

# American Psychiatric Association



**Area 1, Robert Pyles, M.D.**

**Area 2, Glenn Martin, M.D.**

**Area 3, Eliot Sorel, M.D., Chair**

**Area 4, Shastri Swaminathan, M.D.**

**Area 5, Priscilla Ray, M.D.**

**Area 6, Melinda Young, M.D.**

**Area 7, Jason Hunziker, M.D.**

**MIT, Paul O'Leary, M.D.**

**M/UR, Eric Williams, M.D.**

**ECP, Hind Benjelloun, M.D.**

**AAOL, Rachel Glick, M.D.**

APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

Fall 2009

# American Psychiatric Association



## Executive Summary

APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

Fall 2009

## APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

In June 2009, Dr. Gary Weinstein, APA Assembly Speaker, appointed four work groups designated to attend to four specific tasks. They were to focus on *Communication, Leadership Training, Model District Branch and Assembly Remodeling*. The work groups' due date for their final reports was set for 30 October 2009.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to our Speaker for inviting us to serve and our thanks to our excellent Leadership Training Work Group for its superb team work and excellent product delivered.

### Mission

- Develop a comprehensive set of optional training and mentoring expectations for each new Assembly member, and for current members who wish to participate. This would extend to DB President-Elects also.
- Utilize current training such as media training, and other public affairs instruction.
- Work through the Area Councils to monitor progress.

### Membership

**Area 1**, Robert Pyles, M.D.

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## Content & Process

We worked via the internet and conference calls and developed our Assembly's *leadership training and mentoring* model with a focus on **knowledge, skills** and **attitudes**. It was done through four distinct but well integrated modules, as follows:

- ***Orientation & Governance (Module1)***
- ***Communications (Module2)***
- ***Finances & Management (Module 3)***
- ***Advocacy & Policy (Module 4)***

## Outcomes

Enclosed you will find the complete leadership and mentoring model proposed for our Assembly members, new and not so new, also made available to our DB Presidents-Elect.

## Special Thanks

Many thanks also to our APA Finance Committee, Council on Advocacy & Government Relations, the Office of Communications & Public Affairs and our Assembly staff who offered our LTWG invaluable support and guidance.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliot Sorel, M.D., D.L.F.A.P.A.

October 29, 2009

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American Psychiatric Association



# **MODULE 1**

## **Orientation & Governance**

APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

Fall 2009

## Introduction to the APA Orientation & Governance Module

Created as a curriculum for leadership development, the module includes **knowledge** of the organization's governance, as well as, **skills** and attitudes needed to get things accomplished. The majority of the module is knowledge based and covers the structure and function of all APA leadership roles. Furthermore, the module presents an organizational chart of the APA and APA staffer's roles and their contact information. The hope is for future leaders to use this document as a reference.

Additionally, the section on **skills** provides insight into how the APA Governance functions with a walk through of how an idea becomes an action. Finally the **attitudes** section is to help keep things in perspective. Highlighting the fact there are many different ways to accomplish ones goals.

Sincerely,

The Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

## APA Governance Made Simple

APA governance can be very confusing for newcomers (and even for experienced APA members). This chapter is meant to serve as an introduction to its fundamental structure and basic functioning. Please refer to the APA Governance Structure chart on the next page for diagrammatic representation of what is described here.

The APA is governed by the Board of Trustees (BOT), a body of officers, both nationally and regionally elected by the members of the APA. It consists of the following members:

### Voting members

- President
- President-Elect
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- 2 immediate past presidents
- Speaker of the Assembly
- Trustee-at-Large
- 7 Area Trustees
- Speaker-Elect of the Assembly
- Early-Career Psychiatrist (ECP) Trustee-at-large
- Member-in-Training Trustee

### Non-voting members

- past presidents, elected prior to 2000 (grandfathered in)
- Member-in Training Trustee-Elect (MITTE)
- representatives (chairs) of CORF, BMS and Minority Fellowships

Underneath the BOT are two major branches of the APA: the Components and the Assembly of the District Branches.

The Components consist of a number of subject-specific work groups, created by the President and the President nominates its members. The components advise the BOT on how to best govern the APA. The Components include 8 standing Committees (e.g. Finance & Budget Committee, Membership Committee, Joint Reference Committee, etc.) and 9 Councils focused on various significant areas of the field of psychiatry (Addiction Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, etc.). Many of the components have their own subordinate Committees and Work Groups. Furthermore the president can create any ad hoc committees, Task Forces, or Work Groups as he or she deems necessary. The BOT may also charge the Components with specific tasks.

The Assembly is a body consisting of regionally elected representatives. It represents, serves, and brings to the attention of the BOT the needs and concerns of the association's district branches. The Assembly also holds sole authority to author and vote on Action Papers, essentially bills that call for certain action(s) by the APA. The Action Papers that the Assembly passes are referred to the Joint Reference Committee

(JRC), who can either forward them to the BOT for review and implementation or to the components for expert review. The Assembly also has subordinate committees.

