



An informational newsletter compiled by the Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association for the MH, IDD, D&A, and rehabilitation communities

REHABILITATION & COMMUNITY
PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2014

■ RCPA NEWS

2014 RCPA CONFERENCE

Early Bird Registration Ends September 5

Registration for TOGETHER...ONE, the 2014 RCPA conference is open. There are multiple ways to register and significant discounts available to those registering by **September 5**. The conference theme is focused on uniting members into one strong association "representing health and human services committed to effective, efficient, and high quality care." Energized by activities taking place in our work, it highlights the importance of one person, one provider, one agency, and one mission.

The robust conference agenda brings ample opportunities to learn and dialogue with stellar speakers to offer a variety of stimulating and timely information. This event features 56 workshops, a film screening, a health care leadership keynote, a vibrant Exhibit Hall, networking events, time to interact with colleagues, and opportunities for creative thinking to inspire passion to create change. The week concludes

with President and CEO Richard Edley hosting state leaders including Department of Public Welfare Secretary Beverly Mackereth and Senator Jay Costa.

An [interactive registration brochure](#) provides essential information. The [conference web site](#) is available with complete information about all scheduled activities and details about workshops, exhibitors, and other events. [Online registration](#) is also available.

Mark your calendar for **October 7 – 10** and join the Conference Committee, Board of Directors, and staff at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. Questions about the conference may be directed to [Kris Ericson](#), conference coordinator, or [Tieanna Lloyd](#), conference registrar.

TOGETHER
One Mission • One Agency
One Provider • One Person



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■ FEDERAL NEWS BRIEFS

CMS to Restart RAC Reviews

On August 4, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) that in light of the continued delay in awarding new recovery auditor contracts, it will modify current contracts to allow Recovery Audit Contractors (RACs) to restart some reviews. It is anticipated that most reviews will be done on an automated basis while a limited number will be complex reviews of topics selected by CMS.

ICD-10 Compliance Deadline October 1, 2015

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a [final rule](#) in the August 4 *Federal Register* that finalizes October 1, 2015 as the new compliance date for health care providers, health plans, and health care clearinghouses to transition to ICD-10. This deadline was established to allow the industry ample time to prepare for this change. ICD-10 improves quality measurement and reporting; facilitates the detection and prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse; and leads to greater accuracy of reimbursement for medical services. CMS issued [MLN Matters Special Edition Article #SE1409](#) that includes information on ICD-10 acknowledgement testing and end-to-end testing.

Evaluation Criteria for QIOs

A notice with comment period was published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in the August 11 *Federal Register* that describes the general criteria it intends to use to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) with which it will enter into contracts. Comments are due to CMS by close of business on September 10.

Fall Prevention Awareness Day: September 23

The seventh annual National Fall Prevention Awareness Day will be observed September 23 to promote and increase public awareness about how to prevent and reduce falls among older adults. This year's theme, "Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow," seeks to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members to play a part in raising awareness and preventing falls. Additional information, including community programs, tools, and resources, are available from the [National Council on Aging](#).

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Richard S. Edley, PhD

Political Endorsements

Recently, the RCPA Board of Directors tackled a very important topic: should we as an association endorse candidates for office? This obviously takes center stage with the upcoming gubernatorial election, but it holds true for all state and national elections. Does an endorsement put RCPA and its members in a better position with candidates on key issues? Is there a downside?

We represent over 350 members and more than 175,000 staff at these organizations in every district in Pennsylvania and in many locations outside of the commonwealth. That is quite a voting block. We represent rural and urban voters, republican and democrat, and individuals across nearly every treatment setting and funding stream. Pleasing every RCPA member through an endorsement would be difficult. Ultimately, then, there is really only one type of candidate that we should support: one who understands the importance of properly

funding health and human service providers to support critical services for those most in need.

The decision by the board at this time was to not officially endorse any individual, but instead to continue to meet with all candidates to discuss items of critical importance in health and human services – to assure that these issues are on the radar of candidates and at the forefront of discussion. That brings us to the upcoming gubernatorial election. I have heard Governor Corbett and Tom Wolf speak on occasion and had the opportunity to meet both of them. There are clear differences in policy and approach and both will continue to have difficult decisions ahead. But there is also an opportunity to educate and influence whichever administration is elected.

What is it that we should want from these two men and their staff, other officials, and those aspiring to represent us in office? As I have said many

times over many issues, we want an RCPA “seat at the table” to best represent providers of critical community services. When decisions are made that affect health and human services, we want to be able to weigh in and have our voice heard and our opinion counted. Further, we should be able to effectively raise issues where decisions are not being made. In many ways what hurts us most is not necessarily a decision made by an administration, but a decision that is avoided or that blindsides us without an opportunity to have input.

As the November elections near and we continue to meet with candidates, including Governor Corbett and Tom Wolf, that is what we will demand. Meaningful dialogue and input into decision making.

