted kids dying of AIDs.

With minor variations of the theme, she finally cast a spell on another skilled “hunter.” They had met at the beach, on the lakes, in water sports and in his yacht. He was spellbound by her beauty. One night, in Paris, he took her into his black limousine, accompanied by his protecting companions. Even in the safety of his “chariot,” however, he was hounded by a pack of camera wielding paparazzi who finally caught up with his speeding carriage in the underground tunnel. It was a terror ridden chase that ended in a crash, resulting in the gruesome death of the hunter, along with his prized possession - the princess/goddess. In a variation of the mythic tale, Diana proved to be a mortal after all. The “chariot” driver, whose evening drink was perhaps laced with a deadly intoxicating potion, also perished along with his master. Her brother gave a stirring eulogy at her funeral, even though, in the traditional mythical contradiction, he had turned down his sister’s request for refuge in his 8,500 acre ancestral estate.

And at the funeral, the bard Elton John, sang: “Your candles burnt out long before
Your legend never will.”

POETRY

Good God Damn. Even at this juncture, this terminal blues girl has regrouped
Despite my having cancer for the third time along with my other myriad of diseases
I have waved my psychedelic cane in the bitter evening air while standing on the cottage
stoop thinking

“Oh No, I’m not done yet, fuck the pain, fuck the pills and always do what pleases”.

So I go in for the next round of shots and X-rays and whatever else they can conjure up
I always make the Doc laugh because it is comical in a way that I should be searching
still

And I do catch the hidden disapproval of the quality of my last surgery, the one that left
me lame and corrupt.

And though I set a date for my demise, someone wiser than I showed me I could change
my mind and will

So even though death is approaching quicker for me than for you

And it will be a welcome release from all my bodily pain

But no one, no one can say I didn’t fight it to the end

Cause that’s what I’m made of. Hell Cat in the rain

PRIVATE PRACTICE: FEES Here is a link to a legal public site where you
can look up fees for a given zipcode. <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: 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. Also, one of our members posted to an international list-serv with regard to any denial of benefit, so I quote Dr. John Fogelman:

The URL below will direct you to a database for the regional CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) headquarters. The names of the regional Medical Directors are listed. When you call, hang in through all the options, and at the end type in the name of the medical director. You will get either the real live doc, an assistant, leave a message, or the name of someone to call for an emergency. It usually works.

http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/sharedsavingsprogram/Regional_Contacts.html

My experience has been that the higher you go in any organization (hospital, government, insurance companies), the closer you are to the decision maker, and the decision makers do not have to stay on the unvarying mindless script. They do not instruct you to have a good day, apologize for your inconvenience, thank you profusely and hear how they know how valuable your time is. They usually listen, and if you do not scream at them, a favorable result often follows.

PARITY ENFORCEMENT FROM NYSPA: If you missed the NYSPA Webinar on parity I strongly suggest you listen to it; accessible on the NYSPA website. Seth Stein and Rachel Fernbach have presented a packet of wonderful new tools that potentially will allow us to better manage and respond aggressively to insurance company efforts to restrict care.

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO RETURN PHONE CALLS. EVEN IF YOU HAVE NO ROOM IN YOUR SCHEDULE FOR NEW PATIENTS: I have frequently heard complaints about patients leaving voice mails with psychiatrist's offices and never getting a return phone call. If true, this reflects very poorly on our profession. Yes, I know many people leave voice mail messages that I can't understand, even after playing it back 6 times with the volume turned up full. Even so, the number of complaints seems to exceed the number of complaints that could be excused due to poor communication.

WHAT YOUR CURRENT POLICY MIGHT BE LACKING:

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Dave Torrans, II
Senior Litigation Specialist



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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 Jawonio, inc. 775 N Main St. New Hempstead. 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.
