



West Hudson Psychiatric Society

Serving Rockland, Orange, Sullivan & Delaware Counties

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eSynapse

December 2018

Editor's Comments

James Flax, MD, MPH, DLFAPA

Sadly, Syed Abdullah will not be sending any more of his wonderful articles for publication in eSynapse. He wrote me that he is now 91 years old, cannot hear well, cannot speak on the phone and cannot type any more, so has to dictate letters. He has moved to his daughter's home where he is well taken care of by family. He sends his "best wishes to all our friends in West Hudson Psychiatric Society, Best Regards". Syed, we will miss your contributions.

You will still find news from Orange County, Rockland County, NYSPA, APA, 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>. (If the links in eSynapse don't work, copy and paste into your browser)

As I've said and written many times, I **will** publish anything you'd like published. I'll add a caveat to this longstanding invitation - **if** it's suitable for the eSynapse newsletter and of relevance to our profession, our patients or about a member, such as – professional opinion, recipes, personal announcements, travelogues, etc.

I want to underline the importance of the APA PAC. However much we may dislike it, this is the way American politics works. **More important than the amount of money contributed is the number and percentage of members who contribute.** Politicians want to know how many people feel strongly enough about the issue to give to the PAC. If you haven't contributed, please consider doing so. Even \$1 adds your name to the list and the number of donors. **See the form appended to the last page of this eSynapse.** I make a point of giving every year because it is the APA PAC that advocates for my interests as a psychiatrist better than any other organization.

Our website is now operational. The content will be updated over the next few months, thanks to the efforts of Liz Burnich. We prominently include a link to the APA "**Find A Psychiatrist**" database. (<http://finder.psychiatry.org>). This is a wonderful public service and can provide a source of referrals to your practice. Please join APA's **FREE** "Find a Psychiatrist" Database by signing in to psychiatry.org, under the Psychiatrist menu go to Search Directories and Databases, scroll down to Find a Psychiatrist Database and "opt-in".

VOTE FOR YOUR APA REPRESENTATIVES

It's that time of year again. Democracy doesn't work if you don't participate. The link below brings you to the slate of nominees for this year's APA election. PLEASE exercise your right, the right you've earned and paid for as a member of APA. Voting starts 1/2/19. (If the link doesn't work, copy and paste into your browser).

https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/awards-leadership-opportunities/leadership-opportunities/elections?utm_source=Internal-Link&utm_medium=Banner-Row&utm_campaign=2019ElectionPetitionCandidates

In this issue of eSynapse you will find a summary of our Executive Council meeting so all readers will have an idea of district branch business. But, it's only a summary. Please **come** to one of our friendly meetings to appreciate the rich discussions and enjoy a tasty lunch at Il Fresco.

Executive Council Meeting
Il Fresco Restaurant, Orangeburg, NY
Friday, January 4, 2019
Friday, March 1, 2019
PROMPTLY at 12:30

Please contact Liz Burnich (westhudsonpsych@gmail.com) if you are planning to attend.
IT'S A FREE LUNCH



The WHPS probably does more for its members and for psychiatry, proportionately (considering the number of members), than any other district branch, as was recognized by the APA in awarding it the Best Practice Award this year. **For our members:** twice yearly educational dinner meetings with high quality speakers; open executive committee meetings that all members can attend with a journal club or presentation from local leaders of psychiatric services or organizations; a mentoring program for residents at Orange Regional Medical Center; a women's group of female psychiatrists that meets every six weeks. For psychiatry and the community: the Mental Health Coalition of Rockland County organized by Lois Kroplick 22 years ago, with about 20 local mental health organizations, has been perhaps the most active and successful undertaking by WHPS, with its highly successful annual Forum, attended by 500 or so people, its educational programs in local Colleges, elementary schools, high schools, its presentations to groups of clergy, police, Rotary clubs, PTAs; many members have been involved in these programs. eSynapse, (with news of psychiatric and WHPS activities in our area, a summary of the executive committee meeting, original articles, advertisements for jobs and offices etc) has been recognized with awards by the APA for its quality and interest. Of course if you don't read it you wouldn't know and you may not know what the WHPS does. We are involved with representing our members and patients at NYSPA and its committees and the APA on the Assembly and its

committees. If you don't think we are doing enough, please join us and contribute. Nigel Bark, MD

Planet of the Apps: Enabling Technology to Make You a Better Clinician, presented by Dr. Leslie Citrome **November 16 Annual Fall Member Dinner Meeting**



Review by Eric Jarmon, DO, PGY4, Orange Regional Medical Center

Step One: guillotine your book at the spine. Step Two: feed you dismembered pages in chronological order through a sheet-fed duplex scanner and make sure both sides of the page are scanned. Step Three: if the cover of your book is hard and cannot be scanned, simply take a picture of the cover on Amazon. Finally, download your PDF to your hard drive, and Presto! You have fulfilled the Second Commandment of the 10 Virtual Commandments – Though shalt endeavor to start converting all paper documents to PDF format! Welcome to the Digital Age, pilgrim!