Richard S. Edley, PhD, President/CEO
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TrueNorth Wellness Selects New CEO



Garrett Trout

President Paul Minnich, TrueNorth Wellness Services, announced the appointment of Garrett Trout as its new CEO, succeeding Mary McGrath. After an extensive national search, Trout was elected to guide the organization moving forward through the changing complexities of the behavioral health industry. Mr. Trout has been active for several years with the association. RCPA congratulates him and looks forward to continued work together.

■ NEW MEMBER

BUSINESS MEMBER
SKYLINE Cloud Services by
Uni-Data
Flushing, NY

Report Released on Result of States Not Expanding Medicaid

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Urban Institute recently released [What is the Result of States Not Expanding Medicaid?](#) Pennsylvania is one of 24 states that have not expanded Medicaid eligibility to adults with incomes at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level, as permitted by the Affordable Care Act. This report describes some coverage, fiscal, and macroeconomic implications of this choice. It also summarizes state-specific fiscal analyses and examines the high federal matching rates on which those analyses rely.

Listening Tour on Disabilities Issues

The Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council announced they will hold a public forum listening tour this fall at locations across Pennsylvania. The dates and locations of the public forums are listed in the [announcement](#).

Public Forums Scheduled for HCBS Statewide Transition Plan

On January 16, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a [final rule](#) effective March 17 amending the Medicaid regulations to provide requirements regarding person-centered plans of care, characteristics of settings that are home and community-based, and settings that may not be home and community-based. These requirements reflect CMS' intent that individuals receiving services and supports through Medicaid waivers receive services in settings that are integrated in and support full access to the greater community. All 1915(c) Medicaid waivers (10 in Pennsylvania) must comply with these requirements.

The final rule provides the state with the opportunity to develop a transition plan that encompasses a period of up to five years after the effective date of the regulation in order to meet provisions of the final rule. Pennsylvania must submit the transition plan to CMS for approval after at least a 30-day public comment period. The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) has developed a proposed statewide transition plan for all 1915(c) Medicaid HCBS waivers that will be made available for public comment in coming weeks. DPW will hold five public input meetings across the state (beginning August 25) to receive comments on the proposed plan. [Information](#) on meeting locations, dates, and the registration link to attend and/or provide verbal comments is available.

Initiatives and Awareness Focus of Falls Prevention Legislative Breakfast

The Pennsylvania Injury Community Planning Group (ICPG) has announced the 2014 "Strong Today, Falls Free® Tomorrow" Falls Prevention Awareness Day Legislative Breakfast. The event is September 23, 8:30 a.m., Rm 302, Irvis Bldg, Pennsylvania State Capitol. The ICPG and the Departments of Health and Aging strive to positively impact the quality of life for the senior population with support to statewide falls prevention initiatives. These organizations assist target groups to remain healthy, active, and able to maintain independent living choices. The breakfast will raise awareness and showcase current fall prevention initiatives occurring across the state, offering a setting where ideas can emerge through networking with others. Following the breakfast, falls prevention activities will continue in the Capitol Rotunda with demonstrations, screenings, and educational materials from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Suicide Prevention Conference in October

Pennsylvania's second annual suicide prevention conference, [Making a Difference Together](#), is October 15 – 16 in State College. The conference is designed for individuals who wish to know more about suicide prevention, intervention, and meeting the needs of suicide survivors. It is specifically designed to meet the diverse interests and needs of attendees, while creating a powerful opportunity for networking, learning, and developing techniques to prevent suicide as well as meet the needs of those who have survived the loss of a loved one by suicide.

For additional information on legislative issues, contact RCPA at 717-364-3280. For copies of bills, call your local legislator, the House Document Room 717-787-5320, or visit the General Assembly's Electronic Bill Room at www.legis.state.pa.us.



Legislative Affairs Committee Reorganizes

Health and human service professionals are constantly presented with the challenge of improving the nation's health care system.

Whether it involves mental health, physical rehabilitation, autism, or drug and alcohol addiction, professionals are called on to provide solutions to improve the public's quality of life. With all of these responsibilities, it is easy to forget about the role of government in the profession. In order to fulfill the mission to protect public health and safety, health and human service professionals must be involved in the policy making process at all levels of government.

While many recognize the need to become involved in public policy issues, those same people may disdain the thought of dealing with elected officials, who often seem larger than life and are perceived as inaccessible. Regardless of feelings toward elected officials, their support is vital to the profession. They make daily decisions that affect agency business and those served. The good news is that elected officials are usually quite approachable, open to ideas, and actually welcome constituent input.

Formulating sound public policy depends in large part on people who have knowledge of the political system. Similar to health and human service, it can be difficult to see and measure progress in public policy. There are only a handful of health and human service professionals serving in public office; therefore, the fate of member issues is in

the hands of people who know little about health and human services and the work being done. Although they may not realize it, they depend on the input of practitioners and experts to craft sound public policy. This requires members to seize the initiative and provide this information to elected officials and their staff.

RCPA needs member help and input to make its legislative affairs agenda a success. Jack Phillips, director of legislative affairs, asks all interested members to help reboot and reorganize the Legislative Affairs Committee. The next meeting is **September 8, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** at the Harrisburg office. The meeting purpose is to listen to member needs regarding legislative affairs and establish a strategic plan for the committee. At the meeting, the committee will:

- Identify a committee chair and potential new members;
- Discuss director of legislative affairs interaction with the administration, general assembly, and members;
- Review RCPA's process of developing and implementing legislative strategies;
- Determine the need for a formalized political candidate interview process; and
- Review the process for distributing RCPA Political Action Committee funds to candidates.

