



An informational newsletter compiled by the Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association for the health and human services communities

REHABILITATION & COMMUNITY PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2015

ANNUAL CONFERENCE



Leading the Way — Just a Few Days Away!

We hope you are planning to attend our last conference at Seven Springs Resort. This year looks like it will be another huge success! Next year the conference will be held at the Hershey Lodge; stay tuned for details!

RCPA PAC Bowling Tournament

It's back – the RCPA PAC bowling tournament will take place on Thursday, October 8, 2015, during the annual conference. The bowling tournament is a great way to get together with friends and colleagues and support RCPA PAC. The minimum entry fee is \$50 for an individual or \$150 for a team registration. Teams are composed of three people.

Individual registrants are placed on teams, so those who want to bowl but don't have a team may register and one will be formed for you! The tournament begins at 4:30 pm and finishes before the barbecue. For those teams who want to practice before the big competition, bowling alleys will be available on Tuesday, October 6, from 8:00 – 10:00 pm.

Everyone is welcome at the tournament to cheer on the bowlers. Come join the fun as a bowler or be in the audience and support RCPA PAC! Email Jack Phillips or Tina Miletic for more information or to register to bowl.



RCPA PAC Second Annual Golf Outing

Please join us for the second annual RCPA PAC Golf Outing at the beautiful Seven Springs Resort on Tuesday, October 6!

The RCPA PAC raises money and supports campaigns of state legislators who work tirelessly on issues that benefit mental health, intellectual disabilities, addictive disease treatment and services, brain injuries, medical and vocational rehabilitation, and other related human services. The funds raised through RCPA PAC can make the difference between a win and a loss on an issue, or assist in making a new ally. Even if you are unable to be a strong contributor to RCPA PAC fundraising efforts, we all have friends and business associates who are interested in helping our allies to victory. Getting involved in RCPA PAC not only allows you to help make decisions on who the committee supports, but also helps to identify new folks who will join in our successes.

Register here for the second annual RCPA PAC Golf Outing. Your involvement will make this year's event an extra special celebration. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to hearing from you soon. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact Jack Phillips or Tina Miletic.

Both of these events are RCPA-PAC fundraisers. Only personal checks are accepted; no business checks or credit cards can be accepted. No refunds for no-shows or cancellations. Substitutions are permitted.

*President and CEO*

**Richard S. Edley, PhD**

*Senior Policy Specialist*

*Western Region*

**Lynn Cooper**

*Policy Specialists*

**Melissa Dehoff**

**Linda Drummond, MPA**

**Sarah Eyster, LSW**

**Connell O'Brien, MEd**

*Director of the International Pediatric*

*Rehabilitation Collaborative*

**Cindi Hobbes**

*Director of Government Affairs*

**Jack Phillips, JD**

*Communications Director*

**Sharon Militello**

*Office Manager/HR*

**Cindy Lloyd**

*Assistant to the President/CEO*

*and Finance Manager*

**Tina Miletic**

*Member Services/*

*Accounts Receivable Administrator*

**Tianna Lloyd**

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**Rehabilitation and Community  
Providers Association**

777 E Park Dr, Ste 300  
Harrisburg, PA 17111-2754  
717-364-3280—Phone  
717-364-3287—Fax  
[www.paproviders.org](http://www.paproviders.org)

■ **MEMBERS IN THE NEWS**

## Cooper Visits VTDC

In September, Lynn Cooper visited Venango Training and Development Center (VTDC). Ms. Cooper met with the Executive Director, Colleen Stuart, and had a chance to see numerous programs. The mission statement of VTDC is “To assist disabled and/or disadvantaged individuals to achieve their highest potential by providing quality programs, services, and opportunities.” It was clear from the



visit that VTDC does just that and much more. It was wonderful to see such successful programs and see so many smiling faces, consumers, and staff. Congratulations to Ms. Stuart for directing this impressive agency; it is outstanding!

## RCPA Logo Displayed at Member's Facility

Community Services Group proudly displays the RCPA logo in their office window. This helps to increase awareness of their affiliation with another well-respected group, shows support of our industry, and promotes membership value to other existing members or prospective members.

Send your photos of the RCPA logo at your facility to [Sharon Militello](mailto:Sharon.Militello@rcpa.org) and be featured in a future issue of *RCPA News*.



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# Leading the Way: Seven Springs



Richard S. Edley, PhD

*This program is an exciting one and filled with top speakers in diverse fields, representing all RCPA divisions and areas of interest.*

By now you all know that this will be our last conference, at least for the near future, at Seven Springs. Between RCPA and its predecessor organizations, it has been quite a run at that resort. I personally remember going in the mid-90s and meeting many of the same people who I will see again in early October. There are a lot of memories from over the years and the decision to move the conference was not an easy one.

