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WWW.ALABAMAPSYCH.ORG

Registration is open for APPA's Spring Conference

April 8-10 • Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

APPA leadership has lined up an outstanding group of speakers for our Spring Conference. If you are not getting our weekly e-mails, "Conference Notes," that highlight our speakers, please send an e-mail to cmorris@alamedical.org so you will be added to our list. You may view past issues of "Conference Notes" on [APPA's website](#).

Rooms are filling up quickly at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort for our conference dates of April 8-10. Just a few rooms remain in our room block. Call (800) 320-8115 and use group code 23A9M9 to make your hotel reservations or [book online](#). Room rates begin at \$172 per night and apply for three days before and three days after the conference. APPA's room block expires March 8,

but we expect rooms to sell out before that date. **If you want to upgrade your room from something other than a one-bedroom or studio, call Georgian Mason at (850) 267-6141 or email GeorganMason@Sandestin.com.**

Register for the conference [online](#) or use the form on page 6.

APPA 2016 SPRING CONFERENCE AGENDA

FRIDAY, APRIL 8

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Conference Registration

1:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Opening General Session and Welcome

1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Peri Menopausal Mental Health Issues
Anupama Yedla, MD
*Assistant Professor of Psychiatry,
UAB School of Medicine - Huntsville*

2:15- 3:15 p.m.
Childhood Psychoses
Clinton Martin, MD
*Assistant Professor of Psychiatry,
UAB School of Medicine*

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Break

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Mental Health Parity
Coleen Coyle, JD
*American Psychiatric Association
General Counsel*

5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Reception with Exhibitors on the Grand Lawn

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.
Breakfast with Exhibitors

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Practice Managers Mini-Conference

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Burnout in Physicians
Kenan Penaskovic, MD
*Assistant Professor
UNC School of Medicine*

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Therapies for Borderline Personality Disorder: What Works
Robert Gregory, MD
*Professor and Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences,
State University of New York*

10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Morning Break with Exhibitors

WHAT'S UP AROUND THE STATE...

Birmingham



BIRMINGHAM PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY



For More information about the Birmingham Psychiatric Society, contact BPS President Paul O'Leary,

MD at dr.paul@me.com.

Central Alabama

For More information about the Central Alabama Society, contact Linda Teel at (334) 288-9009 ext. 207 or linda.teel@mpa1040.com.



Mobile



For more information about the Mobile Bay Psychiatric Society, contact James Hart, DO, at

jimfb@icloud.com.

Tuscaloosa


If you live in the Tuscaloosa area and would like to get connected with your fellow colleagues, check out the Tuscaloosa



Chapter of APPA. Contact Thaddeus Ulzen, MD, at tulzen@cchs.ua.edu for more information. 

Members representing APPA meet in Washington, D.C.



J. Clint Moore, DO, (left) listens as APA Region 5 Deputy Representative Paul O'Leary, MD, (right) discusses patient care with Sen. Jeff Sessions at the Medical Association of the State of Alabama's Governmental Affairs Conference in early February. 

APPA members chosen as Distinguished Fellows


The APA Board of Trustees have approved 127 Distinguished Fellows, five from Alabama, to be recognized at the APA Annual Meeting in Atlanta:

- Marisa A. Giggie, MD, Tuscaloosa
- Nelson Handal, MD, Dothan
- Sandra Parker, MD, Daphne
- Terry Passman, MD, Fairhope (Distinguished Life Fellow)
- Bradley Sadler, MD, Mobile

Distinguished Fellows will be recognized during Convocation on Monday, May 16, in the Georgia World Congress Center. See meeting details below.

In addition, six Alabama psychiatrists were promoted to APA Fellow:

- Leona Graham, MD, Dothan
- Eddie Huggins Jr., MD, Anniston
- Clinton Martin, MD, Birmingham
- Praveen Narahari, MD, Mobile
- Mary Strong, DO, Tuscaloosa
- Eyob Tessema, MD, Dothan

APPA offers congratulations to each and will recognize these accomplishments at the Spring Conference in April. 

APA Annual Meeting registration is open

The dynamic nature of mental health means you need to stay on top of advances to better serve your patients. What better way to do this than to learn from the world's largest and longest-serving psychiatric organization? The voice and conscience of modern psychiatry, the American Psychiatric Association currently represents a growing membership of 36,000 psychiatrists globally. Our member physicians work together to ensure humane care and effective treatment for all persons with mental disorders.

AMERICAN
PSYCHIATRIC
ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING
May 14-18, 2016 • Atlanta



Visit psychiatry.org/annualmeeting/registration for details. 