Going Paperless is the third and final topic covered in last Friday's presentation at the annual Fall Education Dinner of the West Hudson Psychiatric Society. The title of the lecture, "Planet of the Apps: Enabling Technology to Make You a Better Clinician," was presented by Dr. Leslie Citrome. This thoroughly entertaining and educational presentation offered tips and advice for practitioners who are trying to adjust to our ubiquitous and ever-evolving technology that we use every day, from apps to smart phones, from search engines to PDF's.

In addition to *Going Paperless*, *Apps can do a bunch of different things*, and *Using Technology to Harvest the Literature*, were the other topics covered in Dr. Citrome's presentation. With regard to Apps, Dr. Citrome points out that 65% of apps are not medically relevant. Furthermore, many of these medically relevant apps aren't available to those who want them, but, rather, are only offered by the authors who ultimately decide whether to share or sell. Dr. Citrome's take home message with regard to Apps is: don't waste your time utilizing medically relevant Apps that lack published evidence backing them up. One such App that thankfully does hold up to scientific standards is CBT-I Coach (CBT-I stands for Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Insomnia), which is a smartphone app designed to enhance CBT-I and is free from the US Department of Veterans Affairs. CBT-I Coach is not designed to replace a health professional who is providing CBT-I, but is meant to be used as an educational resource. Currently, the FDA does not expect

manufacturers to submit premarket review applications or to register their Apps with them. So when it comes to using Apps in your practice, please do your homework.

Finally, in *Using Technology to Harvest the Literature*, Dr. Citrome discussed a couple of ways to set up a free automated search. First, he recommends going to the US National Library of Medicine's PubMed/MEDLINE database, available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/, and sign in at My NCBI to register for a free account. Another way to set up a free automated search was to get a NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY CARD. On the Monday following the West Hudson Education Dinner, I actually did go on line and registered for a New York State Library Card. All that was required was a PDF questionnaire (which I submitted electronically, of course, why waste the paper or pen ink?), and a few documents (such as my NY State Medical License, NY State Driver's License, and Hospital ID), which I took pictures of on my smart phone and emailed directly. Yes, I did say NY State Medical License, because the library does have membership available specifically for physicians who practice and reside in New York. The day after I submitted the application, I received a personalized email from someone at the Circulation Unit at the New York State Library in Albany stating that my library card application had been processed and provided me with a library card number (the physical card was in the mail), a pin number, and four PDF attachments regarding borrowing privileges. That very day I was able to read my favorite local newspaper (same day edition) and the current issue of my favorite periodical – both full text and absolutely FREE! Thank you, Dr. Citrome!

Dr. Citrome's presentation had some other take home messages. With regard to going paperless, eBooks take up no shelf space and are always with you (whether on your computer, iPad, or Kindle). After all, why retain paper books that have lost monetary value, take up space, and get thrown out when you are deceased? Remember to always back up your files. Although documents do get lost even in the digital world, Windows 10 has some very useful search features. Also, going paperless is good for the environment.

I will end here with Dr. Citrome's 10 Virtual Commandments:

1. Though shalt not keep paper copies of any downloaded documents
2. Though shalt endeavor to start converting all paper documents to PDF format
3. Though shalt adopt a standard approach to naming PDF files
4. Though shalt store PDF files in an organized fashion in suitably named file folders on one's personal computer
5. Though shalt back up file folders on a regular basis by synchronization with a portable hard drive, and subsequently on any and all computers at work or at home that one uses
6. Though shalt index one's hard drive using an indexing program that permits searching with PDF files
7. Though shalt seldomly print the PDF file
8. Thought shalt view PDF files on large monitors or on multi-monitor systems
9. Though shalt use mail to send PDF documents to others instead of using paper faxing or the postal service
10. Though shalt encourage others to be virtually paperless at work and at home.

Slides from the presentation are available using the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/6ssdnjpi3a5ogpi/PlanetOfTheAppsStandardPresentation%20110418%20With%20Handouts.pdf?dl=0>

President's Column

New York State Psychiatric Association Fall Meeting, October 20 2018

Nigel Bark, MD

December 2018

The fall meeting of the New York State Psychiatric Association starts with committee meetings. I attended the Public Psychiatry committee, as I usually do. And, usually there are just three or four septuagenarians. This year we were joined by three young enthusiastic psychiatrists including Dr Maria Bodic, who runs the Columbia Presbyterian Public Psychiatry Fellowship Program which has ten fellows each year; Dr Usha Tandon who presented her program in Queens, out of Elmhurst Hospital, which combines behavioral care, addiction services and medical follow ups in one integrated care model; Dr Sasidhar Gunturu who described an integrated program at Bronx Lebanon Hospital in the Bronx, which provides both medical and psychiatric services in a 'one stop shopping experience' for patients. Dr Lindenmayer reported that Manhattan Psychiatric Center has two internists in its 124th street out-patient clinic. The administrative barriers, like only one Medicaid billing a day, seem to have been removed. The committee agreed that these models are clearly pioneering a new delivery model of behavioral care and need to be models for other behavioral care services. And Dr Jeffrey Akaka from Hawaii attended because he is campaigning to be Secretary of the APA – against NYSPA's own Dr Ramaswamy Viswanathan (Viz), from Brooklyn.

