

❖ CONFERENCE

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE 2022 RCPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: “TOGETHER!”

Registration for the RCPA Conference 2022 *Together!* is [now open!](#) The conference will be held October 11 – 14, 2022, at the Hershey Lodge in person this year. Be sure to register, as the early bird rate is available now until September 9, 2022. We are excited for the lineup of speakers who will be presenting at this year's conference, as there will be pertinent information available and discussed for all service areas.



Together!
RCPA 2022

Be sure to check out the entire list of sessions in our [brochure](#), and note that sessions will be recorded to allow participants access after the event. In addition to an amazing roster of speakers, our 2022 Conference will have an exciting array of [sponsors](#) and [exhibitors](#). We thank those who have committed to our conference thus far! If you are interested in sponsoring or exhibiting, [visit here](#) for more details. Questions about the conference may be directed to [Carol Ferenz](#) or [Sarah Eyster](#), Conference Coordinators [[view full article](#) for more information]. ◀

❖ SPECIAL FEATURES

RCPA Website Offers Accessibility Tool

Thanks to [accessiBe](#), RCPA's website is accessible to individuals with disabilities! Their accessibility tool is free to most nonprofits. It lets your end users tailor your websites for multiple different special needs, by selecting various settings for both accessibility and content. To see the options available, click or tap on the round accessibility widget in the bottom left corner of your screen!

- [View the accessiBe TV commercial](#)
- [Visit the accessiBe website](#)



NEW MEMBER INFORMATION

September 2022

BUSINESS

Eleos Health

260 Charles Street
Waltham, MA 02453
Chuck Tepper, VP, Public Partnerships

eVero Corporation

48 S Service Rd, Ste 300
Melville, NY 11747
George Koutsopetras, Director of
Client Development

PROVIDER

Alliance Health Wraparound, Inc.

58 W Main St
Uniontown, PA 15401
Sebastian LoNigro, CEO

About RCPA:

With well over 350 members, the majority of who serve over 1 million Pennsylvanians annually, Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association (RCPA) is among the largest and most diverse state health and human services trade associations in the nation. RCPA advocates for those in need, works to advance effective state and federal public policies, serves as a forum for the exchange of information and experience, and provides professional support to members. RCPA provider members offer mental health, drug and alcohol, intellectual and developmental disabilities, children's, brain injury, medical rehabilitation, and physical disabilities and aging services, through all settings and levels of care. Contact **Tieanna Lloyd**, Membership Services Manager, with inquiries or updates regarding the following:

- **Membership Benefits**
- **Your Staffing Updates** (i.e., new hires, promotions, retirements)



STAFF

Richard S. Edley, PhD

President and CEO

Allison Brognia

Event Planner/ Accounts Payable Manager

Melissa Dehoff

Director, Rehabilitation Services Divisions

Sarah Eyster, MSW

Director, Mental Health Division

Carol Ferenz

Director, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Division

Cindi Hobbes

*Director, International Pediatric Rehabilitation
Collaborative*

Tieanna Lloyd

Accounts Receivable/Membership Services Manager

Tina Miletic

Assistant to the President/CEO, Finance Manager

Sharon Militello

Director, Communications

Hayley Myer

Administrative/Communications Specialist

Jack Phillips, JD

Director, Government Affairs

Jim Sharp, MS

Director, Children's Division

Jason Snyder

Director, Drug & Alcohol Division

MEMBER CONTRIBUTOR CORNER

“Mock” OSHA Self Audit Tips

by Gordon Smoko, CSP, CFPS, ARM, Senior Risk Manager, Brown & Brown

OSHA compliance is an ever-present concern for all businesses. Health care has unique exposures, making compliance a challenge. With OSHA’s maximum penalty for an “other than serious” citation increasing to \$14,502 per violation in 2022, it pays for RCPA members to remain aware of the compliance requirements. In this article, I review the tools available that specially cover health care related operations for a “mock” OSHA inspection.

First off, what is a “mock” OSHA self-audit? A mock OSHA self-audit includes a review of your OSHA mandated health and safety programs, employee safety training records, and injury / illness records. The audit also involves a walk-through of your operations to identify safety hazards

that represent violations of OSHA standards. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, often by the safety director or other staff in conjunction with the safety committee.

A thorough review will require a significant amount of time — several days — for the review of written programs and site inspections. Also, it should encompass all aspects of the operations, including maintenance, dietary, transportation, and administration, in addition to the traditionally thought of direct health care environment within the organization... [\[read full article\]](#). ◀



DIVERSITY



Racial Equity Meets Trauma Informed Care

We live and work in an age where daily, we are expanding our understanding of the impacts of inequity, racism, and trauma. For many racial minorities and People of Color, racism adds an additional layer of trauma. It is crucial that we look at these problems and potential solutions in conjunction with one another to develop strategies targeted at individuals who have experienced racialized trauma.