APPA partners with Medical Association, other stakeholders to combat prescription drug abuse

Prescription drug abuse initiative aims to save lives

To combat the growing problem of prescription drug abuse, APPA has partnered with the Medical Association of the State of Alabama and a coalition of medical, business, health insurance and law enforcement organizations in the launch of a new initiative – **Smart & Safe** – aimed at providing education on and encouraging the safe prescription, use, storage and disposal of medication.

Recent studies indicate most first-time abusers get their drugs from a family member or friend, and Alabama is no different. Raising awareness about proper medication use is essential to preventing accidental overdose and death. According to Acting State Health Officer Dr. Tom Miller, prescription drug abuse is a significant threat to Alabama's public health.

"The number of deaths due to drug overdose, including prescription drugs, has resulted in the deaths of 762 Alabama residents between 2010 and 2014," Dr. Miller said. "In 2014 alone, there were 221 deaths due to drug overdoses. We wholeheartedly support the Smart and

Safe campaign and the effort to tackle prescription drug abuse by promoting responsible and safe prescription use and the proper disposal of medications."

Roughly a quarter of Americans has been touched by this epidemic. Unfortunately, these estimates continue to increase every year.

"According to a recent study, Alabama has the 26th highest drug overdose mortality rate in the United States, and the number of drug overdose deaths in Alabama has tripled since 1999, a majority from prescription drugs. ... Blue Cross is proud to support the Medical Association to help ensure its success," said Dr. Darrel Weaver, medical director for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama.

While drug abuse directly affects families and individuals, its indirect effects on Alabama communities and the



Download posters and find more information about Smart & Safe on APPA's website.

businesses therein are substantial according to Denson Henry, vice president of Henry Brick Co., in Selma, and co-chair of the Business Council of Alabama's Health Committee.

"Abuse of legal and illegal drugs is expensive to business, industry and employees due to higher insurance claims, lost productivity, injuries both on and off the job...not to mention the human cost. Encouraging and

supporting treatment and prevention can help the employee, co-workers, management and families," Henry said.

Smart & Safe will build upon the success already realized through passage of a 2013 legislative package (Prescription Drug Monitoring Program) aimed at reducing prescription drug abuse.

Learn more at www.SmartAndSafeAL.org.

Federal Health Care Issues: 2015 Year in review

Source: *Medical Association of the State of Alabama*
www.alabamamedicine.org

Medicare Physician Payment System

2015 saw a big victory for physicians in the long overdue repeal of the Medicare sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula, which each forced physicians and the seniors under their care to wonder if Congress would have the courage to act to protect Medicare beneficiaries access to care. The Medical Association and 13 allied Alabama medical specialties, in response to a CMS request for comment on a number of questions related to its Congressional directive to fill in the details of long-term SGR, sent a strongly-worded letter to CMS outlining opposition to one of the main tenets of CMS's questionnaire, whether

physician Medicare payments should be conditioned on acceptance of Medicaid or health insurance exchange plans which would move us closer to a single-payer system.

"... instead of finding innovative ways to expand access to care by rewarding physicians, CMS now proposes to dictate individual physicians' patient sets. This is a direct attack on practice autonomy and will put the nation's health care system much closer to single-payer, a move we believe would ruin Alabama's and America's health care system," the letter reads.

ICD-10 mandate

Despite the Medical Association's efforts and those of Congressman Gary Palmer (AL-06) to delay ICD-10, the new coding system went live on October 1 as scheduled.

Leading up to implementation, the Medical Association had petitioned the Alabama Delegation for support for Rep. Palmer's bill and shepherded a resolution through the Alabama Legislature sponsored by physician-Senators Tim Melson and Larry Stutts urging Congressional delay of ICD-10.

Despite disagreeing with CMS about the unfunded ICD-10 mandate on physicians, the Association's Board of Censors felt it imperative to provide as much information as possible to its members about complying with the mandate so they would not be caught flat-footed if delay efforts were unsuccessful, including webinars, meetings and advice from experts in the field of medical practice management and health IT during 2015.

continued on page 4

2015 Year in review, cont.

Electronic Health Records (EHR) and Meaningful Use

Meeting CMS's requirements for meaningful use (MU) continues to become more and more difficult for physicians. Perhaps the greatest sign this year being the fact that CMS's final rule for MU Stage 2 compliance required 90 consecutive days of adherence in 2015 despite the fact that the rule was issued when less than 90 days left in the year. The Medical Association led a coalition of 38 Alabama specialty and county medical societies in asking our Congressional Delegation to support a bill – H.R. 3940 – by fellow-physician and Congressman Tom Price (R-GA) to allow CMS to grant a blanket hardship exception for physicians from its impossible Stage 2 MU final rule.