Dr Lindenmayer talked of the constant readmission of people with serious mental illness and his belief that we are not facing the main reason: the lack of insight, "anosognosia". We are not treating it or studying it (apart from Dr Xavier Amador of SUNY, formerly at Columbia). Bill Tucker who was an inspirational leader of an ACT team in Queens after he left OMH, and wrote an inspiring book about his experiences disagreed: in six years he never admitted any of his 60 patients to hospital and believes strongly that with the right support and treatment, recovery happens. From the discussion about other ACT teams it appears that it was Dr Tucker, not the ACT team process that made his successful.

The other interesting discussion was about access to care. This is a major problem in much of the United States, as it is in the four counties of WHPS. Interestingly Dr Lindenmayer said it is not a problem in Manhattan. There may be some reluctance to seek care because of stigma, but there are plenty of services. My exploration of this, listing all the available services in the Bronx a few years ago, came to the same conclusion: there are more psychiatric beds, outpatient services, substance abuse services, supervised residences (but not for the very functionally handicapped) than the usual expert recommendations; but poor coordination and continuity of care are major problems. But more on access to care from the general meeting.

The morning presentation was by Seth Stein on the proposed changes by CMS in both the documentation and reimbursement for outpatient office visits (99202-99205 and 99212-99215) replacing the separate fees for each level of E/M service with a single fee for all four E/M services (99202-99205 and 99212-99215) calculated on the weighted average fee. It would be harmful for psychiatrists, would require new software for electronic health records, would in time be adopted by all payers and presents major problems for those billing psychotherapy and E&M codes. A detailed description and criticism is on NYSPA's website (nypsych.org) in the form of Seth Stein's letter to CMS in response to the proposal. CMS listened and have delayed the

implementation for two years as reported on Saul Levin's November 2nd letter to DB Presidents and Executive Directors. CMS' Final Rule with 2,300 pages (!) was issued on November 1st and APA is reviewing it.

NYSPA gave an award to Dr Barry Perlman for being the very successful chair of the Legislative Committee for 30 years. It also gave an award to the New York State's Social Workers Society's legislative representative, Karin Carreau, for being an essential ally in NYSPA's campaign for parity, ending successfully this year with a bill to mandate an annual Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorder Parity Report as part of the annual "Consumer Guide to Health Insurers" to monitor parity (because compliance has not been good); a bill passed 137 to 1 in the Assembly and unanimously (60-0) in the Senate, but still awaiting Governor Cuomo's signature. NYSPA is encouraging members to write to the Governor to sign this bill, A.3694-C, into law (or use MSSNY's Physician Advocacy website).

This was NYSPA's E-Bulletin of October 23:

**Governor Declares October Mental Health and Addiction Parity Month in NYS
NYSPA Members Urged to Contact Governor to Advocate for Enactment of the
MH/SUD Parity Reporting Act (A.3694-C)**

Governor Cuomo has proclaimed October as Mental Health and Addiction Parity Month in New York and officially announced the launch of the new behavioral health ombudsman program, known as the Community Health Access to Addiction and Mental Healthcare Project (CHAMP). NYSPA applauds the Governor's latest efforts along with the appointment of Stephanie Campbell, the former Executive Director of Friends of Recovery – New York, to lead the new ombudsman program.

At the same time, NYSPA is urging its members to send letters to Governor Cuomo to urge him to sign A.3694-C, the MH/SUD Parity Reporting Act, into law. This legislation, which passed both the Senate and Assembly nearly unanimously, would require insurers, health plans and behavioral health benefit managers to submit data to the Department of Financial Services to ensure compliance with parity laws. The American Psychiatric Association has written in support of the New York legislation, characterizing it as "among the strongest parity compliance reporting measures in the nation."

All NYSPA members can send a letter to the Governor by using the MSSNY Physician Advocacy site: <https://cqrcengage.com/mssny/app/write-a-letter?4&engagementId=483333>.

There were 21 other medical and consumer organizations working with NYSPA on the bill. This follows last year's success in raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18. The other main aim has been to have Conversion Therapy banned. NYSPA reported that, along with many other organizations, they have raised awareness laying the groundwork for passage of a bill next year.