*Don't ask
what the world
needs. Ask
what makes
you come alive
and go do it.
Because what
the world
needs is people
who have
come alive.*

— Howard Thurman

■ MEDICAL REHABILITATION

CMS Publishes Final FY 2015 IRF Rule

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published the [final rule](#) that updates the fiscal year (FY) 2015 Medicare payment policies and rates for the Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) Prospective Payment System and the IRF Quality Reporting Program in the August 6 *Federal Register*. Highlights and the impact of the final rule are available from [RCPA](#).

Medical Rehab Committee Meets September 11

The RCPA Medical Rehabilitation Committee (Medical Division) will meet September 11, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., in Harrisburg. Agenda topics include FY 2015 inpatient rehabilitation facility prospective payment system final payment rule and quality reporting program; legislative update from the American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association; discussion on Highmark and naviHealth partnership; member updates on accountable care organization projects, collaborative efforts, and readmission prevention strategies; Recreational Therapy Licensure bill; Department of Public Welfare place of service reviews; Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Early Reach Initiative; and more. Please [register](#) to attend.

Rehabilitation Outcomes Study Among Burn Injury Patients

The American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation released a [study](#) comparing rehabilitation outcomes among burn patients admitted to an inpatient rehabilitation facility (IRF) who were discharged to acute care and then readmitted to an IRF, with burn patients admitted to an IRF only once. The study found that the differences in rehabilitation outcomes between the repeater and non-repeater groups were small and may not reflect clinically meaningful differences. Burn injury patients who required a second IRF admission had rehabilitation outcomes similar to those of burn injury patients who did not require a second admission, emphasizing the value of inpatient rehabilitation for burn injury IRF readmissions.

■ CONFERENCES/TRAININGS

September 9. Free Webinar. [Unemployment Insurance for Non-profit Health and Human Services Organizations.](#)

September 10 – 12. [Parity and the Affordable Care Act: Bridging Gaps to Advance Mental Health.](#) Mental Health America Annual Conference. Sheraton Atlanta Hotel. Atlanta, GA.

October 7 – 10. RCPA Conference 2014: [TOGETHER...ONE.](#) Seven Springs Mountain Resort. Seven Springs, PA. [Registration.](#)

October 15 – 16. Pennsylvania Suicide Prevention Conference, [Making a Difference Together.](#) Ramada Inn. State College, PA.

October 24. Rural Behavioral Health Conference – Recovery: The Journey Continues. DoubleTree Hotel Meadow Lands. Washington, PA. Sponsored by Staunton Farm Foundation. Free for consumers; \$30 for professionals. Please see the full [brochure](#). [Registration](#) is open.

Deadline Approaching for TBI Grant Applications

The Department of Health Bureau of Family Health, Division of Child and Adult Health Services continues to accept applications for funding for schools, community sports programs, and providers of recreational opportunities for youth. The grant is designed to support education and awareness of the causes and consequences of concussion and mild to severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) in youth. The [announcement](#) about the grant opportunity was published in the June 28 *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. The deadline to submit applications is September 15.

Brain Injury Global Picnic on September 20

On September 20, the [Brain Injury Global Picnic](#) will be held to unite everyone involved in the support and treatment of brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and other disabilities worldwide. The goal of the picnic is to bring an end to “the silent epidemic” by increasing awareness about brain injury, especially traumatic brain injury, by uniting organizations across the world on one day.

Conference on Alternative Treatments for Brain Injury Recovery

On October 11, “Looking Outside the Box: Alternative Treatment for Brain Injury Recovery,” will be offered in Philadelphia. The conference will focus on alternative treatments for brain injury recovery and feature sessions such as homeopathy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, neurofeedback, and vision therapy. Registration and additional information is available from the [Acquired Brain Injury Network of Pennsylvania, Inc.](#)

Article Focuses on Simple Test to Catch More Concussions on Field

In an article, “Simple Test Helps Doctors Catch More Concussions on the Field,” published in the July 28 *Medical Press*, researchers report that adding one simple test to a team physician’s sideline list detected 100 percent of concussions that occurred during games. In the study, researchers evaluated the King-Devick test, developed more than two decades ago to initially evaluate children for learning disabilities. This test, combined with two other tests that measure cognition and balance, produced an accuracy rate of 100 percent in recognizing concussions.

CPARC Develops Community Employment Program

The Arc of Cumberland and Perry Counties (CPARC) S. Wilson Pollock Center for Industrial Training has implemented a new program, Accelerated Community Employment Development. The new program provides individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to participate in work training leading to community employment. This initiative offers individuals a variety of employment training experiences including a structured vocational curriculum and community-based work assessments. There are volunteer opportunities; job shadowing, job development, and job coaching; industry integrated work experiences; and the possibilities of entrepreneurship.