Clearly one of the benefits of having the event at Seven Springs is the “retreat” nature of the location. Let’s face it: once you are there, no one is leaving the mountain. Particularly through a merger, this had some advantages in bringing people together through the many networking opportunities.

The Hershey Lodge event next year, and in subsequent years, will feel different. We have already begun the planning process and there are a lot of things to consider in making that feel like our new home. The overall goals are to have a more central event in the state; to more easily attract government officials and legislators to speak and interact with the RCPA membership; to bring in national leaders and speakers; and to have an even larger attendance from membership.

Now, back to this year’s event. This program is an exciting one and filled with top speakers in diverse fields, representing all RCPA divisions and areas of interest. We also have several key plenary sessions and an added legislative presentation by Representative Dan Miller (D-42) on Friday morning. And of course the receptions, the exhibit hall, the awards luncheon – and look out for the surprise Hershey giveaways!

Registration for the conference is up over last year at this time and many of you have taken advantage of the RCPA offer to defer payment for the conference registration until after the state budget is finally passed. RCPA has been very vocal about the effects of the budget impasse on providers and those they serve, and while the conference is a time to learn, network, and relax, we will continue to push an agenda not to use health and human services as a leverage point in negotiations. Maybe by the time we all meet in October there will be good news.

I look forward to seeing everyone [October 6–9](#). It is also not too late to sign up for the [PAC Golf Outing](#) for Tuesday afternoon to kick off the conference!

Richard S. Edley, PhD, President/CEO

*This column represents my opinion, not necessarily that of the association.*

## BHMCO/RCPA Task Force Continues Important Work: Surveys Members

As previously reported, the first meeting of the statewide HealthChoices Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization (BHMCO)/RCPA Task Force was held on July 16, 2015, and all BHMCOs attended, along with numerous oversight bodies. The purpose of this task force is to identify any operational compatibilities among the BHMCOs that exist or can be created, in areas such as credentialing, authorizations, procedure codes, billing, and forms. Members working with numerous BHMCOs with wide-ranging differences in operational procedures causes significant confusion and frustration among the providers. The differences also cause increased errors and ultimately increased costs for all involved. The response from the BHMCOs and oversight bodies was encouraging. The group identified 14 areas to be considered.

In response to a request from the BHMCOs, RCPA has agreed to send out a survey to the membership to determine which of the areas identified are the most troublesome, and to request ideas for how to improve the process. The survey was sent out in mid-August and responses were due by September 11.

The survey received 46 responses. Of the 14 areas identified by the work group, members ranked the top five that they believe need to be addressed first:

1. Interpretation of Medicaid Regulations
2. Overall Compliance Issues
3. Authorizations for Units of Service
4. Billing
5. PROMISe Applications – tied with – Treatment Record Reviews

The majority of respondents work with multiple BHMCOs as predicted (29 out of 46). Every BHMCO was represented in the survey results.

Numerous suggestions were made by members for improving the process. Some were related to having multiple BHMCOs and some were related to state regulations.

Some examples include (in no particular order):

- Fixing the PROMISe delays
- Consistency in CPT codes
- Consistency in interpretation of Medicaid regulations
- Implementing one credentialing application
- Standardization regarding denials
- Standardization of authorizations
- Similar billing processes
- Regular reviews of rate setting/reimbursements
- Standardization of guidelines
- Standardization of forms
- Streamlined process for BSL
- Standardization units of Crisis, BCM, and FBMH
- Standardization of treatment record reviews
- Training in ICD-10
- Standardization in compliance and monitoring
- Standardization of assessment forms
- Standardization of treatment plans
- Reduction in time spent doing reviews and audits

Members were asked if there were any other issues not covered in the previous questions.

Thirteen added additional comments, including:

- Act 62 uniform process needed
- Differences in reimbursement rates between BHMCOs and rates being too low
- Electronic encounter forms needed
- BHMCO standards more stringent than state requirements
- Funding needed for psychiatric rehabilitation
- Need to solve the problem of two licenses at the same location
- Unnecessary physician signage
- Consistency needed between county and BHMCO
- Overall audit process should be assessment and support – not a punitive process

The next meeting of the task force after that was held on September 22.

## RCPA Members are Eligible to Apply for ACE Awards!

The Inglis Awards for Continuing Excellence (ACE) honor the outstanding performance of not-for-profit organizations in the Greater Delaware Valley that provide direct services, products, and/or advocacy for people with physical disabilities. Inglis' mission is to enable people with disabilities – and those who care for them – to achieve their goals and live life to the fullest. The deadline to submit an application is Tuesday, November 3, 2015.

