Focus on 31

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Bear Down on the Internship Crisis

by Andrew Benjamin, JD, PhD, ABPP

The lack of accredited internship positions for our doctoral students threatens the quality and integrity of our education system, and the vibrancy of psychology as a profession. It also has demoralized many of the 50,000 members of APA (one third of APA members are these students) and calls into question the effectiveness of our leadership and governance. Why would students want to join or support any of our associations if we are not attending to the critical issues of their professional lives?

With federal and state policy shifting toward integrated health care reform, greater accountability for producing efficacious services will bring focus on quality assurance during the training of clinicians. Psychologists who fail to emerge from accredited training settings are precluded from later employment by a number of employers, including the federal government. An increasing number of settings may bar the employment of psychologists trained by unaccredited programs as Psychology stands out from all other health professions that routinely require education and training from accredited programs.

Although the APA Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) with the Council of Chairs of Training Councils, and APPIC have documented and attempted to encourage changes in increasing the number of accredited internship sites, little change has occurred. The crisis has worsened. At the Division 31 Retreat in February, your leadership met with a number of senior APA staff members to flesh out a strategic plan that would increase the vitality and the influence of the Division. Among other strategic goals, your Board unanimously endorsed finding ways to address the worsening of the internship crisis. Such barriers have been documented.

New President-elect Named

Congratulations to our newly elected Division 31 President-elect Dr. Angela Herzog. She will assume office in January, 2013.
Include Psychology in Health Care Reform

Cynthia Sturm, Ph.D.
Federal Advocacy Coordinator

The 2012 State Leadership Conference, held March 10-13 in Washington, DC, highlighted the critical role of states in the implementation of health care reform. The theme, Bringing Psychology to the Table: State Leadership in Health Care Reform, addressed the key issue of the involvement of psychology in the evolving system of health care. Federal advocacy initiatives continue to be focused on inclusion of psychologists in the Medicare “physician” definition. This gateway would allow for psychologists to treat Medicare patients within the scope of their state licensure, without inappropriate physician supervision.

APA has also provided comment, on behalf of both APA and APAPO, to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Ways and Means Committee to replace the flawed Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula. (See full letter at http://www.apapracticecentral.org/update/2012/06-07/growth-rate.pdf). The current payment model reimburses technology-based specialty services at a higher rate than lower-cost mental health and primary care. As principal providers of mental health services to Medicare beneficiaries, psychologists’ willingness to provide services is critical to access to mental health care. Ensuring better Medicare payment rates and a permanent fix to the SGR will encourage psychologists to remain part of this system.

By the time you read this, the United States Supreme Court will have announced their ruling on the constitutionality of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – a potential game-changer for the new healthcare system. Key issues in the implementation of ACA are the individual mandate to obtain health insurance by 2014, the expansion of eligibility for Medicaid, and the development of health insurance exchanges (HIE) for individuals and small businesses. Mental health parity is mandated in the plans included in the exchanges. According to State Reforms (www.statereform.org), many states are already “active” in implementing the health reform law – Alabama, Connecticut, California, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Vermont have completed at least five of seven progress criteria based on exchange development, insurance reforms, the Medicaid expansion, and public sharing of implementation information. States are banking on the availability of federal funds to support their implementation of ACA. Stay abreast of the latest developments on the Division 31 Health Care Reform Blog at http://www.apadivisions.org/division-31/news-events/blog/health-care/index.aspx.

Please continue our Division and SPTA advocacy by responding to Action Alerts and using the Legislative Action Center at http://capwiz.com/apapractice/home/. The new Capwiz affiliates system is generating significantly more messages to legislators and strengthening the voice of psychology in Washington. Encourage your colleagues to respond!

Plan to stop by the Division 31 and APA State Advocacy Social Hour at the APA Convention.

The social is scheduled for Friday, August 3rd, at 7 p.m. at the Peabody Orlando Hotel, Celebration Room 4.
Manitoba Psychological Society

The Manitoba Psychological Society has taken a bit of a twist on the concept of its work in the area of diversity. One of the greatest areas of neglect in mental health that have noticed in our province has been the lack of services targeting cultural communities and new Canadians, including refugees. MPS has taken an initiative to partner with local organizations such as the Immigrant Centre of Manitoba and the civic chapter of the Canadian Mental Health Association to work towards taking initiatives to better serve these diverse cultural and ethnic populations. At present, these discussions include setting up community meetings in which our organizations would meet with communities to build relationships with them.