CPARC also hosts a work study program in cooperation with Keystone Human Services and Dauphin County Mental Health Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Department. This is a 10-week summer work experience that includes classroom days and paid part-time employment. Job coaching services are provided to support the individual during working hours. The work study program offers real job experience and learning how to get to work. Additional information about these programs is available from Susan Wenning, CPARC assistant director for vocational programs (swenning@cparc.org or 717-766-8512).

Documentation Work Group to Conclude

As reported in earlier [Alerts](#), RCPA and other stakeholders challenged the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) policy clarification that indicated that concurrent documentation is not a billable part of the therapeutic episode for peer support. After discussions, OMHSAS issued a clarification stating that collaborative work on development, review, and revision of goals can be part of the billable time spent with an individual receiving peer support and other services. The OMHSAS Policy Bureau convened a short-term stakeholder work group to clarify which aspects of collaborative goal setting and progress assessment are considered part of the therapeutic process and which are a non-billable aspect of documentation. RCPA staff and its Mental Health Committee Co-chair Kathy Yarzebinski participated in the work group. This work group focused on developing practice guidelines and training suggestions for the field. It will conclude in the next weeks and present recommendations to OMHSAS. RCPA will share those recommendations when they are complete. The association appreciates the policy clarification that recognizes advances in best practice that providers across Pennsylvania have adopted with great success.

Suicide Prevention Activities

September 8 marks the beginning of National Suicide Prevention Week and September 10 is World Suicide Prevention Day. The American Association of Suicidology has provided an information and [media kit](#) which includes resources, sample media statements and public service announcements, fact sheets, and more to help inform about suicide prevention.

What Primary Care Needs From Behavioral Health

RCPA member Child Guidance Resource Centers (CGRC) was interviewed for the *National Council Magazine* about its partnership with ChesPenn Health Services, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). The interview was reported in the *National Council Magazine, Issue 1, 2014*. ChesPenn contracts with Child Guidance Resource Centers to offer fully integrated on-site behavioral health services for its primary care patients. Three days a week a behavioral health consultant, employed by CGRC, works at the FQHC supporting the five primary care practitioners in meeting the behavioral health needs of more than 3,000 patients. CGRC staff is available both by appointment and on a walk-in basis.

The article reported a variety of topics including the history of the relationship, contractual arrangements, initial billing obstacles and considerations, the benefit of being perceived as part of the medical practice, and the benefits to patients and the physical health providers when the service is truly integrated rather than just co-located.

Bringing Primary Care to Behavioral Health Sites

RCPA member NHS Human Services was highlighted in the *National Council Magazine, Issue 1, 2014* for its model of integration of care. Despite funding constraints and challenges, NHS determined that doing what is possible now is more important than waiting for the funding that would make full integration a reality. Collaborating with mission-driven primary-care practices and the participating behavioral health managed care organization as full partners, using current staff, and blending current behavioral health and primary care resources into a multidisciplinary health home team are the primary ingredients of the NHS integration effort.

A nurse navigator is attached to each adult mental health community-based case management team, mental health case managers are trained as whole health care managers, and peers in recovery are trained as wellness coaches. Nurse navigators are the bridge between the primary care practice and the outreach capability of the health home. NHS is participating in a learning collaborative in southeastern Pennsylvania to share information, strategies, and operational procedures related to developing health homes. For more information about the initiative, please contact [Donald Thompson](#).

PA eHealth Organizes Webcast on Privacy Issues

RCPA was pleased to be part of a webcast, organized by Pennsylvania eHealth Partnership Authority, that focused on drug and alcohol privacy issues. The authority was created by Act 121 of 2012. Its purpose is to improve health care through secure electronic health information exchange among organizations. Numerous drug and alcohol leaders including Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs Secretary Gary Tennis participated in the discussion. The primary purpose of the discussion was to focus on provider-to-provider sharing of electronic information. Federal and state regulations were discussed and it was agreed by most that education is needed throughout the health care system. Several case scenarios were presented by physicians and leaders felt confident that access to service would not be threatened by existing regulations. Most confidentiality problems occur between provider and payor not between provider and provider.

Drug and Alcohol Regulation Update

The drug and alcohol program general regulations will be presented at the September 4 meeting of the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) for final approval. As reported, a small group of hard working RCPA members went through the regulations line-by-line and submitted many and major recommendations for change. All association recommendations were accepted by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) and others in state government. The regulations are expected to be supported by the IRRC and, hopefully, finalized soon after.

Many of the same members completed the review of Chapter 709, Subchapter E, *Standards for Inpatient Nonhospital Activities – Residential Treatment and Rehabilitation*. These recommendations were submitted to DDAP in August. Chapter 157 recommendations will be submitted soon. RCPA would like to thank again the amazing group of members willing to devote hours to review these outdated regulations and develop recommendations for changes. Questions regarding drug and alcohol regulations and revision work underway should be directed to [Lynn Cooper](#).