“  
*The strongest people are not those who show strength in front of us, but those who win battles we know nothing about.*  
 ”

– [www.inspirationalquotes.com](http://www.inspirationalquotes.com)  
 anonymous

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](http://www.legis.state.pa.us).



## Stopgap Funding

Two weeks ago, the State Senate passed two funding bills, SB1000 and SB1001, on party-line votes. These bills would authorize short-term funding for health and human service providers as well as education. The funding would be retroactive to July 1, the start of the current 2015/16 Fiscal Year, and would last until the end of October, 2015.

After passing the Senate chamber, the two short-term budget bills were sent to the House. At press time, the bills were scheduled for final passage on Thursday, September 24, and then they would be sent to Governor Tom Wolf for his signature.

According to the governor and Democratic leadership, the stopgap budget bills do not solve the problem. Democrats argue that the budget passed by Republicans in June was ineffective and the governor had every right to veto it. Furthermore, they assert that passing short-term funding bills based upon the vetoed budget is unwise, when the governor has proposed something comprehensive and even better. Democrats also contend that an approved stopgap would make it less likely for negotiations with Gov. Wolf, who has said he will veto the stopgap, to produce a full budget.

Republicans maintain that passing temporary funding for schools and human service agencies makes sense and negotiations would not stop just because stopgap funding was approved. Republicans are asking why those who need state dollars should be forced to wait for at least some funding while the Republicans and the governor work on a permanent budget.

RCPA has been, and continues to be, concerned about the effects of a late state budget on health and human service providers. The state budget stalemate between the General Assembly and Gov. Wolf is having real and lasting effects on these providers and the people they serve across the Commonwealth.

RCPA supports the stopgap funding. The association has been in contact with the General Assembly and the governor's office, encouraging them to pass and sign the stopgap funding bills into law, so health and human service providers can continue services to the most vulnerable individuals throughout Pennsylvania.

## ■ AFFILIATION OPPORTUNITY FOR RCPA MEMBERS



Beacon Light Behavioral Health Systems and Stairways Behavioral Health, both long-standing RCPA members, are pleased to announce their affiliation under the banner of a newly formed company, Journey Health System.

Journey Health System is classified as a 509a type 3 not-for-profit organization whose singular mission is to devote itself to "the support of its affiliated 501c3 companies."

As such, Journey Health System coordinates a variety of support services that are shared between the affiliated companies. These include fiscal, human resources, corporate compliance, information technology, clinical best practice consultation, enhanced risk management capabilities, bulk purchasing of goods and services, among other duties.

A benefit of this structure is the joint access to a broad range of psychiatric services, including residency training, fellowship and telemedicine programs, all of which are keenly needed, particularly in rural communities.

This novel configuration is in direct response to the changing landscape of health care delivery. Rising costs with flat or declining revenue place high demands on behavioral health organizations. This solution ensures the full integrity of each organization's 501c3 status, its local identity as well as its governance within its respective community. However, it does allow for some sharing of the administrative expenses, which could potentially help free up funds to go toward clinical causes.

Journey Health System has already expanded its affiliation beyond Beacon Light and Stairways with the addition of several other members. It remains interested in having discussions with other like-minded organizations in an effort to help members achieve economies of scale, creating new opportunities with greater clinical and fiscal stability. For further information, contact William F McCarthy, V.P. of Strategic Alliances at 814-882-6851, or Rick Seager, CEO at 814-368-3800.

## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

### Direct Support Professionals Recognition

The week of September 13–19 was recognized nationally, and in Pennsylvania, as Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Week. Many RCPA members provided special events and recognition of these very important staff.

In recognition of Direct Support Professionals Week, The Arc of Cumberland and Perry Counties (CPARC) celebrated their DSP employees across numerous programs in a variety of ways. Residential staff received gift baskets, and also were served breakfast at trainings. The management staff at the Center for Industrial Training served a full breakfast to all DSPs. Lunch was served along with morning donuts and coffee at Early Education Center. Life Time Adult Day Care DSPs received flowers and gift bags. DSPs at the Participant-Family Focused Program also received gift bags and a light breakfast. There were also numerous internal communications praising CPARC's dedicated workforce. In addition, the Carlisle newspaper, *The Sentinel*, published a [letter to the editor](#) on September 11, written by CPARC Executive Director John Reardon, recognizing DSP Week and their staff.