Ohio Psychological Association

Members of the Diversity Committee met for a breakfast meeting with the Ohio Black Legislative Caucus during the OPA Legislative Day May 25, 2011. The Diversity Committee will host a second breakfast this May with the Black Legislative Caucus to continue with discussions and ideas on how to address the needs of constituents and minority psychologists throughout the state.

For the 5th consecutive year, the Diversity Committee is in the process of awarding a stipend in honor of Dr. Michael Sullivan to a graduate student in psychology conducting research demonstrating a commitment to enhancing inclusiveness and diversity. This year, 23 applications were received. The 2012 award winner(s) will be announced at the SLC in Washington, D.C. March 2012. The winner(s) will receive between $500 to $1,000.

Oregon Psychological Association

This past year, we continued to advocate for diversity issues in a variety of ways. The Diversity Committee worked to establish a peer review diversity consultation committee to provide cultural consultations to OPA and community members. The Diversity Committee collaborated with the OPA Legislative committee in supporting legislation that proposed the requirement of continuing education credits on cultural competence to 19 different health professions Boards in Oregon, including psychologists. In May 2011, the Diversity Committee worked with the OPA Ethics Committee to co-present at the annual OPA conference. Additionally, in 2012 we are also doing our own presentation entitled Cultural Competence in the Context of Health Care Reform: What You Need to Know.

Tennessee Psychological Association

The Tennessee Psychological Association’s diversity initiative is comprised of four main aspects; Assessing TPA’s diversity demographics, developing a diversity mission statement or philosophy, recruitment and mentoring programs for potential and new members, and evaluating the initiative with realistic expectations, quarterly checkpoints, and annual evaluations.

Currently, TPA’s diversity initiative is still in the early stages of gathering the current diversity demographic information.

Division 31 Announces Heiser Award Winners

APA President Suzanne Bennett Johnson, Ph.D., and APA Division 31 are pleased to announce the 2012 recipients of the Karl F. Heiser APA Presidential Award for Advocacy:

- John Gavazzi, Psy.D., ABPP
- David Lechuga, Ph.D.
- Dean Paret, Ph.D.
- Brian Stagner, Ph.D.

This award honors these psychologists who have helped to define the discipline and profession of psychology statutorily by state and federal laws and regulations through their successful volunteer advocacy efforts.

Please join us at the Heiser Award Ceremony at the APA Convention on Saturday, August 4, 2012 from 9:00am – 9:50am in the Celebration Rooms 12 & 13, in the Peabody Orlando Hotel.

Visit: http://www.apadivisions.org/division-31/awards/index.aspx for more information about the Heiser Award or contact Jeff Barnett, award coordinator, at drjbarnett1@verizon.net if you would like additional information about the award or would like to nominate a colleague for this recognition.
The U.S. Army Surgeon General Patricia Horoho recently testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee: “Psychological health problems are the second leading cause of evacuation during prolonged or repeated deployments.” The popular media reports that suicides among military members, on average of one per day, are the highest rate so far during a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan – and this year higher than the number of troops killed in combat. This clearly demonstrates an appreciation for the need for psychological services in a timely fashion. Reflecting upon my tenure on the U.S. Senate staff, I recall an August 2, 1978 memo from the then-Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Department of Defense titled: Utilization of Psychologists in the Military Health Care System. Vernon McKenzie: “I have had my staff explore this question in some detail. We have concluded that there are utilization problems with respect to this group that require further consideration. We have tentatively concluded that there are several steps which might be taken which would improve the utilization of this professional group. Among these are the following.... Grant psychology departmental autonomy where the size and staffing of the hospital would justify.... Allow a psychologist, when he is senior and capable, to be the head of a mental health department.... Improve the promotion opportunities for senior psychologists....” SG Horoho is the first female and first nurse to be appointed to that critical position since the creation of Army Medicine in 1775.