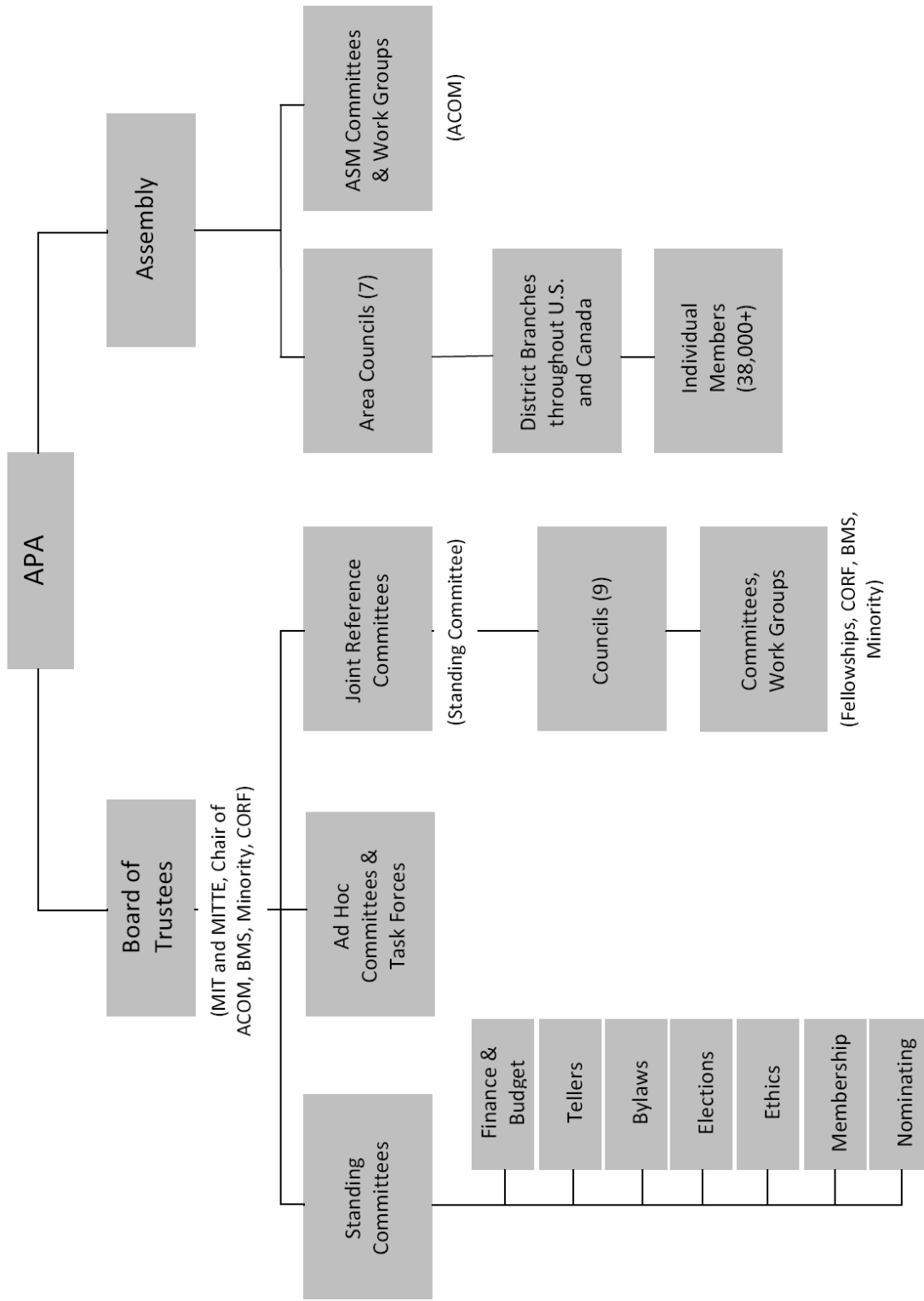
Assembly Executive Committee (AEC) is charged to act for the Assembly between Assembly meetings as well as promote the interest and decisions of the Assembly within the rest of the APA. It evolves strategies to enhance the implementation of the Assembly actions by APA components. It deals with the various interactions of the Assembly and the BOT and JRC and assists the Speaker with planning for Assembly meetings and helps develop policies about the Assembly. The AEC consists of the three Assembly officers, the two immediate Past Speakers, the Area Reps and Deputy Area Reps as well as the chair of the MUR, MIT, ECP and AAOL Committees, the Parliamentarian and the Medical Director. The AEC is chaired by the Speaker.

The Joint Reference Committee (JRC) is a unique, standing committee of the BOT that acts as a coordinator of all the issues and concerns of the BOT, the Components, and the Assembly. The JRC provides administrative oversight for the Components and is likened to a relay station that refers issues for study to the appropriate Components, sends recommendations to the BOT and Assembly for consideration, and reviews and forwards Action Papers between the Assembly and the BOT

In addition, the Medical Director and Chief Executive Officer (one position) reports directly to the BOT. He or she is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization and implementation of the BOT's decisions, but is not a member of the BOT

The September Components meetings, held in the Washington D.C. area each year, is the site where the various councils and committees underneath the BOT meet to discuss the year's agenda. The Assembly meets twice a year (May and November) to discuss their agenda and the action papers put forward by its members. The BOT meets (usually September, December, March, and May). All of these meetings are open to all APA members, except for executive sessions and the Committee on Ethics sessions that are confidential.

### APA Governance Structure



# The Assembly

## **W**hat is the Assembly?

The Assembly Committee of Area Members-in-Training Representatives (ACOM) provides Assembly representation for members of the American Psychiatric Association who are enrolled in psychiatric residency and fellowship training programs. Committee members are elected by their Area Councils and serve two sequential one-year terms: the first as Area Member-in-Training (MIT) Deputy Representative and the second as Area MIT Representative. Area MIT Representatives are voting members of the Assembly while Deputy Representatives are not. ACOM meets twice a year at the same time as the Assembly, as well as via monthly conference calls. ACOM members also serve on a number of Assembly committees, including the Rules Committee, Reference committees, the Assembly Executive Committee, and the Assembly Committee of Planning.

## **What does the Assembly do?**

ACOM Representatives and Deputy Representatives serve as:

- A reference and referral group for the Assembly when seeking input on actions or proposed actions affecting MITs.
- A national group that represents MIT interests in the APA.
- A voice regarding issues before the Assembly and Area Councils.
- A way MITs can submit Action Papers to the assembly.

## **ACOM FAQ:**

### ➤ **How often and where does the Assembly Assemble?**

- The whole meets twice a year, and each area meets twice a year.
- There are two national meetings where the whole assembly meets. The first meeting occurs during November each year in Washington D.C. The second starts one day before the Annual APA meeting each year and is held wherever the Annual meeting is being held. Both last three days usually starting on a Friday and ending on Sunday.
- In addition to the Assembly meetings, each Area meets twice a year, a fall meeting and a spring meeting. These can be held the day before the Assembly meetings or a month or two before the assembly meetings; the exact date and location is decided by the individual areas.

➤ **What's a typical day like at the assembly?**

- |          |                   |                              |
|----------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| • Friday | 11:30am – 12:50pm | Area Council Meetings        |
| • Friday | 1:00pm – 2:00pm   | Plenary Session 1            |
| • Friday | 2:15pm – 4:30pm   | Reference Committee Meetings |
| • Friday | 7:00pm – 9:00pm   | Group Dinner Meetings        |
| • Friday | 9:00pm – 11:00pm  | PAC Suite Opens              |

➤ **Who attends the meetings?**

- Two MITs from each Area, two members from each state, two members from each Area, the Speaker, chairpersons of each Area, committee chairs, Trustees, President and other executive officials and a number of other reps attend the Assembly, which totals to roughly 180-250 psychiatrists who are members of the Assembly.

➤ **How do you communicate with other Members in your area?**

- Email, website, phone – District Branches from the Area are welcome to contact their Area representative whenever they have an issue to bring to the Assembly.

➤ **How are you reimbursed for travel and lodging?**

- APA has a travel agent for flight and lodging. Members should email the travel agent contact for information prior to the meetings. Meals are reimbursed, so long as they total less than the per diem, roughly \$50. Members keep their receipts for food and conference-related expenses, and after the conference they fill out a reimbursement form that can be faxed or mailed to the APA.

## Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

AAOL:	<i>Assembly Allied Organization Liaison</i>
ACOM:	<i>Assembly Committee of Members-in-Training Group of MITs representing and elected by the seven Areas</i>
Action Paper:	<i>A written document presented in the Assembly proposing new policies, positions, or procedures for the APA</i>
Area:	<i>Geographic sector of the APA membership; seven in total</i>
Area Council:	<i>Council elected by local members to represent their geographic sector of the APA membership</i>
Assembly:	<i>Assembly of the District Branches - regionally elected representatives of the members of the seven Areas of the APA</i>
BOT:	<i>Board of Trustees Nationally and regionally elected. Executive body of the APA, with fiduciary responsibility for the Association.</i>
Caucus:	<i>Self-selected group of psychiatrists with a common subspecialty interest or background not otherwise/already represented within the APA; can be formed under the Councils or the Assembly</i>
Committee:	<i>A group established reporting to a Council to perform which on-going duties of the Council or the APA at large. "Standing Committees" are those committees which report directly to the Board of Trustees, whose charge is detailed within the APA bylaws.</i>
Component:	<i>Generic term encompassing any of the Councils, Committees, Task Forces, etc. of the APA. Usually specifying those that report to the BOT (not those within the Assembly)</i>
CORF:	<i>Committee of Residents and Fellows A Component of the BOT comprised of MITs nominated by the President to focus on and communicate the needs of MITs</i>
Corresponding Committee:	<i>Committee appointed by the APA president which does not meet at the Fall Components meeting; rather meets via email and telephone correspondence</i>

Consent Calendar:	<i>List of Action Papers that are deemed non-controversial and slated to be approved without Assembly discussion or debate</i>
Council:	<i>An umbrella component that reports to the Joint Reference Committee designated to an area of the field of psychiatry with its own subordinate Committees</i>
Deputy Representative:	<i>Non-voting representative of one of the seven Areas in the Assembly, in-line to become a voting member of the Assembly</i>
District Branch:	<i>Regional unit of the APA within an Area, usually representing either an entire state or a region of a state depending on extent of membership or population in that area</i>
JRC:	<i>Joint Reference Committee Specific standing committee under the BOT that serves as a coordinating relay station that appropriately refers issues for study, evaluation, and approval amongst the Board of Trustees, the Components, and the Assembly</i>
MIT:	<i>Member-in-Training Any member of the APA in psychiatric postgraduate training (resident or fellow—not medical school students)</i>
MITT:	<i>Member-in-Training Trustee Elected voting MIT on the BOT of the APA</i>
MITTE:	<i>Member-in-Training Trustee Elect Elected non-voting MIT on the BOT of the APA, in-line to becoming MITT</i>
M/UR:	<i>Minorities/Under Represented</i>
Task Force:	<i>Special group established under the BOT with a specific, time-limited task that ultimately reports its conclusions directly to the BOT</i>
Work Group:	<i>Group established within a Council to work on projects of short duration, funded from the council budget.</i>

### APA Resources for Members

Free **American Journal of Psychiatry**, both hard copy and online, with online reference searching capacity

Free **Psychiatric Services** (on request)

Free **Psychiatric News**, both hard copy and online, with online reference searching capacity

Affordable registration to spring Annual Meeting and fall Institute on Psychiatric Services - 70% less than general member registration

25% discount on books and journals from American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc.

Free Psychiatry Residents' Newsletter with news about issues important to residents

Free **A Resident's Guide to Surviving Psychiatric Training**

Free online access to **Practice Management for Early Career Psychiatrists**

Receive a FREE Copy of **Advancing DSM Dilemmas in Psychiatric Diagnosis**

Eligibility for APA awards, fellowships, travel scholarships and research opportunities

Free "members only" electronic newsletters on advocacy activity and member benefits

Unlimited access to APA's Web site and "Members Corner" at [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org), an invaluable professional resource

APA Job Bank

Free access to ePocrates

**FOCUS, the Journal of Lifelong Learning in Psychiatry**, covers topics in psychiatry, offers CME with each quarterly issue, and provides an annual self-assessment exam. APA members receive a special discount on subscription rates. (free to members of the 100% club)

APAPRO: Psychotherapy Rounds online. To join, email [CCope@psych.org](mailto:CCope@psych.org)

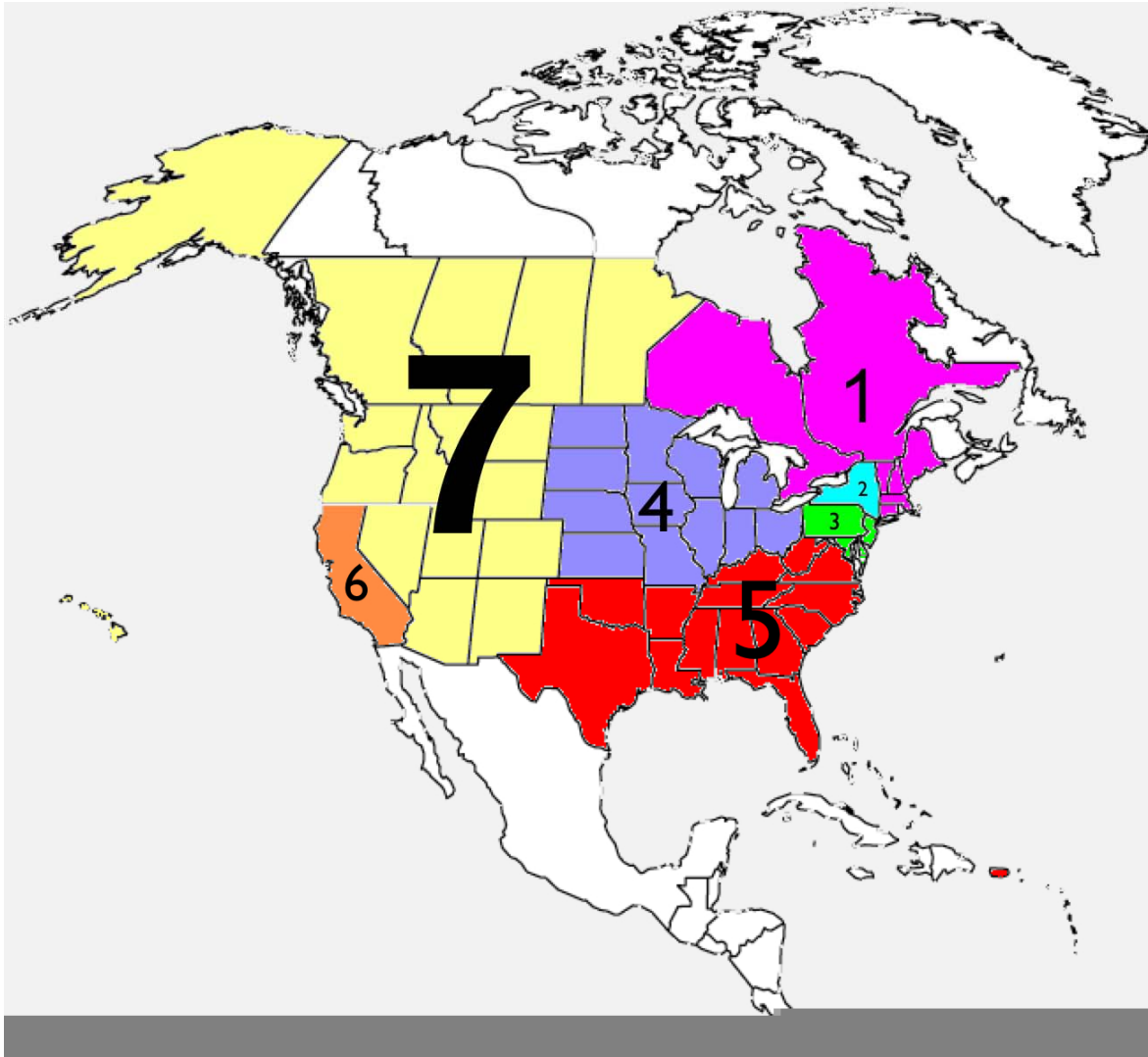
For more information about these resources and many other visit [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)