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania started off the week of September 14 with providing staff with a continental breakfast on Monday; on Tuesday, nachos and cheese were available during breaks; Wednesday, popcorn was available during the breaks; Thursday featured exercise and free massages and on Friday, staff were treated to grilled burgers and hot dogs along with having snow-cones and other sides for lunch. All week long the staff were able to participate in games and questionnaires to earn tickets that they used for a raffle for a number of gift baskets.



**The Vista School®**

School Partners With Employers  
to Hire Young Adults With Autism

RCPA member The Vista School is highlighted in a special [article](#) by the *Central Penn Business Journal*.

## CMS Releases Medicare ACO Quality and Financial Performance Results

In late August, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the 2014 quality and financial performance [results](#) that show Medicare Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) continue to improve the quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries and are generating financial savings. The results posted suggest that ACOs are delivering higher quality care to more Medicare beneficiaries each year. Medicare ACOs are groups of doctors, hospitals, and other health care providers, who voluntarily come together to provide coordinated care to Medicare beneficiaries. ACOs are judged on their performance on an array of meaningful metrics that assess the care they provide, including how highly patients rated their doctors and how well clinicians communicated.

## Proposed Rule Addresses Health Equity in Medicare

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a [proposed rule](#) to address health equity and reduce disparities in health care, as required by Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which extended civil rights protections banning sex discrimination to health programs and activities. The proposed rule, *Nondiscrimination in Health Programs and Activities*, extends all civil rights obligations to the Health Insurance Marketplaces and HHS health programs and activities, and clarifies the standards HHS applies in implementing Section 1557 across all bases of discrimination. It also establishes that the prohibition on sex discrimination includes discrimination based on gender identity, as well as requiring effective communication for individuals with disabilities, and enhanced language assistance for people with limited English proficiency. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted until Monday, November 9, 2015.

## ICD-10 Web Pages Assist Providers With Transition

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has created a number of helpful web pages for providers as they transition to ICD-10 on Thursday, October 1, 2015. The [ICD-10-CM/PCS Frequently Asked Questions](#) page has answers to questions about claims processing and billing, coding, general equivalence mappings, home health, national coverage determinations, and local coverage determinations). The [ICD-10 Medicare Fee-for-Service Provider Resources](#) provides a complete list of Medicare Learning Network educational materials.

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■ STATE NEWS BRIEFS

## Stan Mrozowski Leaves OMHSAS Children's Bureau

On September 18, Stan Mrozowski informed RCPA staff and others that he had relinquished his position as Director of the Children's Bureau at the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). Dr. Mrozowski noted that "there have been discussions recently in the Department of Human Services about the role of the Bureau and the decision has been made to make a change." In his farewell message, Stan noted that "I leave with immense satisfaction about the many accomplishments over the past 12 years during which I have been the Director of the Children's Bureau. I have very few regrets – mostly only that we did not do even more to help children and families in the Commonwealth. I also leave with appreciation for having worked with so many fine people who truly care about youth and families. I will truly miss the friendship and the collegiality that has made the work so rewarding." RCPA will follow up with OMHSAS leadership to explore and report on any other changes that are planned for their management of children's behavioral health services in the future.

## State Medicaid Directors Selected for Medicaid Leadership Institute

The National Governors Association (NGA) and the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) announced that six Medicaid directors have been chosen to participate in the 2016 class of the [Medicaid Leadership Institute](#). Pennsylvania is one of the states on this list.

## STAR Data System to Be Discontinued

RCPA received notice in late August that the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs had made the decision to discontinue the STAR data system. It was reported that the discontinuation would occur in mid-September of this year. A brief extension of access to the STAR data was provided until September 18. There is no new information to report regarding next steps or how data will be collected. Secretary Tennis stated at the RCPA committee meeting that more details will be provided soon. All questions should be directed to the STAR Helpdesk at 717-783-8200.

## Brief MAT Survey From DDAP

In order to better understand the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) capacity of treatment providers located in Pennsylvania, DDAP needs additional information regarding the availability of MAT access-to-care at the provider level. Providers were asked to complete the brief survey below as soon as possible. The survey is available [here](#).

## Cheryl Dondero Retires From DDAP

After 35 years of service in the Commonwealth, Cheryl Dondero has decided to retire in October from the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), to become the executive director of Dauphin County Drug and Alcohol Services. The retirement date is Friday, October 16 and Ms. Dondero will be starting at her new position the following Monday, October 19. Ms. Dondero stated "I was born and raised in Dauphin County so it's exciting to be able to work more closely in the communities that I call home and to keep fighting for people and their families suffering with addiction." RCPA wishes Ms. Dondero the best in her new endeavor and is grateful for the work she has done at DDAP and the support she has provided.

