

State Implementation of Health Care Reform

January 2012 Update

An Initiative of APA Practice



Passage of the **Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** in 2010 has given rise to opportunities for psychologists to address longstanding problems with health care access and inadequate service delivery systems. Given that much of health care reform will be implemented at the state level by 2014 it became essential for APA Practice to develop strategies to assist state psychological associations with these efforts. Several departments in APA Practice are contributing to this effort which is being facilitated administratively by the State Advocacy Office.

Background

In October 2011, an Advisory Group was formed to review the many elements of national health care reform under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that are to be implemented at the state level over the next several years. The Advisory Group membership is composed of representatives from several state constituencies. The Advisory Group serves as a sounding board for APA Practice in its efforts to assist state psychological associations (SPTAs) with resources and expertise in order to participate in the development and implementation of health care reform in their states. Also during the Fall of 2011, Dr. Katherine Nordal, Executive Director for Professional Practice, formed an internal team of APA Practice staff to advise her on program development and implementation related to health care reform. The APA Practice Health Care Team discusses and plans ongoing staff work in health care reform as a complement to the work of the Advisory Group.

ACA Priority Areas

Psychology's priority areas relative to the ACA reforms include: Medicaid redesign; formation of state health exchanges; partnership with Primary Care Associations; the development of Accountable Care Organizations; creation of health care medical homes; integrated care; health information technologies (IT); and health care financing.

SPTA Summits on Health Care Reform

In early efforts to engage psychologists in state implementation efforts, a number of SPTAs have organized and held health care reform summits or think tanks. These have served as educational, strategic planning and brainstorming forums for psychologists. Below are a few examples of some of these early efforts in which Dr. Katherine Nordal and other members of the APA Practice Health Care Team participated. Several additional SPTAs are planning summits for 2012.

SPTA Summits on Health Care Reform

New York

- June 2011. 30 psychologists plus guests. This Think Tank model developed priorities of psychology in NY state health reform, including: practice; advocacy & public education; research; training & CE; financial structure; and diversity.

Massachusetts

- October 2011. 100 attendees. Programming involved representatives of allied health organizations, psychiatry, social workers, pediatrics, mental health counselors, and consumer groups.

Maryland

- December 2011. 100 attendees. Feature Presentations by leading health care economists, a former state insurance commissioner and mental health stakeholders.

Implementation Tools for SPTAs

The ACA has tasked state elected officials with designing how their state will implement the new health care initiatives. Elected officials of several states have begun forming commissions, committees, and various types of work groups to explore and design an implementation strategy that would be appropriate for their state. Some SPTAs are finding that mental health is represented as only psychiatry on the state exploratory groups and that psychology is not a main player in the health reform discussions. To help SPTAs advocate for psychologist representation, the State Advocacy Office will be working with the Advisory Group to develop an online JIVE Community Site that will be a central hub for information, specifically about psychology and the ACA priority areas listed above. The Community Site, once completed, will be launched as a public resource to SPTA leaders to reference what other states are doing and what is current in the field. SPTAs can then translate tools from the Community Site to health care reform summits for their members.

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SPTA Involvement in State Reform Efforts

A number of SPTAs, as illustrated by the below example, are already participating in state sponsored efforts to implement reform-based initiatives.



A Look at Reform in Arkansas

At the beginning of the process President of ArPA, Leslie Riley, PsyD, and her colleagues discovered that psychologists were not a part of the central decision making of the state workgroup on payment reforms, sponsored by the Governor. After consulting with APA Practice and advocating for psychology's role in the state workgroup, ArPA succeeded in obtaining Adam Benton, PhD, an early career child psychologist, a placement on the Governor's workgroup. The state workgroup is now forming treatment guidelines for ADHD Episodic Care. ArPA is currently advocating for psychologists to be recognized as "accountable providers" and for fair reimbursement strategies.



State Leadership Conference • March 10-13, 2012

The theme of the 2012 State Leadership Conference is, *Bringing Psychology to the Table: State Leadership in Health Care Reform*. Dr. Katherine Nordal will be joined in the opening session by keynote speaker, Alan Weil, the Executive Director of the National Academy for State Health Policy. Mr. Weil received his bachelor's degree in economics and political science from the University of California at Berkeley, a master of public policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, and a J.D. from Harvard Law School. A passionate and engaging speaker, he is considered one of the leading authorities in the country on how national health care reform will be implemented at the state level.

A two-part workshop series on how SPTAs can prepare for health care reform will headline an outstanding lineup of programming. Additionally, the Featured Presentation, chaired by APA President Suzanne Bennett Johnson, and the Division 31 sponsored workshop will focus on different aspects of psychology's role in integrated care -- a critical component of health care reform. Other programs include looks at electronic health records, telepsychology guidelines, Medicare, Medicaid, and parity implementation to name a few.



The **State Implementation of Health Care Reform** initiative is administered by the State Advocacy Office, APA Practice – American Psychological Association.

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