**CONTACTS:**

**Staff Contacts at the American Psychiatric Association**

APA general	703-907-7300 888-357-7924	<a href="mailto:apa@psych.org">apa@psych.org</a>
Membership	703-907-7355	<a href="http://www.psych.org">www.psych.org</a>
American Psychiatric Publishing	800-368-5777	<a href="mailto:appi@psych.org">appi@psych.org</a> <a href="http://www.appi.org">www.appi.org</a>

Map of the Areas in the APA



## **AREAS OF THE APA**

(By State or Territory)

### AREA 1

Connecticut  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
Ontario  
Quebec and Eastern Canada  
(Nova Scotia, New Brunswick,  
Newfoundland, Prince Edward Is.)  
Rhode Island  
Vermont

### AREA 2

New York

### AREA 3

Delaware  
Maryland (excluding suburban Maryland)  
New Jersey  
Pennsylvania  
Washington, DC  
(City of Washington, suburban Maryland,  
Northern Virginia)

### AREA 4

Illinois  
Indiana  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Missouri  
Nebraska  
North Dakota  
Ohio  
South Dakota  
Wisconsin

### AREA 5

Alabama  
Arkansas  
Florida  
Georgia  
Kentucky  
Louisiana  
Mississippi  
North Carolina  
Oklahoma  
Puerto Rico  
South Carolina  
Tennessee  
Texas  
Virginia (excluding Northern Virginia)  
West Virginia  
Uniformed Services

### AREA 6

California

### AREA 7

Alaska  
Arizona  
Colorado  
Hawaii  
Idaho  
Montana  
Nevada  
New Mexico  
Oregon  
Utah  
Washington  
Wyoming  
Western Canada (Alberta,  
British Columbia, Manitoba,  
Saskatchewan)

## *American Psychiatric Association*

### **Skills for a Successful term in the APA Governance**

- Spend time getting to know other members
- Spend time understanding the APA Institutional Memory
- Get to know the APA Staffers
- Join the PAC and visit the PAC Suite
- Understand the stages of an action paper (AC)
  - Conception
    - Something fairly concrete and realistic works best
  - Editing
    - Review '08 or later action papers for new style guidelines
  - Gathering Co-Editors to review
  - Reviewing the Action Paper with your Area
  - Review the Action Paper with an APA Staffer
    - Good to discuss with staffer whose job the AC will impact
    - Discuss with Budget folks to get a cost estimate
  - Submit Action Paper before Deadline
  - Gather support from other Areas and Groups for the AC
  - Ask a member of Rules Committee (committee talks 1 month before assembly)
    - See about getting the AC placed on Consent Calendar
    - Suggest which Reference Committee it might go to
  - If assigned to Reference Committee
    - Plan on attending to explain the AC
    - They may make amendments
  - Be present at the Assembly when your paper is being discussed
    - Be ready to speak in favor of your paper
    - Plan to have other speak in favor of your paper as well
  - Once the AC passes then talk with JRC to get paper passed to BOT
    - Process greatly sped up if all the components who review the topics that your action paper involves have already reviewed and support paper.
  - Once the AC gets sent to the BOT,
    - Make sure you have support on the BOT for your AC
    - BOT Area Trustees have a vote and a voice.
      - If your area supports the AC then make sure your area BOT Trustee can speak clearly about the importance of your AC.
  - BOT passes AC into Action.
  - APA Staffers implement the AC

## Attitudes for a successful term in the APA Governance

- **You are the voice of the membership in the APA Governance**
  - Help members be heard at District Branch meetings
  - Ask for members input about local and national issues
  - Help members craft ideas so they can be presented at the Area meeting and at the National meetings.
  
- **You are the face of National leadership when at Home**
  - Talk about the Assembly with your District Branch
  - Help members understand the issues
  - Explaining the process is sometimes the best way to understand the process.
  
- **Use the Assembly to collaborate with colleagues**
  - District Branches are all facing the same problems
  - Often Assembly folks can help develop a good solution
  
- **Get involved**
  - Best way to learn about the assembly is to volunteer for positions

American Psychiatric Association



## **MODULE 2**

# **Communications**

APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

Fall 2009

## Introduction to the APA Communications Module

We anticipate the *Communications Module of the APA Assembly Leadership Training Workgroup* (LTWG) will serve as a critical, steadfast resource for outreach efforts by Assembly leaders to various entities within our mental health community. This module will allow leaders to have a clear understanding of the assortment of communications avenues within the Assembly and the APA and enable them with the aptitude to communicate effectively.

Consistent with the modules within the LTWG, *Communications* is divided into ***Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes***. Under *Knowledge*, our module highlights both the Office of Communications and Public Affairs and the Office of Healthcare Systems and Finances, detailing the wealth of communication channels available through these two APA bodies. In addition, the *Knowledge* portion reviews additional modes of communication with the APA and the Assembly, including listservs and news releases. The *Skills* section of our *Communications Module* emphasizes the importance of gaining the skills essential for communications through the media to our patients, our physicians, and our profession. The module closes with *Attitudes*, which encourages communications to strongly contribute to the elimination of shame, stigma, and discrimination within our profession.

A thank you to the APA Office of Communications and Public Affairs Membership for their assistance and resources, and to Dr. Sorel for his excellent leadership as the Chair of our LTWG.

## Knowledge

- The American Psychiatric Association (APA) Office of Communications & Public Affairs (OCPA) develops and disseminates information to the news media about APA policies, programs and activities, as well as public information on psychiatry and its impact on those suffering from mental illnesses. OCPA communicates with members and the general public through a variety of venues
  - [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org),
  - The APA Annual Report
    - The APA Annual Report summarizes the work, initiatives and accomplishments for the association over the course of the year and discloses the financial health of the association  
<http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/AnnualReports.aspx>
  - Newsletters
    - APA Member Update  
<http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/APAMemberDBSAResources/Copy%20of%20MemberUpdate.aspx>
    - APPI News  
  
<http://www.appi.org/appinews.cfx>
    - APA Advocacy Newsletter  
[http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/AdvocacyGovernmentRelations/GovernmentRelations/RushNotesAPAsWeeklyAdvocacyNewsletter\\_1.aspx](http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/AdvocacyGovernmentRelations/GovernmentRelations/RushNotesAPAsWeeklyAdvocacyNewsletter_1.aspx)
    - Psychiatric Research Report  
<http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Research/PsychiatricResearchReport.aspx>
    - Mental HealthWorks

[http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/news/mental\\_healthworks\\_newsletter.aspx](http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/news/mental_healthworks_newsletter.aspx)

- NIDA Notes

[http://www.nida.nih.gov/NIDA\\_notes/NNIndex.html](http://www.nida.nih.gov/NIDA_notes/NNIndex.html)

- The American Psychiatric Association's **Office of Healthcare Systems and Financing (OHSF)** communicates issues pertaining to the financing of and access to mental health treatment.