Scope of practice (of other disciplines) is a constant concern of our Government Relations Office, particularly psychologist prescribing. The APA is developing a new strategy to avoid the accusations of it being a guild issue: to recognize the national problem of access to care and make it a safety issue, not a guild issue. There will never be enough psychiatrists: let psychologists do what they do best; use nurse practitioners and physician's assistants but make sure they are trained properly and supervised appropriately. This is set forth in a SAFE statement which we have not seen yet.

Dr Vivien Pender, NYSPA's (Area II) Trustee on the APA Board reported that APA has a \$5.38 million award from CMS to develop and test new quality measures for CMS' Quality Payment Program; that Congress boosted NIH funding by \$2 billion and SAMHSA by \$584 million; that APA is purchasing its new headquarters: they are very impressive and all members are encouraged to visit if they are in Washington. I did so two weeks ago and had an hour's tour with the librarian/archivist. They have a rich collection of books and items including a page from the Gutenberg Bible describing music therapy (David calming Saul). She also reported that the APA's 175th anniversary will be celebrated at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco next year (The APA is the oldest medical society in the US).

The APA has a \$14.2 million grant from SAMHSA to create a Clinical Support System for Serious Mental Illness. The APA is also collecting experience with, and working with The Joint Commission (TJC) and CMS, on "Ligature Risk Assessment"; that is features of hospitals or Psychiatric Units that can be used to commit suicide (hooks, shower heads even doors). Units have been closed because of TJC's requirements – yet more hospital suicides occur in non-psychiatric units that don't have the same requirements, (and the latest rates of suicide in hospital are much lower than previously reported.)

Two action papers were discussed and supported by vote at the meeting: one on providing support to separated immigrant children and the other on advocating for adequate funding for healthcare and mental health care in Puerto Rico where there is a Medicaid cap which does not occur anywhere else in the US.

Prior approval remains a very big issue and child psychiatrists seem to be harassed even more than adult psychiatrists. Please report egregious cases to Seth Stein. Several demands for prior approval may be illegal: some changes in children's prescriptions; writing a 90-day prescription when a 30-day prescription is indicated. (The pharmacist that refuses to honor a 30-day prescription can be reported to the Board of Education!) Seth Stein is preparing a summary of all such regulatory limitations.

Seth Stein also warned of the latest insurance company scam. He learned in the past couple of weeks that Anthem sent a bill for \$140,000 to a psychiatrist, not for seeing patients too often or without evidence to support the visit but for using E&M codes along with psychotherapy codes! Another psychiatrist and Cornell Clinics in NYC had similar experiences. The regulations and parity specifically say psychiatrists should use E&M codes. This will be a national issue and NYSPA and the APA will work with the AMA to nip this in the bud.

As always it was an interesting and useful meeting. WHPS is looking for representatives to go to the committee meetings and all can attend the full meeting though we have just three voting members whose names need to be sent in beforehand.

WHPS Executive Council Meeting
Friday, November 9, 2018
12:30pm - Il Fresco

Minutes

Attendees Present: Nigel Bark, Raj Mehta, Laura Antar, Jim Flax, Lois Kroplick, John Fogelman and Liz Burnich

1. Journal Club: Nigel Bark, MD

- a. Nigel presented articles about a study on cigarette smoking and cognitive functioning and an article on anti-psychotics impact on white matter which was followed with an engaging discussion about attendees own patient experiences about these topics.
 2. Fall 2018 Educational Meeting:
 - a. Our own member, Dr. Leslie Citrome will present on the topic “Planet of the Apps: Enabling Technology to Make You a Better Clinician” on Friday, November 16 at La Terrazza at 6pm.
 - b. Nigel is unable to attend this meeting so Laura will conduct a brief business meeting and then Raj will introduce the speaker.
 3. Spring 2019 Meeting Planning:
 - a. Nigel has been in touch with Dan Gillison, the Executive Director of the American Psychiatric Foundation about speaking at our spring meeting. He responded with some available dates this spring and we decided we would try to get a commitment for Friday, April 5.
 - b. A suggestion was made that we make this an evening of “Meet the Leaders of the APA” and invite APA CEO, Saul Levin, M.D. and/or APA President-Elect, Bruce Schwartz, M.D. Nigel will reach out to them to gauge interest.
 - c. It was noted that we would not be able to offer CME for this event so there were some suggestions about having a CME meeting later in the spring.
 - d. Some topics suggested were tele-psychiatry or maybe a panel of psychiatrists to debate hot topics in psychiatry. This will be revisited at our January meeting.
 4. Committee Updates:
 - a. Lois gave a recap on the Public Forum that was held on Oct 24 at RCC on the topic of Anxiety. She thanked everyone for their support and suggested that West Hudson have a bigger presence next year. One suggestion was to have a table set up with flyers and information to hand out to the attendees.
 - b. The next Women’s Meeting is scheduled for Fri. Nov. 15 at 12:30pm at Jane Kelman’s office
 - c. Liz and Russ will collaborate with Richard Gallo & Associates to send a joint letter to Senator Carlucci congratulating him on his re-election and reminding him of the issues of importance to psychiatric care with the goal of getting him to come to one of our meetings.
 5. 2019 Planning
 - a. In May, 2019 we will have vacancies on the Executive Council positions of President-Elect, RFM Rep and ECP Rep. A committee consisting of Past President, President and President-Elect will work together to cultivate our new leadership.
 - b. In addition to our President, we are allowed to designate two NYSPA Reps each year. These reps have voting privileges and should be able to commit to attend the March and October NYSPA Area II meetings. All Members are welcome and encouraged to attend the NYSPA meetings but we should make sure our designated Reps can make the commitment to attending these meetings.
 6. Future EC Meetings via teleconference:
 - a. Laura and Liz conducted some tests after this meeting with doxy.me, a laptop and a speaker and to see if we can use teleconferencing for our EC meetings so that our Orange County board members can lessen their time/travel commitment for these meetings. We had a few little hiccups in figuring things out but it seemed to work. If Ulrick, Nick and Eric can get together at one location in Orange County for our January meeting, we can do a true test to see if this is something that will work for us. I requested the upstairs room for January to hopefully lessen the background noise.
 7. NEXT Executive Council MEETINGS:
 - a. Friday January 4, 2019 at 12:30pm at Il Fresco, Orangeburg
 - b. Friday, March 1, 2019 at 12:30pm at Il Fresco, Orangeburg
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CORRESPONDENCE AND EVENTS