The Center for Health Care Strategies offers [these practical considerations](#) to help health systems and provider practices incorporate a focus on racial equity to enhance their trauma-informed care efforts. ◀

TELEHEALTH

State & Federal Updates for Telehealth

The landscape for telehealth in Pennsylvania continues to trend towards sustaining and expanding the use of telehealth in the future. In August, Governor Wolf signed two pieces of legislation impacting telehealth services; Act 30 maintains previous public health emergency (PHE) flexibilities until October 31, 2022; and Act 76 removes the statutory requirement of 50% onsite psychiatric time in the clinic and permits the use of telehealth.

Likewise, The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) has provided an [updated guidance/FAQ](#) for the ongoing use of telehealth, after the release of the most

recent telehealth bulletin [OMHSAS-22-02](#). This updated bulletin confirms and defines the need for verbal consent in the event that physical or electronic signatures cannot be obtained.

On the federal legislative front, there is a pending bipartisan bill that would extend the telehealth flexibilities for an additional two years. Under the current PHE, these flexibilities will remain in place for 151 days after the last federal PHE, which is set to expire in October 2022, thus extending the current telehealth flexibilities until March 2023. ◀

❖ GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



RCPA's Legislative Tracking Reports

RCPA is constantly tracking various policy initiatives and legislation that may have positive or negative effects on our members and those we serve. For your convenience, RCPA has created a legislative tracking report, which is broken down into specific policy areas. You can review these tracking reports below to see the legislative initiatives that the PA General Assembly may undertake during the current Legislative Session. If you have questions on a specific bill or policy, please contact **Jack Phillips**, Director of Government Affairs. ◀

- ▶ Brain Injury
- ▶ Budget
- ▶ Children
- ▶ Criminal Justice
- ▶ Drug and Alcohol
- ▶ Intellectual Disabilities
- ▶ Medical Rehabilitation
- ▶ Mental Health
- ▶ Suicide

❖ BRAIN INJURY

BIAA Webinar on Spasticity Following Brain Injury: Common Symptoms & Current Treatment

The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is offering a free [webinar](#), "Spasticity Following Brain Injury: Common Symptoms and Current Treatment Options," on Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 1:00 pm. Cindy B. Ivanhoe, MD will describe the symptoms of spasticity and explain why and how it is treated. She will also discuss combination treatments for spasticity. ◀



❖ MEDICAL REHABILITATION

NIDILRR Listening Sessions

The National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) has begun to develop their 2024–2029 Long-Range Plan and will be hosting a series of virtual stakeholder listening sessions, to provide more details on the plan's framework and allow stakeholders to ask questions and provide input. [Use this link](#) to learn more about the sessions, including the full schedule and registration.

CMS Parts 1 & 2 IRF Virtual Training Programs Available

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has posted Parts 1 and 2 of the 2022 inpatient rehabilitation facility (IRF) [virtual training programs](#). The training programs focus on the IRF patient assessment instrument (PAI) version 4.0. ◀

❖ PHYSICAL DISABILITIES & AGING

Department of Aging & PA Link Launch Media Campaign To Build Awareness About PA Link

The Department of Aging, along with the PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources, have launched a statewide media campaign to build greater consumer awareness of the [PA Link](#). The PA Link provides information and referral services to older adults and individuals with disabilities. Through person-centered counseling, this program helps individuals with activities of daily living by connecting them with medical and non-medical supports and services regardless of an individual's age, physical or developmental disability, or ability to pay. ◀



❖ DRUG & ALCOHOL

Harm Reduction and Addiction Treatment: Not an Either/Or Proposition

By Jason Snyder

Since as early as the 1960s, harm reductionists have operated mostly underground and in the shadows in the United States. Today, the harm reduction movement is squarely in the middle of the conversation about and visible on the front lines of the work being done to save the lives of those who use drugs. Harm reduction has positioned itself as arguably the most effective immediate solution to saving people from dying due to a drug overdose. And many, including at the highest levels of state and federal government, are taking notice.

Harm reduction, according to the [National Harm Reduction Coalition](#), incorporates a spectrum of strategies that includes safer use of drugs, managed use, abstinence,

meeting people who use drugs “where they’re at,” and addressing conditions of use along with the use itself.