## Community HealthChoices Concept Paper Released

On September 16, 2015, the Departments of Human Services (DHS) and Aging (PDA) released their Community HealthChoices (CHC), previously known as Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS), [concept paper](#). This concept paper, which was developed based on public input, describes the plan's features. Feedback on the concept paper may be submitted through Friday, October 16, 2015. The feedback will shape the November 2015 request for proposals (RFP) for CHC-MCOs. The RFP will be tentatively awarded in March 2016, contingent upon successful readiness reviews and negotiations. CHC will go live in the Southwest region in January 2017, the Southeast region in January 2018, and the Northwest, Lehigh-Capital, and Northeast regions in January 2019.

## Medical Assistance Providers Must Take Action to Revalidate Their Enrollment Information

In accordance with the Federal Affordable Care Act, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) must revalidate all providers at least every five years; therefore, DHS is requesting providers that enrolled on or before March 25, 2011, to submit enrollment applications now. Providers will need to revalidate enrollment information, for every service location, by completing a new enrollment application to meet the March 24, 2016 deadline.

DHS is anticipating a high volume of applications, and in order to ensure timely processing, **providers are encouraged to submit revalidation applications as soon as possible**. This will prevent any interruption in participation with DHS or partnered managed care plans.

The following pages on the DHS website provide helpful information:

- [DHS Provider Enrollment and Screening Requirements of the Affordable Care Act](#)
- [DHS enrollment/revalidation applications and instructions](#)

The [DHS Program Office](#) is available to address any questions or concerns.

For those who have already revalidated, DHS encourages providers to check the [MA Enrolled Provider Portal Lookup Function](#) to determine the revalidation date. All provider letters and portal login screens contain the next revalidation due date. Look for changes on the provider portal for each 13-digit login to check service location.



## National Provider Call to Focus on IMPACT Act of 2014

A national provider call focusing on the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation (IMPACT) Act of 2014 has been scheduled by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The call has been scheduled for Wednesday, October 21, 2015, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

Agenda topics include:

- Legislative requirements of the IMPACT Act related to the use of standardized data, quality measures, and resource use and other measures for skilled nursing facilities, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, long-term care hospitals, and home health agencies
- Participation in the quality measure assessment and development process
- Opportunities for stakeholder engagement and input

To participate in this call, providers must [register](#). Space may be limited so early registration is recommended.

## CMS Issues Clarification Limiting Scope of Review on Redeterminations and Reconsiderations of Claims

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a clarification to the Medicare administrative contractors (MACs) and qualified independent contractors (QICs), regarding the scope of review for redeterminations and reconsiderations via [MLN Matters Article SE1521](#). CMS has instructed MACs and QICs to limit their reviews to the reason(s) the claim or line item at issue was initially denied. The updated instruction applies to redetermination requests received by a MAC or QIC on or after August 1, 2015, and will not be applied retroactively.

## MedPAC Holds Meeting on Unified Payment System for Post-Acute Care

On September 10, 2015, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) conducted a public meeting to discuss Medicare issues and policy questions, and approve reports and recommendations to the Congress. Included in the agenda was a session that focused on MedPAC's task of developing a prototype prospective payment system (PPS) that spans across the post-acute care (PAC) settings, as mandated by the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation (IMPACT) Act of 2014. The IMPACT Act requires MedPAC to submit a report to Congress regarding this by June 30, 2016. Included in the meeting was their presentation [Mandated Report: Developing a Unified Payment System for Post-Acute Care](#). It is expected that MedPAC will conduct multiple public meetings in the months ahead regarding the development of PAC PPS before presenting their draft recommendations.

## Federal TBI Program Moving from HRSA to ACL

It was announced by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Burwell that the department will relocate the Federal Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) state grant program from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) within the next federal fiscal year. In the reauthorization of the TBI Act, which was signed into law in November 2014, discretion was given to Secretary Burwell to determine which agency within HHS should administer the TBI Program. ACL's mission is to maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults and people with disabilities across the lifespan, as well as their families and caregivers.

## Movie Trailer For "Concussion" Released

The first movie [trailer](#) for the upcoming film "Concussion" was recently released online. The film features Will Smith and is about the National Football League's ongoing problem with head injuries and resulting brain trauma among former players, and the league's efforts to dispute the evidence. The film is scheduled to be released this December.

## New Helmets Could Help Doctors See Concussions on Football Field

A news [article](#) was published on Bloomberg Business online, which focuses on a material developed at the University of Pennsylvania, that may eventually help detect when a hit is hard enough to damage the brain. The researchers created a chemical strip that changes color on impact to measure the force of a collision and could be integrated into helmets for both athletes and soldiers.