<http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/AdvocacyGovernmentRelations/FinancingHealthcare.aspx>

- OHSF's outreach is outlined below:
  - With **Payers** (public and private): OHSF is responsible for developing and maintaining working relationships with payers both public and private to ensure that patients have access to appropriate mental health care.
  - With **AMA**: OHSF coordinates the activities of APA's representatives to the AMA CPT Editorial Panel where CPT codes are developed; and to the AMA RUC (RVS Update Committee), which determines the payment levels for the procedures defined by CPT codes.
  - With **Business**: OHSF works with private sectors payers of health care – businesses – through the Partnership for Workplace Mental Health. See [www.workplacementalhealth.org](http://www.workplacementalhealth.org) to access materials focused on outreaching to businesses to improve the mental health of employees and their families.
  - For the **Underserved**: OHSF, working with an APA Board-appointed task force, has developed an online clearinghouse with information for psychiatrists practicing in psychiatrically underserved areas.

- Highlight modes of communication within the Assembly and APA.
  - Listservs
    - The Office of Ethics and District Branch/State Association Relations hosts three listservs for district branch/state associations. These listservs are sponsored by the APA and are used to exchange information to make the role of President/President-Elect, executive staff and Ethics Chair easier. The listserv is also used by various departments within the APA to pass along important information to the district branches.
      - District Branch Presidents and Presidents-Elect
      - District Branch Executive Staff
      - District Branch Ethics Chairs
    - Member to Member Listserv  
<http://www.psych.org/Resources/Membership/ListServFAQS.aspx>
  - Directory of District Branches and Executive Directors  
<http://www.psych.org/dblisting/>
  - The Action Paper
  - Communication with the public
    - News releases:  
<http://psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/NewsReleases.aspx>

## Skills

- APA Media Training Program  
<http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/APAMemberDBSAResources/MediaTrainingProgram.aspx>
  - Building relationships with local media
  - Message development
  - Preparing and managing media interviews
- Template News Releases  
[http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/APAMemberDBSAResources/TemplateNewsReleases\\_1.aspx](http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/APAMemberDBSAResources/TemplateNewsReleases_1.aspx)
  - Women's Mental Health
  - New Year's Resolutions and Taking Charge of Your Mental Health
  - National Suicide Prevention Week
  - National Hispanic Heritage Month
  - College Mental health
  - Children's Mental Health Doesn't Take a Summer Break
- Media Toolkits  
[http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/APAMemberDBSAResources/MediaOutreachToolkits\\_1.aspx](http://www.psych.org/MainMenu/Newsroom/APAMemberDBSAResources/MediaOutreachToolkits_1.aspx)
  - NY Plane Crash Outreach Kit
  - General Scope of Practice Outreach Kit
  - Enactment of Mental Health Parity Law Talking Points
  - Financial Stress and Mental Health Talking Points
  - Iowa Tornado Outreach Kit
  - College Violence Talking Points
  - Mental Health Parity Outreach Kit
  - University Shooting in IL Outreach Kit
  - Mental Health Parity Outreach Kit
  - Nebraska Mall Shooting Outreach Kit
  - PBS Frontline: The Medicated Child Documentary Outreach Kit

## **Attitudes**

- Our priority is our patients and we strive to eliminate the stigma and end discrimination against our patients and our profession.
  - Competence
  - Professionalism
  - Positive pride in our profession

American Psychiatric Association



**MODULE 3**  
**Finances & Management**

APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

Fall 2009

## Introduction to the APA Finances & Management Module

The APA is able to serve patients, the public and its members by careful management of our resources. This includes dedicated members, innovative, well informed leadership, strong District Branches and sound management & fiscal management.

This module addresses the basic **FINANCES & MANAGEMENT** issues of our APA, essential for assembly members and district branches/state associations effective leadership. Once the reader has been *oriented* to the **Governance & Structure** of the APA (**Module 1** above), our **Module 3** acquaints leaders with the complex financial and tax structure of the APA and its associated components. Management issues needed to keep the APA and District Branches financially sound are then explored.

The issues recommended for discussion include, understanding the budgeting constraints and processes of the APA organization and the APA Assembly. Descriptions of the role of the District Branches and specific topics designed to increase personnel and financial management skills for District Branch presidents are also included.

## **Knowledge**

1. Explanation of the APA Budget process
  - a. Role of APA Budget Committee
  - b. Role of APA Treasurer
  - c. Role of APA Board of Trustees
  - d. Role of CFO
  - e. Role of Executive Director/CEO
  - f. Discussion of APA Finances. See suggested topics below
  
2. Explanation of APA Assembly Budget process
  - a. Role of APA Board of Trustees
  - b. Role of Assembly Executive Committee
  - c. Role of Area Councils
  
3. Description of Role of District Branches
  - a. Conformance to APA Bylaws
  - b. Conformance to State laws
  - c. Individuality in budget and management
  - d. See topics below
  - e. Taxes/regulatory requirements
  
4. Management issues for DB Presidents
  - a. Management of District Branch staff
  - b. Meetings management
  - c. Member recruitment/retention

## **Suggested Speakers**

1. Explanation of the APA Budget process
  - a. Chairman, APA Budget Committee
  - b. APA Treasurer
  - c. APA President or Trustee
  - d. APA CFO
  - e. APA Executive Director/CEO
  - f. APA CFO
  
2. Explanation of APA Assembly Budget process
  - a. APA Assembly Speaker or Recorder
  - b. APA President or Trustee
  - c. APA Assembly Speaker
  - d. APA Assembly Area Representative
  
3. Description of Role of District Branches
  - a. Chair/Representative DB/SA Executive Staff
  - b. DB/SA Executive Staff Chair/Rep
  - c. DB/SA Executive Staff Chair/Rep
  - d. DB/SA Executive Staff Chair/Rep
  - e. DB/SA Executive Staff Chair/Rep
  
4. Management issues for DB Presidents
  - a. DB President/ Assembly Speaker
  - b. DB/SA President volunteer
  - c. APA Assembly Speaker
  - d. APA Membership committee chair

## APA Finances & Management Made Simple

- A. Suggested topics for discussion of APA Finances
1. Major sources of APA revenue streams
  2. Significant changes in revenue streams especially over the last 18 months
    - a. Impact of economy on reserve balances
    - b. Significant decrease in advertising revenue and its impact
    - c. Impact of decrease in the number of industry-sponsored symposium at Annual Meeting
  3. Goals of adequate reserve balance (true for most 501 (c) organizations)
    - a. Goal of a reserve balance to cover one year of operating expenses
    - b. Options for new or existing activities/programs if funding is lost/ decreased
    - c. Options to buy a building when existing lease expires in future
    - d. Option to fund development of DSM VI in future
  4. APA corporate structure with a 501 c-6 and three 501 c-3 corporations and how reserve pools are split between c(6) and c(3) with restrictions
  5. Ongoing annual review of existing activities/programs to prevent demise of reserve pool and need for thoughtful program review at all levels of APA
- B. Suggested topics for District Branch/State Association budget and management.
1. Need for all levels of APA leadership to consider ways to provide more efficient services to benefit APA membership
  2. Consideration of design of District Branches/State Associations (C3 vs C6) .
  3. Personnel management including a discussion about defining staff job descriptions, recruitment, etc. Alternate strategies such as the use of temporary consultants or hired management services would also be addressed.