Some of those strategies include syringe service programs (SSPs) and fentanyl test strips. And although opponents of harm reduction argue that such strategies enable drug use, according to the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [new users of SSPs are five times more likely to enter drug treatment](#) and three times more likely to stop using drugs than individuals who don’t use the programs. The CDC also reports that SSPs help serve as a bridge to other health services, including Hepatitis C and HIV testing and treatment, and vaccination [[read full article](#)]. ◀



❖ INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

PA Abuse/Neglect Registry Task Force

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) has taken the lead in creating a task force to develop recommendations for legislation supporting an Abuse and Neglect Registry in Pennsylvania. This group was formed due to the concern that care-dependent adults with disabilities and older adults are highly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Carol Ferenz, IDD Division Director at RCPA, has been appointed as RCPA's representative, along with representatives from ODP, OLTL, OMHSAS, DHS general council, PDA, OCYF, Senate and House Human Services staff, Temple Institute on Protective Services, National Adult Protective Services, Autism Connection, Vision for Equality, Arc of PA, Disability Rights PA, Speaking for Ourselves, Self-Advocates United as 1, PA Association of County Administrators, PAR, and The Provider Alliance.

When abuse/neglect occurs, a substantial gap in preventing recurrence is that, even in serious cases of substantiated abuse/neglect in PA's Adult Protective Services (APS) or Older Adult Protective Services (OAPS), unless there is a successful criminal prosecution, the responsible caregiver is not prevented from employment at another agency, obtaining guardianship of an individual, or volunteering in agencies supporting individuals with disabilities. In Pennsylvania, without a criminal conviction, there is no mechanism to identify or track caregivers who abuse or neglect the individuals they look after, because PA does not maintain a registry of caregivers who have abused or neglected individuals in their care [[read full article](#)]. ◀

❖ CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PCCD Announces School-Based Mental Health Grants

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Strategic Policy Development of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) announced the availability of School Safety and Security Program funding to support the [School Mental Health & Safety and Security](#) Grants for the 2022–2023 school year. School entities (i.e., school districts, area career and technical schools, intermediate units, charter schools, regional charter schools, and cyber charter schools) are immediately eligible to apply for these funds to address mental health initiatives and physical security enhancements.

Per Act 55 of 2022, \$190 million is being announced to support this initiative, \$95 million of which is dedicated to mental health initiatives and \$95 million of which is dedicated to physical security enhancements. Awards will be made to 784 eligible school entities with budgets not to exceed the formula distribution included in the solicitation for 24-month project periods, contingent on the school entity making the application to PCCD.

RCPA encourages all providers of school-based mental health services to engage with their local school districts as an opportunity to participate in the planning and/or service provision of school-based mental health. ◀



Value-Based Payment/Purchasing Group Meetings

RCPA provider members met in July and heard from Dr. Yvette Jackson of Devereux about their Value-Based Payment (VBP) experience in Arizona. Dr. Jackson also shared some documents with the attendees. In addition, Fady Sahhar of ProVantaCare discussed the RCPA VBP white paper. The next VBP provider member meeting will be held [Wednesday, September 28, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm](#). The group is looking for providers who would like to discuss/present on current VBP arrangements in Pennsylvania for FBMH, ACT, outpatient, or another level of care. Meetings after September will include business members, as well as have a payor portion of the meeting. Finally, the group will be sending out a survey to RCPA provider members looking for readiness and input for future meeting content. Please contact [Sarah Eyster](#) if you are interested in speaking. ◀

988/Crisis Intervention Meeting

Join your colleagues for a meeting with OMHSAS and Jefferson University staff to hear updates on the 988 rollout, funding plan, update on crisis intervention service expansion, and the crisis intervention regulations on [Wednesday, September 14, 10:00 am – 11:30 am](#). ◀

Telehealth Operations Meeting

The next Telehealth Operations meeting will be held Thursday, October 6, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm; please watch for the registration link. ◀

Long-Term Structured Residence (LTSR) Licensing Meeting

A meeting for LTSR providers across the Commonwealth will be convened in September, date TBD, to discuss concerns with recent licensing experiences. Please contact [Sarah Eyster](#) for more information. ◀

Integrated Care and Wellness Center (ICWC)/Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Update

The bipartisan gun safety bill of 2022 has identified CCBHC expansion as a priority for mental health services. As such, the government has identified CCBHC state expansion as a priority. Sadly, this does not include funding for expansion in Pennsylvania directly. The Pennsylvania version of the CCBHC, called ICWC, continues and there is a possibility of expansion in late 2023. SAMHSA continues to offer direct provider grant opportunities annually. Related to the original demonstration program, OMHSAS continues to participate in regular meetings with SAMHSA and has noted SAMHSA's inflexibility with the current quality measures. Other states have asked SAMHSA and CMS to be more flexible as well. To learn more about this, please join us on [Monday, September 19, 9:30 am – 11:00 am](#), to hear from both OMHSAS and the National Council. For more information, contact [Sarah Eyster](#). ◀



RCPA Events Calendar

*Events subject to change; members will be notified of any developments.