## Community HealthChoices (formerly MLTSS) Subcommittee Meeting Dates Released

The Department of Human Services (DHS) released the [dates and locations](#) for the upcoming Community HealthChoices (CHC), previously known as Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) Subcommittee meeting. The meetings will be held from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

### MENTAL HEALTH HEADLINES

## National Council's Nina Marshall Captivates Members: Tells of CCBHC Preparation

RCPA former Board Co-Chair Susan Blue worked to secure a technical assistance session with Nina Marshall, director of public policy for the National Council for Behavioral Health. More than 60 members took advantage of this presentation held on September 16. Ms. Marshall provided the background for the Excellence in Mental Health Act, which allows states to develop Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) using Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) funds. She explained the two roles of behavioral health providers in the "New Health Ecosystem," planning grant year considerations for both providers and state agencies, and the anticipated timeline for states to be notified of a planning grant award (mid-October).

Pennsylvania submitted a 35 page [application](#) to SAMHSA for a one year planning grant on August 4. The planning grant would allow Pennsylvania stakeholders to prepare to become a CCBHC. In the application, the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) only stated that there would be a "minimum of two" CCBHCs, but did not indicate a maximum number. OMHSAS has indicated in the application that they will utilize the Federally Qualified Health Clinic (FQHC) payment model of reimbursement on a daily rate. This means that regardless of the number of services provided on that day, there is one CCBHC rate. In addition, Ms. Marshall shared that Pennsylvania has chosen to fully incorporate the payment into the managed care capitation rate.

After a great interactive and informative [presentation](#) by Ms. Marshall, RCPA members found many more questions than answers, and decided to work proactively to develop a CCBHC task force to address the issues. The first call with this group was held in September. Future meetings will be scheduled this fall.

### IDD FOCUS

## ODP Updates

**The Office of Developmental Disabilities has released the following information:**

**Announcement #067-15:** *Save the Date: ODP Year 8 Cost Report Training Date for Waiver Residential Service Provider Staff; Monday, September 21 at 1:00 pm. Watch for more details.*

**Announcement #068-15:** *ODP's Quality Management Certification Program: Leadership Resources Available: QM Module 104, Part 2: Virtual QI Teams.*

**Announcement #069-15:** *Professional Development Webcast Now Available: Money Follows the Person: An Overview.*

**Announcement #070-15:** *ODP Year 8 Cost Report Training Registration for Waiver Residential Service Provider Staff is now open.*

**Informational Memo #071-15:** *Updating Provider and AE Contact Information for Provider Monitoring Fiscal Year 2015/2016.*

**Announcement #072-15:** *PA Department of Human Services Medication Administration Training Program Final Classroom Training Sessions for 2015; being offered across the state in September, October, November, and December.*

**Informational Memo #073-15:** *CMS Approved Waiver Amendments for Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support Waivers Effective July 22, 2015 and Guidance for Implementation.*

**Announcement #074-15:** *CMS Final Rule for HCBS Waivers: An Overview Now Professional Developmental Course; webcast now available for all audiences which can include one credit hour for supports coordinators.*

## DHS Home Modifications

The Department of Human Services is [reviewing its current home modifications service](#) provided by the Office of Developmental Programs and Office of Long-Term Living waivers. These changes include the proposed Regional Broker Model for the home modification waiver service. A summary of the proposed changes include:

- Implementation of regional Broker Model for home modification services
- Brokers must have demonstrated construction expertise and knowledge of home modifications needs of aging and disabled
- Brokers not eligible to serve as a contractor but may provide other home and community based services
- Organized Health Care Delivery System vendors will no longer be responsible for coordinating home modifications

## WIOA Advisory Committee

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act's [Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities](#) has released its draft [Interim Report](#). This report summarizes the committee's progress and provides preliminary recommendations.

The committee's report is to advise the US Secretary of Labor in three areas:

1. How to increase competitive integrated employment for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities and those with significant disabilities;
2. Use of certificate program under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act for the employment of those with disabilities; and
3. Ways to improve the oversight of the use of these certificates.

Subcommittees formed to address these issues include: Transition to Careers; Complexity and Needs in Delivering Competitive Integrated Employment; Marketplace Dynamics; Building State and Local Capacity; Section 14(c) Sub-minimum Wage Certificate Program; and AbilityOne Program.

## Airlines Disability Guidance

The US Department of Transportation has issued guidance to airlines regarding their responsibilities under the Air Carrier Access Act, titled "[Guide: Air Travelers with Developmental Disabilities](#)." This guide helps individuals with disabilities understand their legal rights, and provides airline employees and contractors with information regarding accommodations for passengers with these disabilities.