Bob McGrath, a staunch supporter of psychology obtaining prescriptive authority from the beginning, estimates that currently there are 1600-1700 colleagues who have completed their advanced psychopharmacology training. This is an impressive figure. What I consider even more so, however, is the increasing interdisciplinary training efforts being developed by our academic colleagues as the nation evolves towards integrated care. For example, clinical psychology graduate student LT Chantal Meloscia, USN is enrolled/embedded in a Graduate School of Nursing Advanced Physiology course. This core course for advanced nurse practitioners provides an in-depth understanding of the function and regulation of the body system to maintain homeostasis, with an emphasis on the integration of the structure and functional systems within the human body.

Visionary Cynthia Belar announced a new APA Primary Care Fellowship which will develop an overall framework and strategy for promoting the engagement of psychologists in providing integrated mental and behavioral health services in primary care settings. This will involve outreach to physician specialty associations, interdisciplinary primary care organizations, and disease-specific groups to enhance collaboration and partnerships on programmatic and policy initiatives related to integrated health care. Exciting opportunities. For the times they are a-changin’. Aloha.
Healthcare Reform Task Force Update Provided

Leslie Riley, PsyD
Chair, Div 31 Healthcare Reform Task Force

The Div 31 Healthcare Reform Task Force is closely monitoring reform efforts to improve awareness of and foster advocacy for the inclusion of psychology at all levels of healthcare reform. The HCRTF has posted several blogs on various state efforts, including the Arkansas Payment Improvement Initiative, the actions of Massachusetts Psychological Association to combat the practices of proprietary science for managing neuropsychological testing benefits, and the efforts of psychologists in North Dakota to identify community resources and partners to mitigate the intern-ship imbalance. Such funds will be used to assist internship programs in applying for APA accreditation, including application and site visit fees, program consultation, administrative and supervisor support, intern stipends/benefits, and other direct costs in seeking accreditation (potentially more than 500 new positions would be created). Priority will be given to those applications that (1) expand the number of positions, (2) serve historically under-served populations, and (3) prepare psychologists for the 21st century healthcare system, especially for work in integrated primary care and community health centers.

Additionally, as state activities commence, the HCRTF will develop a lexicon of terms to assist psychologists in deciphering new models of payment and health care delivery. A key term for psychologists in Arkansas is the “Principal Accountable Provider (PAP).” In the new Arkansas payment model, the PAP will serve as the “quarterback” for a year-long episodic package of care for various diagnostic conditions. Due to advocacy efforts of the Arkansas Psychological Association, psychologists have been included in the definition of PAP, in addition to physicians and psychiatrists. The PAP can provide services and will participate in gains sharing and losses in a model of retrospective reconciliation. Visit www.apa.org/about/division/div31.aspx for more information on these and more healthcare reform efforts and SPTAs’ responses to them.

President’s Message
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The HCRTF aims to catalog psychologists’ activities in healthcare reform efforts and mental health parity issues nationwide. For example, Arkansas is the first state in the nation to try a new concept of payment through the Arkansas Payment Improvement Initiative. This new payment system will switch from a fee for service to reimbursing providers for episodes of care for 6 initial clinical diagnoses over the course of one year.

Another state in which psychologists are playing an important role in reform efforts is Oregon. Insurers and policy makers are determining which services will be included in essential benefits packages for individuals. Oregon Psychological Association is advocating for the inclusion of family therapy among other behavioral health services in essential benefits packages.

BEA members and BEA staff under the leadership of Dr. Cynthia Belar were quite open to moving forward with alacrity. A new business item was drafted and vetted by both the Finance Committee and the APA Board of Directors. In August, the Council of Representatives will be asked to approve a designated fund of as much as $3 million to provide seed funding to increase the capacity of accredited internship programs. Such funds will be used to assist internship programs in applying for APA accreditation, including application and site visit fees, program consultation, administrative and supervisor support, intern stipends/benefits, and other direct costs in seeking accreditation (potentially more than 500 new positions would be created). Priority will be given to those applications that (1) expand the number of positions, (2) serve historically under-served populations, and (3) prepare psychologists for the 21st century healthcare system, especially for work in integrated primary care and community health centers.