APS Trainings

The Adult Protective Services (APS) Act 70 of 2010 will deliver protective services for Pennsylvania's adults with disabilities ages 18 – 59. To ensure that informed and trained investigators conduct effective protective services investigations, the law mandates that all newly hired APS workers receive uniform training. A self-study course will be used as an ongoing reference. Each module covers a specific topic and will be available to all stakeholders. [Linda Drummond](#) is a member of the APS Regulations and Trainings Review work groups. Please share with her any recommendations for training topics. Current modules under development include:

- Introduction to Abuse, Neglect, Abandonment and Exploitation, and Legal Mandates;
- Adults with Disabilities Overview and Rights;
- Mental Health;
- Overview of Service Systems for Adults;
- Complex Communication Needs;
- Impact of Trauma;
- Substance Abuse;
- Mandatory Reporting and Receiving the Report of Need;
- Adult Protective Services Investigation;
- Investigations in State-licensed and State-operated Facilities;
- Reporting and Documentation Requirements;
- Assessment, Service Plans, Delivery, and Termination of Protective Services;
- Protective Services Interview;
- Neglect by Caregiver and Abandonment;
- Self-neglect;
- Physical Abuse;
- Sexual Abuse;
- Financial Exploitation; and
- Legal Interventions.

PUNs Update

An Office of Developmental Programs work group has been formed to make recommendations to the current Priority and Urgency of Needs (PUNs) document. Coordinated by the Temple University Institute on Disabilities, this group will include families, self-advocates, supports coordination organizations, and administrative entities. The provider representative will be RCPA Policy Specialist Linda Drummond. RCPA members are asked to share recommendations for changes to this document with [Ms. Drummond](#).

DSP Recognition Week

Direct Support Professionals Recognition Week is September 7 – 13. The US Senate issued a [proclamation](#) and, at RCPA's request, Governor Corbett issued a [Pennsylvania proclamation](#) in recognition of direct support workers. Members that employ direct support professionals (DSPs) in the intellectual, developmental, and other disability service systems are asked to contact local media outlets and county governments to generate coverage of DSP week. It is critical that community providers remind the public of the important work these staff provide. To assist members, RCPA has developed several templates that may be customized for use to reach out to the public and media:

- [Request letter](#) for counties – this letter requests that a county or locality designate September 7 – 13 as DSP week. The request

should be sent along with the proclamation.

- Reporter/editor [pitch email](#) – members are asked to send the email to any reporter or editor in their region.
- Sample [press release](#) – the press release is aimed at smaller publications that cannot assign a reporter to write a story such as community newspapers, radio stations, and other local media outlets.
- Members are asked to customize the pitch letter and press release to include agency information and an anecdote that describes the agency's services and the role of DSPs. RCPA is also interested in featuring agency recognition activities in future issues of *RCPA News*. Please share stories and photos with [Linda Drummond](#).

LARK Award

LARK Enterprises in Lawrence County recently had its janitorial services program named "Runner Up for Best Janitor Services" by the *New Castle News* Best of the Best Awards. Since 1989, *New Castle News* has run this award program with readers nominating and voting for their favorite businesses in a variety of categories.

LARK's janitorial service is part of its transitional employment program, supporting individuals with disabilities who are transitioning to integrated, competitive employment through real work experience in community locations. The program currently has two separate janitorial crews with nine individuals working between an afternoon and midnight shift. Both crews provide general cleaning to area businesses which includes vacuuming, mopping floors, and trash removal.

Janitorial Job Coach Richard DiCaprio said, "The janitorial crew is honored and want to thank the community for its vote for recognizing its work. The PM janitorial crew works very hard to perform the quality of work that is expected in LARK Enterprises' janitorial training program."



Crew members Bill Brown and Margaret Novasel are pictured on the job.

Keith Stewart, janitorial job coach for the midnight crew, attributes the program's success to the crew members. He said, "We have the tenacity, attitudes, and the 'get it done right' spirit of this crew to thank for this award."

IDD Toolkit on Health Care

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center has coordinated development of a [toolkit](#) offering information to improve health care for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Adults with IDD often face health disparities such as complex, multiple, or difficult-to-treat medical conditions; difficulty accessing health care due to physical or financial barriers, receiving inadequate health care; difficulties expressing symptoms and pain; and receive little attention to wellness, preventive care, or health promotion.

Many physicians receive little training in caring for individuals with IDD and many have little experience with this population. The toolkit offers best practices tools and information on specific medical and behavioral concerns. The online toolkit has four categories:

- *General Issues* such as communication barriers and informed consent;
- *Physical Issues* that includes forms for a cumulative patient profile and preventive care checklists;
- *Health Watch Tables* that provide guidance on specific health concerns for those with autism, Down syndrome, Fragile X, Prader-Willi, and Williams syndrome; and
- *Behavioral and Mental Health Issues* offering risk assessment tools, crisis management, and prevention plans.

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) has released the following information.

[Announcement #048-14](#): ODP Deaf Services Required Training for Investigators, Licensing Inspectors and Monitors.

[Announcement #049-14](#): CMS Approved Second Waiver Amendments for ODP Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support Waivers Effective July 1, 2013.

[Announcement #050-14](#): SCO Monitoring Tool for FY 14/15. This must be completed by October 17.