4. Establishment of appropriate financial oversight, including appropriate financial safeguards with check signing, use of credit cards, audit controls, etc.

American Psychiatric Association



**MODULE 4**  
**Advocacy & Policy**

APA Assembly Leadership Training Work Group

Fall 2009

## Introduction to the APA Advocacy & Policy Module

### **KNOWLEDGE**

The APA is the voice of American psychiatry. APA advocacy initiatives encompass the legislative/regulatory, political, psychiatric practice and communications arenas at national, state and local levels.

Four sections within the APA work toward the promotion of the APA's advocacy goals:

1. The Department of Government Relations (DGR)
2. The Office of Communications and Public Affairs (OCPA)
3. The Political Action Committee (APAPAC)
4. The Office of Healthcare Systems and Financing (OHSF)

This section of the module fully describes each advocacy-related department or office within the APA. Additionally, the extensive resources available through the DGR and OCPA are referenced.

### **SKILLS AND METHODS OF ADVOCACY**

The skills and methods of effective advocacy, for both oral and written communication, are introduced and explained in this section of the module.

These are organized by the APA's "targets" of communication:

1. Policymakers nationally, at the state level and locally
2. The media
3. The public (directly)
4. Other psychiatrists
5. Non-psychiatrist physicians within the House of Medicine

The extensive resources of the APA are described and referenced.

### **ATTITUDES**

This section addresses the need to begin advocacy work before the apparent need arises, so that psychiatrists will be seen within the context of trusted and respected colleagues. It also addresses the importance of political activism.

## Knowledge

“**Advocacy**” is defined as publicly supporting or recommending a particular cause or policy. In psychiatry, we advocate on behalf of mental health, mental illness, our patients and the professional practice of psychiatry.

As psychiatric physicians, we naturally advocate on behalf of psychiatry in our professional working lives. Beyond the office and the hospital, we do this by educating policymakers and the public and by recommending and supporting policies consistent with our training and our ethical concerns as psychiatric physicians.

Our voice is intensified and reinforced by organized and coordinated advocacy. Locally, District Branches have committees dedicated to government affairs and public affairs. Nationally, the APA’s Department of Government Relations, the Office of Communications and Public Affairs, the Political Action Committee, and the Office of Healthcare Systems and Financing carry out these vital functions.

Additionally, we engage lobbyists to champion our causes. **Lobbyists** help us craft our messages, educate us on the most effective ways to promote and support our causes, and speak for us with policymakers when we cannot be present to speak for ourselves.

Examples of successful APA Advocacy include:

- The successful campaign for full parity for mental health and substance use disorders – The Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equality Act of 2008 – that ends health insurance benefits inequality between mental health/substance use disorders and medical/surgical benefits.

Unfortunately, our work is not yet complete; this act only affects group health plans with more than 50 employees, and only affects those plans that offer mental health benefits. An additional peril is that psychiatry may not be able to fulfill expectations created by this Act. Presently, there are not enough psychiatrists to provide all the newly mandated coverage.

- Successful campaigns to increase awareness of mental health issues and to decrease the stigma associated with mental illness.
- Successful programs in suicide prevention.
- Successful advocacy for increasing access to psychiatric services in mental health professional shortage areas through eligibility for psychiatrists for Loan Repayment Awards via two-year commitments to service in the National Health Service Corps.

Advocacy work is never done. Our work is incomplete, and potential cuts to mental health funding and mental health services always loom larger in times of financial crisis.

Assembly members, District Branch officers, and APA members in general are urged to understand and participate in our advocacy efforts.

## ADVOCACY AT THE APA

The APA is the voice of psychiatry. APA advocacy initiatives encompass the legislative/regulatory, political, psychiatric practice and communications arenas at national, state and local levels.

There are four sections within the APA which work toward the promotion of the APA's advocacy goals, each of which has its own website, easily accessed through the APA's Advocacy website.

- The Department of Government Relations (DGR)
- The Office of Communications and Public Affairs (OCPA)
- The Political Action Committee (APAPAC)
- The Office of Healthcare Systems and Financing (OHSF)

To visit the Advocacy website, go to:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy

From there, choose which section you wish to visit. You will need to log in for some sites.

### 1. DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS:

The **Department of Government Relations (DGR)** works to ensure that APA delivers a consistent and focused message to policymakers, the media and the public. Staff within the Department of Government Relations continually work to shape federal and state legislation and regulations of concern to psychiatry, psychiatrists, and our patients.

In Washington, the DGR advises Congress, the White House, and federal agencies on the APA's positions and priorities; facilitates communication between psychiatrists and their legislators; and works with the APA Political Action Committee (APAPAC) in its support of federal candidates who will best represent psychiatry's interests.

Around the country, the DGR provides resource assistance to District Branches and State Associations and Societies on state legislative and regulatory topics; tracks key health care legislation; serves as a clearinghouse for best lobbying practices and model legislation; and provides on-site strategic assistance and grassroots training.

On the website for this Department you will find:

- [Current Legislative Fact Sheets](#) for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress
- [Minds Online](#) (an advocacy blog)
- [Advocacy Action Center](#) (allows you to look up your Members of Congress to tell them how mental health issues affect you and your patients)
- [Advocacy Highlights](#) (of mental health-related issues currently before Congress)
- [APA on the Issues](#) (information on a variety of legislative issues affecting psychiatry today)
- [Archives](#) (material from before 2006, and APA testimony and Legislative Fact Sheets from the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress)
- [Currently in Congress](#) (current and pending mental health-related Congressional legislation)
- [Health Reform](#) (outlining current health reform initiatives, including a Health Reform Fact Sheet)
- [Join APA Grassroots Network](#) (keeps APA members up to date on state and federal legislative issues affecting psychiatrists and their patients and contains an easy link to the Action Center website)
- [RushNotes](#) (APA's weekly Advocacy Newsletter)
- [State Update](#) (bi-monthly Newsletter highlighting state legislation addressing mental health issues within individual states)
- [State Affairs](#) (providing links to assist DBs and State Associations with state legislative and regulatory topics)
- [Schedule a Visit with your Member of Congress](#) (offers assistance in setting up meetings with your Member of Congress and provides resources and background material for that meeting)

Additionally, the DGR website has links to several resources available to members, including APA Principles for Healthcare Reform for Psychiatry, a Parity Fact sheet, etc.

## 2. OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The APA **Office of Communications and Public Affairs (OCPA)** develops and disseminates information to the news media about APA policies, programs and activities, as well as public information on psychiatry and its impact on those suffering from mental illness.

The media relations team of the Office of Communications and Public Affairs can also help locate psychiatric experts to provide insight and context on psychiatric and mental health issues.

In addition to its interactions with the media, OCPA communicates with APA members and the general public through a variety of venues, including e-newsletters, [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org), patient information brochures, the APA Annual Report and special events such as press conferences and the APA Annual Meeting.

On the website, there are links for “Newsroom” and “HealthyMinds”.