The leadership of Division 31 is listening and acting. And we will actively move more initiatives to create excellent training and mentoring for the next generation of our leaders.

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Sallie E. Hildebrandt, Ph.D.

Dr. Hildebrandt is in independent practice with a focus on the treatment of depression, sexual and marital therapy, and evaluation of bariatric surgery patients. She is also Past President of the California Psychological Association and Chair of the Committee of State Leaders.

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Division 31 APA Convention Programs

Jim Herzog, Ph.D.
Convention Program Chair

Thursday, August 2, 2012
- 8:00 am - 11:50 am
  Division 31 Business Meeting
  Peabody Orlando Hotel
  Gulf Room
  Chair:
  Andrew H. Benjamin, JD, PhD
  University of Washington
- 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm
  Conversation Hour (S):
  Wellness in the Profession of Psychology-The Colleague Assistance Movement and Treatment Approaches
  Convention Center
  Room W 310 A
  Co-chairs:
  Brian M. Wind, PhD and
  Beth K. Westbrook, PsyD
- 2 pm - 3:50 pm
  Symposium (S):
  Effective Advocacy and Leadership for Early Career Psychologists
  Convention Center
  Room W 311C
  Chair:
  Sallie E. Hildebrandt, PhD

Friday, August 3, 2012
- 9 am - 10:50 am
  Symposium (S):
  High-Impact Advocacy Tactics to Influence Legislators - Learn from the Most Recent Heiser Awardees
  Convention Center
  Room W 304 F
  Chair:
  Andrew H. Benjamin, JD, PhD
  with David Wiesner, PhD
  Jaine L. Darwin, PsyD
- 11 am -11:50 am
  Symposium (S):
  How Can SPTAs Make Ethics Education More Meaningful?
  Convention Center
  Room W304H
  Chair:
  Samuel J. Knapp, EdD
  7 pm - 7:50 pm
  Social Hour (N) and Annual Awards
  Peabody Orlando Hotel
  Celebration Room 4
  Chair:
  Andrew H. Benjamin, JD, PhD
  Janet R. Matthews, PhD

Saturday, August 4, 2012
- 9:00 am - 9:50 am
  Heiser Award Ceremony:
  APA Presidential Award for Advocacy
  Peabody Orlando Hotel
  Celebration Rooms 12 & 13
- 9:00 am - 10:50 am
  Symposium (S): LGBT-Focused Public Policy - The Role of State/Territorial Psychological Associations
  Convention Center
  Room W 102B
  Co-Chairs:
  Nathan G. Smith, PhD
  Melissa Grey, PhD
- 11 am -11:50 am
  Symposium (S):
  Interdisciplinary Grant-Funded Research As a Training Tool
  Convention Center
  Room W311C
  Chair:
  Stefan E. Schulenberg, PhD
- 12 pm - 1:50 pm
  Conversation Hour (S):
  Recruiting Early Career Psychologists into State Psychological Associations
  Convention Center
  Room W304C
  Co-chairs:
  Thomas J. DeMaio, PhD
  Carla Bradshaw, PhD

Sunday, August 5, 2012
- 9 am - 10:50 am
  Paper Session (N): Important Issues for Psychologists Involved in Community Practice
  Convention Center
  Room W207A
- 11 am - 11:50 am
  Symposium (S): Shaping the Future of Disaster Psychology-ECPs and APA Disaster Response Network
  Convention Center
  Room W108A
  Chair:
  Donna M. Hastings, PsyD

Student Corner
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Some students have been exposed to teachers and supervisors who embody advocacy and see the need to become involved in social justice. Advocacy competency comes in many colors and flavors. If there was ever a year in which to gain skills in advocacy, 2012 seems to be giving us ample opportunity to do so. Hot buttons for student psychologists are: how do we pay the massive debt we have incurred to become psychologists? Will we be able to get an internship that will allow us to complete our program of study? Do we know what we need to know to survive as a psychologist? Are we informed? Do we have the skills?

Division 31 will have sessions at the APA convention to address some of these areas; will you take the time to listen and build your skills?
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