Notify the airline and ask for accommodations in advance. Airlines can ask some questions about the disability to assist in providing accommodations. Specific medical information questions are not allowable. The airline may refuse to allow the individual to travel on the originally scheduled flight due to the disability but must provide a written statement regarding that reason.

## Disability Employment Day

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The State Civil Service Commission, in partnership with the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities, has scheduled "[Disability Employment Outreach Day](#)" for Wednesday, October 7, 2015. Individuals with disabilities will learn about the application, testing, and hiring processes for state jobs. Accommodations may be requested at the State Civil Service Commission 717-787-6127.

## Andrews Career and Transition Fair

The Department of Labor and Industry's 12th Annual [Career and Transition Fair](#) is scheduled for Wednesday – Friday, October 21 – 23 at the Hiram G. Andrews Center in Johnstown. An overview of the center, its training programs, and transition fair are available. This effort is in recognition of October as *National Disability Employment Awareness Month*.

## PADES

The [PA Disability Employment and Empowerment Summit](#) (PADES) will be held at two locations; Tuesday, October 27, 2015, in Pittsburgh and Friday, November 13, 2015, in Lancaster. This summit is presented by the Governor's Disability Cabinet and supported by the Departments of Human Services and Labor and Industry.

## Lifesharing Conference

Pennsylvania's Lifesharing Coalition is presenting its [2015 Lifesharing Conference](#) on Monday – Tuesday, October 19 – 20, 2015, at the Ramada Hotel, State College. Keynote speakers will be David Hingsburger from the Vita Community Living Services in Canada; ODP Deputy Secretary Nancy Thaler; PA Representative Thomas Murt; and ODP Bureau of Supports Director for People with Intellectual Disability Patty McCool.

## CMS Announces Payment Options

At the recent Home and Community Based Services Conference sponsored by the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) presented a session; [Medicaid Employment: Options and Incentives](#). CMS is developing a new performance-based option for funding 1915(c) waivers for employment supports. This would allow states to use a data-based average amount of time to pay for employment outcomes.

This new payment structure could include outcomes payments as a single unit of service if the service is time-limited and has a tangible outcome. These services include Discovery/Supported Employment Assessments, Job Development, Placement, and Customized Employment. Formal guidance on these options will be released soon.

## Oregon Lawsuit Agreement

The US Department of Justice and the State of Oregon have entered a [settlement agreement](#) regarding the civil rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The agreement is to resolve violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act for Oregon citizens that are segregated in sheltered workshops. The lawsuit filed by private plaintiffs indicates the state over-relies on sheltered workshops to the exclusion of other integrated alternatives such as supported employment services. Settlement highlights:

- Half of the youth served will receive an individual plan for employment through the state's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
- State will be required to issue policies and promote the expectation that all individuals with IDD work an average of 20 hours per week, consistent with their choices and abilities.

## Autism Support and Self-Advocacy Resources

Support and self-advocacy groups are an important and valuable way for individuals and families to stay connected to each other. The Autism Service Education Resource and Training Center (ASERT) offers information about these groups in an easy-to-navigate new format. The new "clickable" [interactive map feature](#) allows individuals, families, and providers a fast and easy way to find support and self-advocacy groups in their community. Information includes meeting details and contact information, featuring the most up-to-date information about groups that has been made available to ASERT.

If the information about groups in your organization or community changes, or you are aware of a local group that is not on this list, information can be sent for consideration to [ASERT](#).

## BSC-ASD Service Capacity, Seeking Solutions

For more than a year, RCPA has been tracking growing concerns regarding the Medicaid requirement that behavior specialists working with children on the autism spectrum hold a behavior specialist or other appropriate license in order to bill for services. Our members have communicated growing concerns about workforce adequacy, staff recruitment, and access to services. In August of this year, Representatives Marguerite Quinn (R-Bucks) and Dan Miller (D-Allegheny) began to circulate a co-sponsorship memo for an amendment to Act 62 that would create a time-limited temporary license, creating a pathway to full licensure, thus addressing the growing workforce problem. The Department of Human Services (DHS) has expressed concern about opening Act 62 and that there may be some administrative solution to this issue.

Representatives Quinn and Miller have agreed to slow action on their bill, pending an alternative proposal from DHS to address the workforce concerns. Last month, DHS issued a [memo and directive](#) to counties and behavioral health managed care organizations (BH-MCO), requiring them to complete a detailed survey regarding access and timing of services, individual practitioners, and challenges related to staff attrition and recruitment. RCPA and its members continue in their concern that the labor pool limitations to service access are growing and a viable solution is needed, be it legislative or administrative.