DR'S FLAX & KROPLICK OF WHPS WITH DR. RAVIV BERLIN, PRESENTER AT THE FORUM

PUBLIC FORUM 2018: A GREAT SUCCESS

Lois Kroplick, DO

The topic for the Public Forum 2018 was Understanding and Treatment of Anxiety Disorders. Over 350 people attended the forum at Rockland Community College on October 24, 2018.

This year's Forum was sponsored by NAMI ROCKLAND along with their partners Rockland Community College, Rockland County Department of Mental Health, RC-DBSA and West Hudson Psychiatric Society. Many local colleges such as Dominican College and Rockland Community College sent their students from psychology and nursing classes. The students saw presentations by two great speakers: Dr. Raviv Berlin and Perryn Dutiger.

Dr. Raviv Berlin, is a psychiatrist who is chief of the young adult inpatient psychiatric unit at Zucker Hillside Hospital of Northwell Health. He is a leading expert in the field of psychopharmacology and psychodynamic & behavioral therapy. Some of the anxiety disorders he spoke about were: Generalized Anxiety, Panic Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. His presentation helped the audience to understand the causes and treatment of Anxiety Disorders.

The other speaker, Perryn Dutiger, is a social worker who courageously told her story of years of struggling with a severe anxiety disorder. She has spoken frequently for NAMI Rockland and has done presentations with the program, IN OUR OWN VOICE. Perryn is presently working as a social worker. She is happy to work in the mental health field as she feels she can make a difference in changing people's lives.

During the question and answer period, Dr. Raviv admitted that psychiatrists don't have all the answers for treating anxiety. He welcomes using many different techniques along with medication and therapy. "All hands-on deck" was his way of saying he welcomes various types of treatment including techniques of mindfulness such as meditation.

This was the first year that WHPS became a partner with NAMI and the other organizations. WHPS' leadership and donations were invaluable. It felt great to have my fellow colleagues work with me on making the 2018 Forum a great success

A special thank you to the Forum Steering Committee for all their hard work. This committee included Rena Finkelstein, Sandy Wolf, Carol Olori, Sherry Glickman, Leslie Davis, Michele Katz, Dr. Raj Mehta, Dr. Laura Antar, Bob Donoghue, Tony Dellicarri, Robin Sloboda and myself. Thank you to all the volunteers who gave so generously of their time. Dr. Minh-Duc Huynh, a psychiatric resident from Orange Regional Hospital, was our photographer that night. We all appreciate the photos he took which captured the highlights of the night. We are very grateful to have Inez Rivera and Kathy Carroll for the financial contribution of RCC and for all your help with arrangements and outreach at RCC. Special recognition to members of WHPS and Psychiatric Residents from Orange Regional who volunteered that night.

Due to members retiring and moving out of the area, the Mental Health Coalition wasn't able to continue doing the Forum. NAMI ROCKLAND came through and took the lead role in organizing the forum. Thanks to the Coalition for giving NAMI funds to help run the forum.

In conclusion, the message of the Public Forum is clear. Anxiety disorders, just like medical conditions such as heart disease or diabetes can be treated so you don't have to continue to suffer!