[Announcement #051-14](#): SC Curriculum 2014 Required Training: Foundations of Recognizing and Mitigating Risk. Available until October 3.

[Announcement #052-14](#): Futures Planning Website Updated and Submission of Your Documents Sharing Best Practices with Implementation Teams Extended. Best practices documents may be submitted to ODP.

[Announcement #053-14](#): New Lessons Added to "Giving Medication at Home: A Course for Lifesharers." This course is composed of 12 webcasts.

[Announcement #054-14](#): 2014 ODP Required Training for Supports Coordinators and SCO Supervisors. ODP will provide 16 hours of the required SC training for calendar year 2014. The remaining 24 hours of required training should be obtained through local trainings and/or conferences. SCs can look at conferences such as PADES, September 8 – 10; Building Bridges, September 16 – 17; and the RCPA conference, October 7 – 10 to obtain the additional 24 hours.

[Announcement #055-15](#): Availability of Pennsylvania's Proposed Statewide HCBS Transition Plan for Public Comment. Public sessions are scheduled across the state and comments will be accepted until September 12.

[Informational Memo #056-14](#): Updating Provider and AE Contact Information for Provider Monitoring Fiscal Year 2014-2015. Direct service providers and Administrative Entities are required to keep ODP informed regarding primary and secondary contact persons for provider monitoring. Updating this information must be completed by September 12.

[Announcement #057-14](#): New Vendor Managing the Certified Investigation Training Program. Effective September 1, ODP will administer the certified investigation training program in partnership with Temple University.

[Announcement #058-14](#): ODP Discussion of Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget. Maestro conference call scheduled for September 5, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

[Announcement #059-14](#): ODP Year 7 Cost Report Training Date for Waiver Direct Service Provider Staff. Scheduled September 11 at 1:00 p.m.

Disability Employment Month

October is recognized nationally as Disability Employment Awareness Month, organized by the US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy. This year's theme is, "Expect. Employ. Empower." A [variety of resources](#) are available to assist agencies in recognition of this event, including sample articles, proclamations, and press releases.



Member Recommendations Requested

RCPA continues its advocacy with the administration and legislators for the continuation of current supports and services. Federal changes may also impact the intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) system over the next few years. These changes include:

- **Home and community-based services waiver rule changes** effective March 17 that amended Medicaid regulations to provide requirements regarding person-centered plans of care, characteristics of settings that are home and community-based, and settings that may not be home and community-based.
- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act**, signed into law July 22, significantly limits placements at sheltered workshops and other work environments where people with disabilities earn less than

minimum wage. Individuals age 24 and younger with disabilities will no longer be allowed to work for less than the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour unless they first receive pre-employment transition services at school and try vocational rehabilitation services. There are exceptions for those who are deemed ineligible for vocational rehabilitation and would allow individuals already earning less than the federal minimum to continue in their jobs.

RCPA strongly believes in a full continuum of services to be available to individuals with IDD, including the range of services available at site locations and in the community. The association also feels it is time for members to begin planning for the possibility of changes in service options in the future. Member expertise and ideas are needed to

assist in developing recommendations for this possibility. RCPA has heard from numerous members that they are already exploring options to continue to serve individuals in various areas such as prevocational and vocational training, competitive employment, and new supports for those that are severely involved.

RCPA asks members to share suggestions, pilots, options, and/or new service ideas that will assist in the continuation of necessary community supports, focus on everyday lives, and address the needs of those that may not be capable of some of the federally-influenced recommendations for such issues as competitive employment. Development of these services allows RCPA and its members to remain in the leadership role in Pennsylvania's service delivery system. Please share your ideas and suggestions with [Linda Drummond](#).

Building Bridges 2014

The 2014 Aging/Intellectual Disability Cross-systems Conference, Building Bridges, is September 16 – 17 at the Holiday Inn, Grantville. The agenda and registration information is available through the [Long Term Living Training Institute](#). This conference is for people who are part of the aging network and intellectual disability system. The goal is to help participants:

- Identify programs and models of care which help improve the quality of life for older persons with intellectual disability,
- Identify the challenges faced by this population,
- Utilize resources and ideas presented to enhance workforce efforts, and
- Understand the aspects of physical change with aging.

Examples of sessions scheduled include Managing Chronic Pain; Ethics in Caring; Specialized Alzheimer/Dementia Program for IDD; Diabetes and Nutrition; Creating a Forever Home; Dual Diagnosis Curriculum; Estate Planning, Guardianship, and Special Needs Trusts; Protective Services; Understanding Alzheimer's Impact on IDD; Reducing Microviolence; Supporting IDD Regarding Sexual Violence; and Power and Potency of Relationships.

CARES Reauthorized and Funded

President Obama reauthorized the nation's primary autism legislation that includes more than \$1 billion in federal funding for the developmental disorder. Known as the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act (Autism CARES), the law ensures continued funding for existing federal initiatives. The new legislation also requires that a point person be designated within the US Department of Health and Human Services to oversee autism research, services, and support activities. The measure includes changes to the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee and mandates that a new report be conducted focused on the needs of young adults and youth during transition.