“While current federal statute allows physicians to apply to CMS for a temporary MU hardship exemption, given the lateness of the strict Stage 2 final rule, hundreds of thousands nationwide will be petitioning CMS for a waiver which can only statutorily be granted on an individual basis. This will be time-consuming for the agency and may lead to administrative backlogs internally that end up docking payments to medical practices for services rendered to Medicare patients,” the letter reads.

Before adjourning for the Christmas break, Congress took language from H.R. 3940 and added it to another broader bill, approving it. This means CMS now has the authority to process requests for hardship exemptions to physicians through a more streamlined blanket-exemption process, alleviating burdensome administrative issues for both providers and the agency.

Federal Fraud and Abuse Programs

Medicare's effort to stop dishonest activities may be well-intended but its focus on physicians as the main source of fraud and abuse is off target. Medicare's recovery audit contractors show a very poor return to the government for the dollars spent chasing fraud and abuse, as more than 60 percent of their determinations are overturned when appealed and CMS has at present a multi-year backlog of appeals to sort through. In the Omnibus Appropriations Bill for 2016 is language directing HHS to improve consistency, transparency and processing of appeals and to use funds recovered through audits to better educate physicians and

others on how they may reduce errors likely to trigger audits. As well, the omnibus bill language directs CMS to increase monitoring of the recovery audit process, its contingency-fee-operating contractors and provide reports to Congress.

National Medical Licensure

Telehealth companies lobbied Congress in 2015 (albeit unsuccessfully) to enable nationalized medical licensure and to do away with state-based licensure, whether for Medicare services alone or for all services. The Medical Association was outspoken on this issue in 2015 and successfully shepherded legislation through the Alabama Legislature allowing Alabama to become the seventh state to join the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, a streamlined licensure process for physicians from participating states who are board-certified and who have never been disciplined by a medical or health board. Eligible physicians with a license in a participating state can apply for an expedited license in another Compact-participating state. This approach ensures quality standards do not suffer and plaintiff trial lawyers aren't able to expand their ability to sue doctors in federal law.

ACA's Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB)

The IPAB is a 15-member presidentially appointed board with the power to make unilateral decisions regarding Medicare. It is a bureaucrat's dream, with broad and dangerous authority to make decisions regarding Medicare that without formal Congressional disapproval, are entirely binding. To date, not one member of the IPAB has yet been appointed and the 2016 omnibus bill cuts funding from the program.

Release of Physician Payment Data

The federal government's track record on release of physician payment data is abysmal. CMS continues to provide no context for interpreting the data it releases, preventing patients from being able to make informed decisions about choice of physician. Instead, CMS released raw data in 2015 that was likely misinterpreted by the public and was certainly misinterpreted by the media. The Medical Association was vocal on this issue during 2015 on the need for significantly more context from CMS

when releasing any physician data and for more thorough review of information before it is published as many physicians were tagged with inaccurate payment data.

Expanding Veterans' Access to Care

Despite passage of legislation in 2014 expanding access to non-VA physicians for some veterans, much more needs to be done in order to ensure our veterans can receive the care they deserve. A new VA facility was opened in Montgomery in late 2015. As well, additional funds were made available through the omnibus appropriations bill and set aside for improving the VA EHR system. Any expansion of access should have quality as its top concern.


Repeal of ACA's Non-Discrimination Clause

Section 2706 of the ACA provides that insurance plans cannot discriminate in payments for services provided by non-physicians when those same services are covered if provided by physicians and if the service provided is within the scope of practice of the non-physician. Significant differences can exist between the quality of a service provided by a physician and the same service provided by a non-physician. No action was taken on this during 2015, but the Medical Association and other state and specialty societies continue to push for repeal.

Physician Compare Website

CMS continues to add limited data sets of physician groups participating in a number of Medicare quality initiatives to the Physician Compare website. The agency has admitted to flaws in the operations of this program and this is especially concerning given that CMS uses these scores to alter Medicare payment rates under its value-based reimbursement models and physicians could face penalties in 2016 if they do not report their results to CMS.

“Cadillac tax”

Via the 2016 tax package that at press time had not been, but is expected to be approved by Congress, a two-year delay of the so-called “Cadillac tax” on benefit-rich health insurance plans (for 2018 and 2019) as well as a one-year delay of the health insurance tax (for 2017) will be imposed. 

SAVE **the** DATE

Coming Attractions

2016 APPA Spring Conference

April 8-10 | Reception – April 8 on the Grand Lawn
Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort | Destin, Fla.

