

- The application of the Clinical Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) Society to become an Allied Organization. (Assembly Committee on Procedures)
- The addition of Prolonged Grief Disorder to the DSM. (DSM Steering Committee)
- The Proposed Position Statement on Concerns About Use of the Term "Excited Delirium" and Appropriate Medical Management in Out-of-Hospital Contexts. (New Business)

Dr. Jeffrey Geller, MD, the Assembly President highlighted that we must ensure that structural systemic racism is eliminated within the APA.

He explained that a consultant team will be selected to assess the entire organization.

From that assessment, a strategic plan with key recommendations will be developed that will likely take some time to fully implement.

Dr. Vivian B. Pender, MD, the Assembly President-elect, shared that she will focus on the Social Determinants of Mental Health, as many of these (e.g. racism, ageism, sexism, etc.) often contribute to mental illness and negatively impact diversity, inclusion, and equity.

She noted that divisiveness and social unrest leading into and continuing

through the recent national election creates both the urgency and opportunity for the APA to lead on this important issue.

The next assembly meeting will be April 30 – May 2, 2021 and will be virtual.

Steve Salzbrenner, MD
Area 4 Assembly Representative

AMA Foundation Award for Health Education

We are proud to announce that Dr. Alëna Balasanova, NPS Executive Board Member, Assembly Member, and Early Career Physician Chair, was honored with the AMA Foundation Award for Health Education, made possible through the generous support of the John P. McGovern Foundation.

The AMAF Health Education Award was established to recognize the professional and public health education accomplishments of practicing physicians. The award was presented to Dr. Balasanova during the opening session of the 2020 Special Meeting of the AMA House of Delegates.

Congratulations, Dr. Balasanova!



Mission: Nebraska Psychiatric Society exists to advance the profession of psychiatry, serve the needs of our members and provide support for psychiatric services across Nebraska.
Vision: To become a trusted voice and resource for psychiatric services in Nebraska.

A Message from the President:

Early in 2020 I had the opportunity to discuss NPS history with one of our first NPS presidents. When I asked what the big topics of the time were over 30 years ago, there was no hesitation in the answer: "Psychologists wanting to prescribe."

All signs indicate that in 2021 NPS will again be facing a proposed bill to allow psychologists to not only prescribe, but to also perform physical exams, and order and interpret laboratory tests. Unless the bill is dramatically improved from the prior versions, NPS will again be taking an opposing position in order to protect the public and its most vulnerable members. And we will again be asking for your help.

From our humble origins in the asylums of the 1800's, psychiatry has come a long way. Ours is a medical specialty unlike any other--we bring all the science of medical education to bear on a patient's problems, within the sanctuary of a unique, therapeutic relationship. There is no substitute, no approximation, no quasi-medical practice that can match it. Psychiatry is, and always will

be, the most all-encompassing and elegant specialty to care for mental illnesses.

The future of psychiatry does look promising on many fronts--patient access to insurance benefits is improving, parity laws are protecting reimbursement, telepsychiatry work is booming with no sign of going away, and interest in the specialty among medical students is increasing. And we still have so much to learn about the ind.

As we welcome 2021, ask yourself what kind of year 2051 might look like for our specialty--I for one believe our position in the medical community will be even more scientifically robust, respected and relevant.

Thanks for all you do for your patients now, and for our patients in the future.



Martin Wetzel, M.D.



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Legislative Update

On November 2, Governor Pete Ricketts announced the appointment of Kevin Bagley as the new Director of the Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care at the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

In the November election, 25 seats of the Nebraska Unicameral were up for election, and all incumbents who were not term-limited were re-elected, other than Dan Quick of District 35 (Grand Island) who was defeated by Raymond Aguilar, a former state senator who was term-limited in 2008. New senators include:

District 9 (Mid-town Omaha)
John Cavanaugh, Jr., replaced Sara Howard; he is the brother of Senator Machaela Cavanaugh.

District 11 (North Omaha)
Terrell McKinney replaced Senator Ernie Chambers.

District 19 (Norfolk)
Mike Flood, a former term-limited senator who was Speaker of the Legislature, replaced Senator Jim Scheer, Speaker of the Legislature.

District 29 (South Lincoln)
Eliot Bostar replaced Senator Kate Bolz.

District 31 (Millard)
Rich Pahls, a former term-limited senator and a member of the Omaha City Council, replaced Senator Rick Kolowski.

District 45 (Bellevue)
Rita Sanders, a former Bellevue mayor, replaced Senator Sue Crawford.

District 49 (Gretna)
Jen Day defeated Senator Andrew La Grone, a Governor Ricketts appointee who had served since 2019.

The Unicameral is scheduled to begin on January 6, 2021 with bill introduction concluding on January 20.