Ulrick Vieux DO, MS wrote of the Jeanne E. Jonas Professional Development Symposium held in Orange County at which the topic of ACE's (adverse childhood experiences) and their adverse sequelae was the topic. The speakers presented a case of a child with ACE's. The ability to see the case from a holistic perspective and see how vital systems of care are when applied effectively was breathtaking. The keynote speaker, Dr. Aykut Ozden (Chairman of Psychiatry- CarePoint Christ Hospital), brilliantly addressed the scourge of Substance Use Disorder and its ramifications within our county and country. (That's Ulrick in the center of the second row).



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADS

The Orange Regional Medical Center (ORMC) GME program is growing exponentially. They anticipate that starting July 1 they will have 73 residents in their 6 GME programs. As a result, the need to be able to refer at risk residents to effective, empathic mental health professionals is great. Due to confidentiality issues many residents may not feel comfortable receiving treatment at Orange Regional Medical Center. ORMC would like a list of therapists that would be willing to see residents as needed. The director of the psychiatric residency program would like to get a list of members of the West Hudson Psychiatric Society that would be willing to see ORMC residents in their private practices. Insurance is Blue Cross/Blue Shield of NY, with varying levels of reimbursement depending on which plan the resident chooses. Please contact:

Ulrick Vieux DO, MS
Psychiatry Residency Program Director/ORMC
Cell #: 845-741-4990/Office #: 845-333-1763

PROJECT TEACH: PERINATAL CONSULTATION

If you practice in New York, you are entitled to online resources including didactic materials, and live consultation from perinatal psychiatrists in our program offered 2x per week. Twice per week, one of our Perinatal Psychiatrists staff a consultation forum via teleconference. At this time, it is only available to NY providers. For more information, please see the attached flyer and the website: <https://projectteachny.org/mmh/>. This initiative is funded by the Office of Mental Health in NY.

APA NEWS & NOTES FOR DB/SAs



News and Notes for APA District Branches/State Associations December 2018

This monthly newsletter is prepared by the APA's Communications Team as a benefit for our District Branches and State Associations. If you have any questions, please contact James Carty at jcarty@psych.org or 202-609-7077.

Want to keep up with APA in between newsletters? Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), ([@APAPsychiatric](#)), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest news and updates.

What's New at the APA

- In the wake of recent popular entertainment portrayals of conversion therapy, the APA reiterated its strong opposition to the harmful and unscientific practice. APA opposes any psychiatric treatment, such as "reparative" or "conversion" therapy, that is based on the false assumption that homosexuality is a mental disorder. You can read more about APA's opposition to conversion therapy [here](#).
- APA and America's Frontline Physicians released a statement opposing the Trump Administration's final rules that will limit contraception access and endanger access to women's preventative care. The final rules undercut women's access to contraception, a

key preventative service. You can read the full statement from APA and America's Frontline Physicians [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

- World AIDS Day 2018 (Dec. 1)
- International Day of People with Disabilities (Dec. 3)
- National Influenza Vaccination Week (Dec. 3 – 9)

December Course of the Month - Functional Neurological Symptom Disorders

In recent years, there has been an explosion of research in the field of neuropsychiatry and renewed interest in understanding related neurocircuits and developing evidence-based treatments for conversion disorder, including cognitive behavior therapy and psychodynamic approaches. This presentation discusses developments in neuropsychiatry and effective strategies in the diagnosis of functional neurological symptom disorder (conversion disorder) for the general psychiatrist. Presented by Sepideh N. Bajestan, M.D., Ph.D., of Stanford University. [Click here to access the Course of the Month and sign up for updates about this free member benefit.](#)

Guide to Navigating Psychiatry Residency in the US for IMGs

APA's Division of Diversity and Health Equity has published a guide to Navigating Psychiatry Residency in the United States for International Medical Graduates (IMGs). This resource includes information on the U.S. Medical Education and Training System, Languages and Communication, Cultural Factors, and Immigration. You can access this resource [here](#).

Renew your Membership for 2019

Thanks to your continued support, we have accomplished a great many of the goals we set this past year. Please renew your membership now and help us continue this important work in the year to come! As a reminder, the deadline to [renew your membership](#) is Dec. 31, 2018. If you have any questions or would like a direct payment link, please contact the APA Membership Department at membership@psych.org or 202-559-3900.

Mental Health Facts for Gay Populations

APA's Division of Diversity and Health Equity has published a fact sheet on Mental Health Disparities in Gay Populations. This resource includes information on Mental health status and disparities, Epidemiology, Mental health status and disparities, Stigma and discrimination and Barriers to accessing mental health services. You can access this fact sheet, as well as other APA fact sheets for diverse populations [here](#).