“Newsroom” offers a variety of resources for journalists, including the latest news in the field of psychiatry, background materials, and information on psychiatric disorders and other mental health topics.

Inside the “Newsroom” section, you will find:

- APA Daily Bulletin (the official daily bulletin of the Annual Meeting)
- APA Annual Report (summarizes the work, initiatives and accomplishments for the association over the course of the year; discloses the financial health of the association)
- APA Member and DB-SA Resources (Assists DBs and State Associations with communications and media outreach. The office provides media training, media outreach tool kits, template news releases, rapid response to crises information, and talking points to help APA members and member associations. Resources include “Let’s Talk Facts” Brochures & “Fact Sheets”)
- News Releases by the APA arranged by year of release.

HealthyMinds.org is the APA’s online resource for anyone seeking mental health information. It includes information on many common mental health concerns, warning signs of mental disorders, treatment options, and preventative measures.

### 3. **POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

The **Political Action Committee (APAPAC)** is the political voice for the APA. This committee allows the APA, at the national level, to educate and lobby members of the House and Senate of the U.S. Congress.

APAPAC works through the political process and supports candidates who are committed to assisting those suffering from mental illness and addictive disorders, who will advance the interests of psychiatry in public forums, and who will represent those interests before the legislature and other government bodies.

The PAC is a vital part of a coordinated grassroots strategy that includes lobbying by individual APA members. It gives psychiatry, and psychiatrists, a seat at the table to discuss with, and offer tangible support for, our political friends, and educates other Members of Congress as to why they should support a position regarding our patients and our profession.

#### 4. **OFFICE OF HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS AND FINANCING**

The **Office of Healthcare Systems and Financing (OHSF)** advocates for APA members on issues pertaining to the financing of, and access to, mental health treatment. OHSF's advocacy efforts include working with payers (both public and private), with the AMA, with business, and for the underserved. In addition, OHSF provides a wide variety of practical assistance to APA members on day-to-day issues that arise in managing a practice.

## Skills

The skills required to effectively advocate for psychiatry as a profession, and for our patients, are those introduced and explained in the module on Communication.

These skills must encompass both oral and written communication.

And they must be able to address our organization's "targets" of communication:

- Policymakers nationally, at the state level, and locally
- The media
- The public (directly)
- Other psychiatrists
- Non-psychiatrist physicians within the House of Medicine

### 1. **ADVOCACY WITH POLICY MAKERS**

Advocating with policy makers and legislators can be one of the more interesting, rewarding and/or frustrating parts of advocacy work.

Much depends on preparation – knowing the policymaker's/legislator's background, interests and political persuasion; knowing the advocacy issues you wish to address; and, most importantly, knowing how to engage the policymaker and "pitch" the issues in a manner of interest and importance to that specific policymaker and his or her constituents.

The following are helpful tools:

- Know the legislative process. There is one process of legislation within the federal government; the process of legislation may vary widely between individual states and within local jurisdictions.
  - The federal legislative process is well-described at:  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
Select "Schedule a Visit with your Member of Congress from "Inside this Section"  
Select "How a Bill Becomes Law..." from "Resources"
  - For individual state and jurisdiction processes, contact your state associations.

➤ Personally communicate with your Congress Members:

A personal meeting or written communication with your Member of Congress, or one of your legislator's staffers, is a powerful tool. Legislators listen to their constituents, as well as to those who care for their constituents. Your concerns help influence a legislator's position, and the more strongly a constituent group can articulate its concerns, the greater the likelihood that the elected official will pay attention and take action. Well-reasoned personal views supported by professional experience have proven to be extremely persuasive.

1. Personally meet with your Congress Member

- You must first submit a meeting request in writing to your Representative's office. Most offices prefer these requests to be faxed or mailed.

If you don't know who your Members of Congress are, or don't know their fax numbers or addresses, visit the Action Advocacy Center:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
Select "Action Advocacy Center" from "Inside this Section"

*or*

<http://www.capitolconnect.com/apa/legsearch.aspx>

A sample request letter can be found at

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
Select "Sample Hill Appointment Letter" from "Resources"

- Preparation for the meeting is crucial. An excellent resource for preparation is "Communicate Your Message Effectively", to be found at:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
Select "Schedule a Visit with Your Member of Congress" from  
"Inside This Section"  
Select "Communicate Your Message Effectively" from "Inside this  
Section"

The Department of Government Relations can provide very helpful background material on current issues, as well as useful background information on your Member of Congress. Go to

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
with numerous resources at "Inside this Section" and "Resources"

*or*

Call the Department of Government Relations at (703) 907-7800

*or*

Email Kate McAllister, the Federal Legislative Coordinator, at [kmcallister@psych.org](mailto:kmcallister@psych.org)

- Useful information about handling the meeting is found at “Common Courtesy During Visits” and “The Importance of Hill Staff”:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations

Select “Schedule a Visit with your Member of Congress”  
from “Inside this Section”

Select “Common Courtesy During Visits” from “Resources”

*and*

Select “The Importance of Hill Staff” from “Inside this Section”

- After your visit on “the Hill”, let the APA Government Relations staff know how it went. Use the “Hill Visit Evaluation Form”:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations

Select “Schedule a Visit with your Member of Congress” from  
“Inside this Section”

Select “Hill Visit Evaluation Form” from “Resources”

2. Use the Advocacy Action Center. You will gain access to the Action Center website, an interactive tool which enables APA members to respond to Action Alerts by communicating with their elected officials via email, fax or telephone, and search for pertinent legislation at the federal and state levels.

To access the Advocacy Action Center, go to:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations

Select “Advocacy Action Center” from “Inside this Section”

- Keep abreast of important State and Federal legislative issues which affect you and your patients.

1. Join the APA’s Grassroots Network By joining the APA’s Grassroots Network, APA-CAN, you can make your voice heard, individually and collectively. The Grassroots Network keeps you abreast of important State and Federal legislative issues impacting you and your patients.

Joining is easy: fill in and submit a form. After the form is submitted, you will be on the Grassroots Network mailing list to receive both DGR newsletters, selected Action Reports and other resource information regarding important legislative developments which affect psychiatry today.

To sign up for the Grassroots Network:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
Select “Join APA’s Grassroots Network” from “Inside this Section”  
Select “please click here” in the paragraph “To sign up...”

2. Read RushNotes, the weekly DGR advocacy newsletter. You automatically receive RushNotes by signing up for the Grassroots Network. Archived RushNotes can be found at RushNotes in the “Inside this Section” of the Government Relations site.
  3. Read State Update, a biweekly production of the APA’s State Affairs office. It can also be found at “Inside this Section” of the Government Relations site.
  4. Scan “Inside this Section” and Resources” at the Government Relations site for up-to-date information regarding legislation.
- Contribute to the Political Action Committee, APAPAC. Become an active part of the political process.