New From ASERT: Infographics!

This summer the Autism Service Education, Resource, and Training (ASERT) Center released the first of what will be a series of information graphics or infographics. These infographics highlight findings from the Pennsylvania Autism Needs Assessment and Pennsylvania Autism Census. This information and visual representations provide state-specific information about a variety of topics important to individuals with autism, caregivers and family members, professionals, decision makers, and community members. Members may view the first infographic at <http://www.paautism.org>. Additional infographics and accompanying policy briefs will be released monthly.

A National Look at Mental Health Needs in Foster Care

The Center for Health Care Strategies recently released *A Striking Contrast: Behavioral Health Care for Children in Foster Care vs. the General Medicaid Child Population*. This report and the accompanying fact sheet and infographic offer a clear and compelling picture of the behavioral health care challenges faced by community providers that serve this population. Medicaid provides health coverage for most children and youth involved in the nation's foster care system. The recent report found that a disproportionate number of these children, nearly one in three, use behavioral health services. Children in foster care represent only three percent of all children in Medicaid, but 15 percent of those using behavioral health services and 29 percent of Medicaid expenditures for children's behavioral health services.

RWJ Report: Are the Children Well?

This summer the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation issued *Are the Children Well? A Model and Recommendations for Promoting the Mental Wellness of the Nation's Youth People*. National experts and child community mental health providers have long urged changes to help address disparities between physical and mental health care and promote social and emotional wellness. The authors effectively argue that the distinction between physical and mental health is "both artificial and harmful" and make a case for re-balancing attention to include wellness in addition to illness. The report urges leaders and policy makers to consider the evidence for interventions, both prevention- and promotion-oriented, that can improve mental wellness at the multiple levels of individual, family, school, and community. The report's comprehensive analysis and recommendations:

- Summarizes the knowledge conveyed by earlier reports on children's mental health;
- Considers the social and economic burdens of segregating physical and mental health;
- Summarizes the current landscape of how families access and pay for mental health services;
- Reviews research on the development of mental illness and wellness over the life course;
- Offers a more inclusive framework for understanding mental wellness;
- Describes multiple opportunities for improving children's well-being, consistent with this model; and
- Offers concrete, feasible recommendations to policymakers for improving the mental wellness of children and youth.

September Children's Committee

The September RCPA Children's Committee meeting is in Harrisburg and via webcast on September 17. The meeting will include updates from state agencies and association staff and continue to explore and discuss ways that providers can design and deliver outpatient-type services to children and adolescents. In addition to more traditional clinic-based services, members will share operational and clinical approaches to delivering behavioral health services in conjunction with school, child welfare, and health care partners.

FASD Awareness

As behavioral health providers observe Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness month they can rely on a new resource. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has published a Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) – *TIP 58: Addressing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)*. This is the first document in the TIP series to directly address FASD. The publication provides strategies and recommendations for expanding FASD prevention and treatment efforts across behavioral health settings and is available at no charge. The content of this very useful resource was developed and reviewed by substance abuse, mental health, and FASD experts from across the country.

CDC Study on Medicating Children

A recent report from the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) *Use of Medication Prescribed for Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties Among Children Aged 6–17 Years in the United States, 2011–2012*, found that an estimated 7.5 percent of American children age 6 – 17 were prescribed drugs to treat behavioral and emotional difficulties in 2011. According to the report, that estimate is equivalent to roughly 3.2 million children. The CDC reports that nearly eight percent of children whose parents are members of the US military and 9.2 percent of children from families with incomes below the poverty line take prescription drugs to treat emotional disturbances and mental health conditions. The CDC reports that more than one-half of children who used prescribed medication for emotional or behavioral difficulties had a parent report that this medication helped the child “a lot.”

Mandated Reporter Training

The target date for training and implementation of the new Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) is December. The training demands for licensed health care professionals, other mandated reporters, schools, and child-serving agencies and the county staff that conduct CPSL investigations all must be designed and developed in the very near future. The state's CPSL Implementation Team is discussing key curriculum elements for each target audience along with both online and in-person methods for initial and continuing education related to child abuse and reporting. The Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs, in conjunction with the Department of Public Welfare (DPW), has begun to provide advance notice to all health-related licensees that are considered “mandatory reporters” that they will need to complete three hours of DPW-approved training in child abuse recognition and reporting requirements as a condition of licensure. Additionally, effective with the first license renewal after January 1, 2015, all health-related licensees applying for the renewal of a license issued by the board will be required to complete at least two hours of board-approved continuing education in child abuse recognition and reporting requirements as a condition of renewal. RCPA will work with DPW and other state organizations that represent health and mental health care professionals to clarify the initial and continuing CPSL education and training requirements and to develop or identify training options for members.

OVR Early Reach Initiative

The RCPA Children's Steering Committee met with representatives of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to learn about the bureau's Early Reach Initiative. The OVR Early Reach Initiative was launched in October 2013 to better engage youth age 14 and older in all disability categories. Early reach coordinators are or soon will be based in all OVR regional offices to engage youth and families, schools, and service systems in considering OVR services that can assist youth with disabilities to secure and maintain employment and Independence. RCPA and OVR are planning a November webinar to provide an overview of the initiative and information about regional resources provided to youth by OVR. Look for an announcement this fall.