APA District Branch Leadership & Business Meeting Notes October 31 – November 2, 2018

By: Liz Burnich, West Hudson Executive Director

Approximately 50 of the APA District Branch Executive Directors came together in Washington DC to share best practices and get APA updates. Some of the highlights and takeaways from our meeting were:

- Saul Levin (APA CEO) reported that membership is at an all time high since 2002.
- We had an opportunity to tour the new APA headquarters. There is a special members area where all members visiting the DC area can stop by and use their facilities to work. They also created a new library sponsored by the American Psychiatric Foundation.
- Saul Levin and Altha Stewart, APA President will be hosting a District Branch Presidents and DB Execs Conference call on Wed. November 28.
- APA is hosting an Ethics Workshop Webinar this year on Thursday, Nov 15 from 7-8pm or Saturday, November 17 from 12-1pm. I forwarded the invite to Marc and I signed up for the Thursday webinar. Let me know if anyone else is interested.
- Dr. Levin advised that 80% of our members are not voting in the annual APA election. Some suggestions include putting reminders in newsletters and sending out e-blasts reminders to members, put article in newsletter describing national board positions to educate members of their roles and help them understand the responsibilities and candidates running for those positions. Maybe Assembly Rep can reach out to the candidates to interview them. When sending reminders

e-blasts with the link, remind members that they can watch short videos of the candidates and vote by clicking on the corresponding box. https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/awards-leadership-opportunities/leadership-opportunities/elections?utm_source=Internal-Link&utm_medium=Banner-Row&utm_campaign=2019ElectionPetitionCandidates

- Legislative Issues: reach out to new representatives after Election Day. Scope of practice: psychologists prescribing – it can happen to your state. #MedicalSchoolMatters
- We attended the APA Wreath Laying Ceremony honoring all psychiatrists who served in the Vietnam War at the Vietnam Wall Memorial in the National Mall. This was a touching ceremony attended by many of the veterans from Vietnam War and their families. There were over 100 attendees and included psychiatrists from New York, California and Puerto Rico.
- The Rule of 95 is changing starting in 2022. New categories established are Semi-Retired Category and Retired Category. More information will be provided as the roll-out is established.
- I was asked to participate in a panel discussion on Membership Retention. I presented on our Mentorship Program, our Resident Meet & Greet and some of the things we do to keep our members engaged and cultivate leadership from a small district branch perspective.
- Also, on the topic of membership, APA encouraged the DBs to reach out to different groups to see if they are interested in group membership discounts and incentives.

APA Honors Psychiatrists who Served in Vietnam in Wreath-Laying Ceremony

On Nov. 1, 2018, the American Psychiatric Association held a wreath-laying ceremony at the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. in honor of the service and sacrifice of psychiatrists who served during the Vietnam War.

About 200 psychiatrists served in the Army, Navy and Air Force during the war, roughly two-thirds of whom were citizen soldiers drafted into service. The only known psychiatrist who was killed during the war was U.S. Army Capt. Peter B. Livingston, M.D.

Dr. Livingston's widow, Mrs. Cynthia Livingston, was a guest of honor at the ceremony. She was accompanied by APA CEO and Medical Director Saul Levin, M.D., M.P.A., APA President Altha Stewart, M.D., and APA Assembly Speaker Bob Batterson, M.D., to lay a ceremonial wreath under her husband's name at the Memorial Wall in recognition of his sacrifice at the conclusion of the ceremony.

The event was attended by 150 people, including 17 Vietnam Veterans, veterans from other conflicts, family members, active-duty U.S. Military personnel, and APA Leadership and Assembly members.

The genesis of the event was an action paper that came through the APA Assembly titled "A Call to Recognize and Honor the Psychiatrists Who Served in Vietnam" co-authored by Adam Kaul, M.D., a Representative of the Psychiatric Society of Virginia, and Norman Camp, M.D., an APA member and retired Colonel in the U.S. Army Medical Corps who served in Vietnam.

After the event, a reception was held at APA Headquarters where APA President-elect Bruce Schwartz, M.D., and U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas) delivered remarks to those in attendance.

Here is the link to the highlight video: <https://www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/apa-wreath-laying-ceremony>.



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Mental Health Works is an interesting APA publication addressing mental health and the workplace. If you don't get it, I suggest you find it at the following website and see what you think.
<http://www.workplacementalhealth.org>

If you missed the dinner meeting on genetic testing for psychiatrists, here is a link to the slides from the talk by Jay Lombard, MD, the founder of Genomind.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ullqriwoa37njz/Genomind%20presentation.pptx?dl=0>

At the spring dinner meeting Dan Iosifescu presented a comprehensive review and discussion of therapeutic strategies for treatment resistant depression. A copy of his slides is available here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/qbp3bwczt8dqq/WHPS%2C%20Iosifescu%204.20.18.pdf?dl=0>

USEFUL INFORMATION RESOURCES: Dr. Ferro recently advised me of a useful electronic publication of psychiatric advice – SimpleandPractical.com. This prompted me to think of all the publications I use to keep up to date. I do not use UpToDate.com though I understand it is very useful. I do use the APA publications, including Focus. I am a member of the listservs of Columbia University and multiple PsychoPharm listservs. I receive Amadeo on 4 different topics <http://m.amedeo.com> and Evidence Alerts <http://plus.mcmaster.ca/EvidenceAlerts/> for reviews of recent articles. I pay for The Medical Letter. I read APA News, Psychiatric Times and Clinical Psychiatry News. I sometimes will read Psychiatric Annals as well. I use Epocrates, Google, Wikipedia, WebMD and others daily. As a result of our modern digital resources, I'm thinking of throwing out all the ancient textbooks taking up space on my shelves. I'd be interested in hearing from others about what resources you rely on to keep up to date.