Reserve your rooms now. We expect the resort to sell out.

2016 APPA Fall Conference

October 8 | Embassy Suites Hotel | Tuscaloosa

2017 APPA Spring Conference

April 21-22 | Montgomery Renaissance Hotel and Spa

2017 APPA Fall Conference

(Tentative)

October 14 | Ross Bridge Resort, Birmingham

Spring Conference Agenda, cont.

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Management of Delirium and Agitation

Mark Haygood, DO

*Assistant Professor of Psychiatry,
University of South Alabama College of
Medicine*

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Marijuana – Facts and Factoids

Ellen Ovson, MD

*Medical Director,
Bradford Health Services*

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The Joy of Mental Health

Ramakanth Vemuluri, MD

Private Practice, Montgomery

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Morning Break with Exhibitors

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Neurobiology of Suicide

Yogesh Dwivedi, PhD

*Professor of Psychiatry,
UAB School of Medicine*

1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Business Meeting and Poster Awards/
Presentations

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

The Opioid Epidemic: What is was Like,
What Happened and What it is Like Now

James Harrow, MD, PhD

*Medical Director,
Alabama Physicians Health Program*

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Breakfast with Exhibitors

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Motivational Interview as a Foundation for
Recovery-Oriented Mental Health Care

Michael Flaum, MD

*Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, University
of Iowa Carver College of Medicine*


12:45 p.m.

Evaluation / Adjourn

Call for Abstracts: APPA Spring Conference

APPA encourages residents and fellows to submit poster presentations for display at the 2016 Spring Conference. Poster abstracts are peer reviewed and posted online, so they count as “Published Abstracts” on your curriculum vitae. This is a very easy way to build your academic portfolio!

The deadline to submit abstracts in March 18. Please send to Lengeriser@altapointe.org and they will be forwarded to the scientific committee for review. Please print your poster at a size of 24 by 36 inches so that they will fit on our presentation boards.

See sample abstracts in the [Members-in-Training](#) section of APPA’s website. 

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Alabama Psychiatric
Physicians Association

19 S. Jackson Street |
Montgomery, AL 36104

(334) 954-2500

Fax (334) 269-5200

www.alabamapsych.org

Sandra K. Parker, MD,
Publisher

Jennifer Hayes,

Executive Editor

Charlotte H. Morris,

Senior Editor

*Articles or advertisements
should be sent to Charlotte H.
Morris, at cmorris@masalink.org
two weeks in advance
of printing.*

*The Freudian Slip is published
bimonthly. The articles
contained in The Freudian Slip
are meant to provoke thought
and comment and do not
necessarily reflect the views
and opinions of the members,
Executive Council or staff
of the Alabama Psychiatric
Physicians Association.
Comments and letters to the
editor are welcome.*

Caring for Psychiatric Patients through Each Stage of Life



APPA 2016 SPRING CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

APRIL 8-10 • BAYTOWNE CONFERENCE CENTER
SANDESTIN GOLF AND BEACH RESORT

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Dietary Needs _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Office Contact _____ E-mail _____

FEES (Before April 1 | After April 1 add \$100)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member \$300 | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member \$400 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student - Free |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonphysician Clinician \$170 | <input type="checkbox"/> Resident \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> One Day \$100 (Sunday) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> One Day \$100 (Friday) | <input type="checkbox"/> One Day \$100 (Saturday) | <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Manager of APPA Non-member \$225 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Manager of APPA Member \$125 | <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Manager of APPA Non-member \$225 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse and guests \$50 to attend meals and reception only (Name tags required) | | |

REGISTRATION

Go to www.tinyurl.com/APPA2016SpringConference to register online or send completed form to:
APPA Spring Conference | Attn. Jennifer Hayes | PO Box 1900 | Montgomery, AL 36102-1900

ACCOMMODATIONS

Call Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort at (800) 622-1038 and mention the Alabama Psychiatric Physicians Association (group code 23A9M9) or book online at <http://www.sandestin.com/23A9M9.aspx>. Rates start at \$172 per night and apply for three days before and 3 days after the conference based on availability. For rooms larger than studio or one bedroom, or for beach side accommodations, call Georgan Mason at (850) 267-6141. **APPA's room block expires on March 8** but we expect rooms to sell out before that date.

DETAILS

More conference information is online at www.alabamapsych.org. If you have special needs and/or need assistance, please contact Jennifer Hayes, at (334) 954-2500 or JHayes@masalink.org.

PAYMENT

Credit Card: VISA MasterCard American Express

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____

Billing Address _____ City, State ZIP _____

Signature _____ Amount: \$ _____