Back to School With the CoP on SBBH

It was in September 2006 that the association announced that the Department of Education (PDE) was funding school mental health grants. Working in collaboration with PDE, the grant application called for any school that applied to partner with a community mental health provider. Those grants became the catalyst for the creation of Pennsylvania's Community of Practice (CoP) on School Based Behavioral Health (SBBH). Association staff has represented members from the beginning of this process that has grown from a handful of small grants to hundreds of partnerships between schools and mental health agencies. From Student Assistance Programs, school-based outpatient services, school-based mental health teams, and School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, the partnership between schools and community providers has taken root across Pennsylvania. Together these partners work to overcome the critical non-academic barriers to learning for children and youth so that all can successfully transition into adulthood.

Pennsylvania Selected for Early Childhood Project LAUNCH

The Offices of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Child Development and Early Learning have announced that Pennsylvania has been selected as a grantee for Project LAUNCH. The Pennsylvania LAUNCH partnership will be based on comprehensive and integrated early childhood service strategies that will be tested in Allegheny County as a model for other communities. Families, pediatricians, child care providers, treatment professionals, and educators will work together to accomplish successful results for the project. The five-year grant of \$800,000 each year will take a public health approach and utilize universal promotion and prevention efforts. It will introduce screening to identify young children at risk and facilitate referral to evidence-based interventions. The goals for the Pennsylvania project are based on the five core LAUNCH Strategies:

- Ensuring young children at risk for poor social/emotional or cognitive outcomes are screened and provided services,
- Integrating physical health and behavioral health services,
- Providing early childhood mental health consultation in early care and education settings,
- Providing enhanced home visiting, and
- Family strengthening and parent skill building.

The project will serve 2,000 individuals annually and 10,250 individuals throughout the five years through screening and referral. The grant calls for the creation of Young Child Wellness Councils comprised of family members and system leaders at the state level and in Allegheny County to facilitate implementation.

More Data Shows TSS Cuts Continue

RCPA was provided with the most recent statewide data on the use of Therapeutic Support Services (TSS) requested by a consumer advocacy attorney under the state's Right to Know Law. The data shows a continued reduction in TSS to children and youth in Pennsylvania. While there has been no indication of change in the state's medical necessity criteria and indicators that the need for services should be increasing with the increased incidence of autism and the reduction and replacement of out-of-home treatment options, the availability of TSS continues to evaporate. Using 2011 as a baseline the cuts in TSS utilization have been:

- 2012 – 561,616 hours (a reduction in Medicaid service expenditures of over \$16.8 million) and
- 2013 – 2,208,111 hours (a reduction in Medicaid service expenditures of over \$66.2 million).

In January 2014, the last month for which information was provided, data shows a nearly 13 percent reduction from January 2013. Questions continue to be raised. What is the impact of nearly \$84 million in TSS reductions and millions more in residential treatment reductions on child mental health consumers in home, school, and community settings? Have the savings been redirected into promoting and funding higher quality services? Have the drivers of these changes been an improvement in access, quality, and outcomes or just a better "bottom line" for the state, counties, and managed care organizations?



REHABILITATION & COMMUNITY PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

Communications Director

RCPA – a large, statewide trade association representing providers of health and human services – seeks a full-time communications director. Based in Harrisburg, the successful candidate will hold a degree in communications, journalism, or technology and have at least five years’ experience. Primary responsibilities include:

Candidates should send a cover letter/ statement of interest, salary requirements, and résumé to Richard Edley, President and CEO, RCPA, 777 East Park Dr, Ste 300, Hbg, PA 17111 or redley@paproviders.org.

- Edit all written communications sent to members;
- Management of communication patterns, including listservs;
- Design and maintenance of web site;
- Management of media relations, including social media platforms;
- Manage and host web conferences;
- Manage monthly newsletter, including content, design, production, and distribution; and
- Maintain contractual relationships with endorsed vendors.

Applicants must possess exceptional writing, editing, and verbal communication skills and be fluent in applications such as Microsoft Office, Adobe Design and Web CS6, and Adobe Connect. Experience with mass market email systems preferred.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

Monday, September 8	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Legislative Affairs Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
Wednesday, September 10	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Human Resources Committee <i>RCPA Conference Room</i>
Thursday, September 11	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Medical Rehabilitation Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
Tuesday, September 16	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Criminal Justice Committee Drug and Alcohol Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
Wednesday, September 17	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Children’s Committee Mental Health Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
Thursday, September 18	9:00 – 11:00 a.m. 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. 2:45 – 4:45 p.m.	Supports Coordination Organization Subcommittee Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee Vocational Rehabilitation Subcommittee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
Wednesday, September 24	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Brain Injury Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>

OCTOBER

Tuesday – Friday, October 7 – 10		TOGETHER...ONE – 2014 Conference <i>Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Seven Springs</i>
Thursday, October 9	12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Explore Factors and Learn Strategies to Provide Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Rehabilitation <i>IPRC Webinar</i>