GoodRx.com – a plug for this service I have found useful for patients whose medications are not well covered by their insurance. Sometimes it provides very beneficial coupons and lists the least expensive retail source for a medication. Cash price can be less than co-pays or deductibles.

PRIVATE PRACTICE FEES: Here is a link to a legal public site where you can look up fees for a given zip code. <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 in an emergency. It usually works.

http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/sharesavingsprogram/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. **THIS IS IMPORTANT!** NYSPA is soliciting detailed information on insurance reimbursements to identify fee and reimbursement discrimination in the payment for outpatient mental health services. **The NYSPA Parity Enforcement Project (PEP)**

NYSPA is rolling out its newest Parity Enforcement Project initiative to identify fee and reimbursement discrimination in the payment for outpatient mental health services. NYSPA has prepared two Request Forms - one for in-network services and one for out-of-network services - and a set of instructions for using the Request Forms. You will note that the instructions have been prepared for use for non-psychiatrists because these forms can be used by anyone who has health insurance through a job, through ACA or a Medicare or Medicaid managed care plan. We urge every psychiatrist who has health insurance coverage to submit either an in-network form or both forms (if you have out-of-network coverage). Anyone with health insurance can submit the forms regardless of whether they have received, are receiving or expect to receive treatment for mental illness. The forms do not require the disclosure of any individual medical information and the responses will not include any medical information. These forms can be widely disseminated to individuals receiving treatment and support groups for patients. The key is that NYSPA needs to review the responses in order to identify evidence of discriminatory coverage. The forms can be downloaded from the NYSPA website by [clicking here](#). Please join us in participating in this effort to identify and root out reimbursement discrimination in the treatment of mental illness.

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.

Mandatory Prescriber Education in NY after 7/1/17

Prescribers licensed in New York to treat humans and who have a DEA registration number to prescribe controlled substances, as well as medical residents who prescribe controlled substances under a facility DEA registration number, must complete at least three (3) hours of course work or training in pain management, palliative care, and addiction by July 1, 2017.

Practitioners must notify the Department of Health that they have completed the educational requirements by submitting an attestation online.

Click on the following links for more information and guidance.

- [Mandatory Prescriber Education Guidance](#) (PDF)
- [Frequently Asked Questions - Updated June 2017](#) (PDF)
- [Attestation Process](#)
- Prescribers can access three hours of free course work covering the eight required topic areas, sponsored by NYSDOH, from the University of Buffalo* at [Opioid Prescriber Training Program](#).

Weekend Psychiatry/Psychotherapy Office for Rent

Route 45, Pomona, Shared Waiting Room, Wheelchair Accessible, Wall-to-Wall Windows,

- Private Bath, Full Sound Insulation, Separate Entrance/Exit
 - Call Lorraine Schorr (845) 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.
-

**Welcome to the Rockland County
Chapter of the Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance Come join
our Mood Disorder, Friends &
Family and Under 30 share
groups on Thursday nights** from 6:30 to 8:30 pm
We've been there. We

can help. Together we share and seek understanding and acceptance of the situations surrounding Bipolar Disorder, Depression, other Mood Disorders and Dual Diagnosis. Through frank and open discussion, compassion, real and true support, the members of the Rockland Chapter of DBSA have come together to create a cohesive unit that is vibrant and alive and offers hope and the means to help people help themselves. This group should be a welcomed part of your wellness program, and if you are a family member, or friend of an individual dealing with a Mood Disorder the same applies.

**Peer-to-Peer support is a proven
path to recovery and wellness.** If you
are looking for a place, for people who truly want to help you help
yourself to change your life, waste no more time, look no further,
we'd love to meet you.

are held from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at **Dominican
College Forkel Hall, 470 Western Highway, Orangeburg, NY 10962**

**Any questions contact: Tony at 845-422-2084 or
Brian at 845-300-1343 Email us at: dbsa.rockland@gmail.com** To
learn more about our next meeting, or to RSVP, please [visit our group on
Meetup.com](#). There is no fee for attending the support group.

NEW YORK STATE PSYCHIATRIC POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE, INC.
400 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 202
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK 11530

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