Access the Political Action Committee at:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Political Action Committee

At this site, you can read more about the PAC and access the PAC Activity list to view a list of recipients of PAC contributions:

Select APAPAC Activity from “Resources”

## 2. USING THE MEDIA

To contact the media relations team:

Call (703) 907-8640

*or*

Email [press@psych.org](mailto:press@psych.org)

There are also several helpful guides and programs produced by the OCPA:

- “OCPA Bulletin News”: The Office of Communications & Public Affairs (OCPA) produces a news bulletin aimed at highlighting department programs, projects, APA member news and media activities arranged or assisted by the department. This is worth scanning before interacting with the media.

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Newsroom

Select “APA Member & DB-SA Resources” from “Inside this Section”

Select “OCA News” from “Inside this Section”

Choose from offered “Resources”

- Media Training Programs are offered by the Office of Communications and Public Affairs to train skilled and well-prepared experts in a variety of subjects, who are then in place, able and ready, to speak with reporters.

OCPA also offers a specialized media training program for DB/SA members who request guidance on local media outreach.

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Newsroom

Select “APA Member & DB/SA Resources” from “Inside this Section”

Select “Media Training Program” from “Inside this Section”

For more information about the APA’s media training program or to request a training, contact:

Rhondalee Dean-Royce

[www.press@psych.org](mailto:www.press@psych.org)

(703)907-8640

- Media Relations Resource Guide for Psychiatric Physicians 2008, produced by OCPA. This guide provides excellent guidance through the maze of media relations and public affairs. Its sections include:
  - The need for media training
  - Preparation for crisis-driven communications
  - Working with reporters
  - Use of media for different occasions
  - Media Request and Briefing forms
  - Messaging and Message Development
  - Five “Rx’s” for a Successful Interview
  - A Media Interview Guide
  - A guide to Interviewing Techniques
  - Guides to Positive Declarative Language and Bridging Language
  - The “B’s” of Interviewing
  - How to Use Print Media: Press Releases, Letters to the Editor, Opinion Editorial Pieces, Editorial Board Meetings
  - APA Talking Points and Additional Outreach materials

It can be accessed through [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)

Use the search option for “Media Guide”

or

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations : State  
Affairs : Media Toolkit  
Select “Resources” and the “Media Relations Resource Guide...”

- Media Toolkits are available from the APA Office of Communications and Public Affairs (OCPA) as a resource for DBs and SAs. They provide proactive and reactive communications and media relations guidance regarding specific events or situations: disasters, upcoming media documentaries, etc. The toolkits include information that can be customized to include specific DB/SA information.

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Newsroom  
Select “APA Member & DB-SA Resources” from “Inside this Section”  
Select “Media Outreach Toolkits” from “Inside this Section”  
Choose from offered “Resources”

- Template News Releases are available to assist APA DBs and SAs in raising awareness about key issues or events. They are designed to be customized with specific DB/SA information and sent to local media outlets:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Newsroom  
Select “APA Member & DB-SA Resources” from “Inside this Section”  
Select “Template News Releases”  
Choose from offered “Resources”

### 3. **ADVOCATING WITH THE PUBLIC**

- There are two developed vehicles for direct advocacy with the public:
  - “Let’s Talk Facts” Brochures is a series of brochures developed to educate the general public about mental disorders and to provide answers to commonly asked questions about mental health issues. Specific topics and brochures may be accessed via:

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Newsroom  
Select “APA Member & DB-SA Resources” from “Inside this Section”  
Select “Let’s Talk Facts Brochures & Fact Sheets” from “Resources”

- [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org) is the APA’s consumer Web Site addressing numerous topics of public interest. “Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives” is a national public information campaign intended to increase APA’s role in influencing public understanding of mental illnesses/mental health, to help combat the stigma associated with mental disorders, and to improve the image of psychiatry.



or  
Allison Moraske, Program Manager  
[amoraske@psych.org](mailto:amoraske@psych.org)  
(703)907-8662

- Find other District Branches/State Associations with similar interests or challenges through:
  - State Update Newsletter: A bi-monthly newsletter highlighting state legislation addressing mental health issues, etc.  
  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org): Advocacy: Government Relations  
Select “State Update” from “Inside this Section”
  - State of the States: Resources about specific legislative activities, state by state.  
  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy : Government Relations  
Select “State Affairs” from “Inside the APA”  
Select “Legislative Information and Resources” from “Inside this Section”  
Select “State of the States (SOS)” from “Inside this Section”  
Choose from among “Resources” for the desired legislative activities
- Find APA interest groups:  
  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)  
Select “Interest Groups” from “Inside the APA”
- Find other Minority or Underrepresented (MUR) groups of psychiatrists:  
  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)  
Select “Office of Minority and National Affairs” from “Inside the APA”.
- Find Early Career Psychiatrists. A directory may be accessed through:  
  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)  
Select “Early Career Psychiatrists” from “Inside the APA”.
- Direct communication with APA members is also available through “APA Member Update”, a members-only electronic publication produced by the Office of Communication & Public Affairs. It features news about APA activities on the national level and in the DBs and SAs:  
  
[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Newsroom

Select “APA Member & DB-SA Resources” from “Inside this Section”  
Select “APA Member Update” from “Inside this Section”  
Then select which edition you are interested in.

## 5. **ADVOCACY WITH NON-PSYCHIATRIST PHYSICIANS**

- The APA AMA Delegation represents the APA in the AMA House of Delegates. The delegation advocates on behalf of psychiatrists, patients and psychiatry, and for the priorities of the APA.

The delegation meets with other psychiatry-related medical specialty societies in the Section Council on Psychiatry, established by the AMA as part of the House of Delegates.

[www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) : Advocacy  
Select APA AMA Delegation

- Join the AMA, your state medical association, and your local county medical societies.

Contact your local general medical hospitals. They may be looking for speakers for Grand Rounds, etc.

## Attitudes

### **The time to begin advocacy work is *before* the apparent need arises**

While our messages are always important, we need established relationships in order to speak more effectively, and to be heard. Trusted and respected relationships are primary. This way, when we ask for help or offer advice, we are known and are not seen as simply self-serving.

An excellent and funny example of how to work with legislators was offered by former California State Senator Joe Dunn, JD, who is the former CEO of the California Medical Association. It's what he identifies as part of the three-, four-, or five-dimensional chess game that is politics. Send birthday and holiday cards to your legislators. They may wonder who you are, but they'll know you are there and watching them. Invite them to your holiday parties (they probably won't come). Send them notes of agreement and thanks when they take positions that are helpful to mental health and psychiatry. Only later, call and identify yourself as a psychiatric physician. Offer to speak with them when they have questions about mental health and psychiatry. Have informal discussions with their staffers. When the time comes to discuss specific legislation, you will be known and not a stranger arriving with hat in hand.

Contact media editorial boards *before* crises arise. Offer to speak with them for background information on psychiatry and mental health. At times of crisis, you will be a known entity and they can turn to you for information.

### **Become politically involved**

Ever wonder how your legislators have developed their opinions of psychiatry and psychiatrists? From personal experience, the experience of family members and friends, and, at times, the media (which doesn't always present the most accurate picture). Contribute to campaigns of legislators you respect. Attend fundraisers. Join the APA's and your state's political action committees. Legislators will notice. The more positive exposure they have to psychiatry and psychiatrists, the more you will contribute to a positive opinion, and the more likely you'll be to have their ear when necessary.