Another psychologist prescribing bill is anticipated to be introduced in the 2021 Nebraska legislative session. After significant advocacy on the part of the American Psychiatric Association, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in September removed a proposal to implement a pilot program allowing clinical psychologists to prescribe and manage medications for veterans who seek care in the Veterans Health Administration. It is imperative that we work with policymakers to find solutions that promote the recruitment and retention of psychiatrists and other mental health providers who are in short supply in outstate Nebraska and critically needed in the Panhandle region

of Nebraska. Patient safety must be the major consideration so Nebraska's citizens will not be put at risk in accessing the psychiatric care they need.

Additional information about specific bills or laws from the legislative session can be accessed via the search function at nebraskalegislature.gov. We need to continue to be vigilant in monitoring and responding to bills of interest to our patients and our profession; I invite comments and welcome your participation in the legislative process.

Ethics Update

Any NPS member with questions regarding ethics issues may contact the APA Ethics Committee at apaethics@psych.org; the Committee responds to individual questions.

A reminder: APA Ethics opinions about COVID-related issues are posted at <https://www.psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Practice/Ethics/APA-COVID-19-Ethics-Opinions.pdf>

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Ann Brooks, M.D., M.S.A.
Legislative and Ethics Committees
Chairperson



Beth Ann Brooks, M.D.

2020 Fall APA Assembly Meeting Update

Hello NPS members,

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and were able to forget about COVID for a couple of hours and enjoy some quality time with your families, even though it may have been via Zoom. What a novel year in so many ways! Hang in there, NPS members. Nothing is forever!

The APA Assembly met virtually in November, and as your Area 4 APA Assembly Representative, one of my responsibilities is to provide you with a report of this meeting.

Topics which generated the most discussion included racism, subspecialty accreditation for Emergency Psychiatry, the addition of **Prolonged Grief Disorder** to the DSM, and concerns about use of the term "Excited Delirium."

The following Position Statements were approved by the Assembly:

- Proposed Position Statement: Suicide Among Black Youth in the United States
- Proposed Position Statement: Sexual Abuse of Migrants in ICE Custody
- Proposed Position Statement: Growing Fear Over Coronavirus Spread and Mental Health Impact in ICE Detention Centers
- Proposed Position Statement: Impact of Cannabis on Children and Adolescents
- Proposed Position Statement: Screening and Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders During Pregnancy and Postpartum
- Proposed Position Statement: Reducing the Burden of Treatment Plan Documentation
- Retained Position Statement: Involuntary Commitment and Related Programs of Assisted Outpatient-

Treatment (2015)

- Revised Position Statement: Medical Necessity
- Proposed Position Statement: Abortion and Women's Reproductive Health Care Rights
- Retired Position Statement: Abortion and Women's Reproductive Health Care Rights (2014)
- Proposed Position Statement: Use of the Terms Client and Provider
- Proposed Position Statement: Medicaid Coverage for Maternal Postpartum Care
- Revised Position Statement: Ensuring Access to Psychiatric Services for the Elderly

Action Papers approved during this meeting included:

- To create a resource document that will help guide the choice and use of seclusion versus restraints in clinical settings.
- To develop and promote a position statement in alignment with the AMA's policy, "Independent Practice of Medicine by Advanced Practice Registered Nurses"
- To create a resource document that will address personal item access/restriction for psychiatrically hospitalized patients.
- To eliminate barriers and expand use of telehealth.
- To explore the process of sub-specialty accreditation to determine the feasibility of granting Emergency Psychiatry certification applying a similar pathway as is done for Addiction Medicine certification by the American Board of Preventive Medicine.
- To clarify that the "Principles" document does not currently represent the official position of the APA, and that a position statement be drafted that addresses the "Principles" document.



Steve Salzbrenner, MD

- To develop a Position Statement that will address the need for housing and employment opportunities for persons with psychiatric illness to include those with history of criminal activity.
- To have the APA expeditiously approve a Position Statement on The Adverse Effects of Misogyny and Gender Bias on the Health of Women.
- To fund ACROSS members to attend 2020-2021 Area Council meetings in equitable fashion as all other Assembly members, and treat equally with respect to budgeting support for participation in all Assembly activities moving forward.
- To support joint meetings of the Council on Minority Mental Health and Health Disparities and the Assembly Committee of Representatives on Minority/Underrepresented Groups.
- To create a Task Force to explore member interest, as well as the financial, organizational, and public relations implications of changing the name of our organization from the American Psychiatric Association (APA) to the American Psychiatric Physician Association (APPA).
- To enhance APA transparency and accountability regarding human and financial resource allocation across all APA components.

The following items were voted on and approved:

- The application of the American Society of Clinical Psychopharmacology to become an Allied Organization. (Assembly Committee on Procedures)

Continued on page 4.

SHARE YOUR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Are you a mental health professional doing something new, unconventional, and/or exciting?

Perhaps you're running a private practice.

Maybe you're the medical director at a rural psychiatric facility.

Would you like to share your experience with other NPS members?

Email Dr. Nick Williams, NPS Newsletter Editor
psychnebraska@gmail.com

We love to hear about new experiences and may include your story in the next edition.