## New Tool for School and Community Service Leaders

There is a new online resource from the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools (CHHCS), designed to support local school administrators, service providers, civic leaders, and others, to sustain programs that prepare children for academic success while promoting their social, emotional, and physical health. CHHCS developed "*Partner Build Grow: An Action Guide for Sustaining Child Development and Prevention Approaches*," with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The new tool recognizes that many local communities, agencies, and school districts have a variety of stand-alone programs to support students that are too often disconnected or financially vulnerable. The action guide offers best-practice knowledge with practical steps needed to secure funding and build crucial support for effective programs.

Topics addressed in the action guide include:

- Mobilizing key allies;
- Taking inventory and identifying existing resources;
- Constructing a clear problem statement and developing a call to action;
- Organizing community stakeholders;
- Assessing viable financing and regulatory approaches; and
- Developing a communications strategy.

The action guide lays out a four-pronged strategic blueprint that stakeholders can use or adapt to the unique circumstances of their communities:

1. Network and build relationships with decision-makers at local and state levels;
2. Identify and stay on top of key federal and state policies that affect programs;
3. Build upon existing resources or assets; and
4. Spread the word and build public support for school-connected programs.

More information about this guide is available [online](#).

## Pennsylvania Injury and Violence Prevention Network

Since 2014, Pennsylvania enacted approximately 25 pieces of legislation that change how Pennsylvania responds to child abuse. These changes significantly impact the reporting, investigation, assessment, prosecution, and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases. The goal is to strengthen our ability to better protect children from abuse and neglect. In addition to RCPA's collaboration with the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Human Services, the association has been working with the Pennsylvania Department of Health Injury and Violence Prevention Network to prevent violence against children. Utilizing the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, support is provided to several local county/municipal health departments to address violence against children. Efforts are also underway to further disseminate the Strengthening Families framework to build protective factors in the family setting.

## In Preschool, We Try To Welcome All Children

The federal government reports that as of 2013, more than half of preschoolers with special needs accessed special education services in segregated settings. On the national level, with early care and education leaders and providers, separate settings are considered the first option for kids with disabilities, particularly for those with the most significant needs. Here in Pennsylvania, both policymakers and community early care and education service providers share the view of federal officials that all children with disabilities should be able to attend preschool alongside their typically developing peers.

Through the guidance and leadership of Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning, PA KEY, partnerships with the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and the Department of Health Special Kids Network, more and more young children with special needs are learning and growing with their peers in day care, preschools, and kindergartens across the Commonwealth. RCPA members and staff have played a continuous role in this effort, serving on advisory groups in support of integrated services, where that is the best option for a child to learn, grow, and receive special services where needed. The US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services are jointly issuing [guidance](#) to states, school districts, and early childhood providers, urging them to make a place for kids with special needs. Through initiatives that range from Program Wide Positive Behavior Support and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, to robust and integrated Early Intervention Services and Project LAUNCH, all young children in the state have more and more opportunities to be supported in mainstream settings.

## Are You a Youth MH First Aid Instructor?

The Pennsylvania *School Based Behavioral Health Community of Practice (SBBH CoP)* has identified Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) as a shared strategy by which to positively affect school-based behavioral health. Pennsylvania is fortunate to have a large number of YMHFA instructors facilitating a large number of courses across the Commonwealth. However, school-aged educators represent a small percentage of those persons trained by YMHFA instructors. YMHFA has been approved as one of the curricula that meets the professional development requirement of Act 71 of 2014 (Youth Suicide Prevention). The SBBH CoP will soon begin efforts to establish an affiliated network of community-based YMHFA instructors and foster relationships with schools. The SBBH CoP includes several RCPA member and staff representatives who will be seeking input from community providers that may be interested in participating in the work of the YMHFA Affiliated Network. Questions about the network can be directed to [Connell O'Brien](#).

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Children's Committee Observes Youth Suicide Prevention Month

The September meeting of the Children's Committee featured a presentation of the Youth Suicide Prevention in Schools and Colleges initiative funded through a Garrett Lee Smith grant to the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). [Presentation materials](#) are available on the RCPA website. In addition to the presentation, the committee received updates from the OMHSAS Children's Bureau. Participants also had the opportunity to raise operational questions and review the many new Child Protective Service Laws with a representative from the Department of Human Services Office of Children, Youth and Families. The committee also discussed an array of service-related issues and initiatives, ranging from integrated health care initiatives to the department's autism services and service staff capacity survey. Children's Committee members will gather again to learn and network in early October for the RCPA conference, with the next committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 2015, in Harrisburg.

### Mental Health Committee

The September meeting of the Mental Health Committee was filled with discussion related to licensing and problem regulations, and particularly Community Residential Rehabilitation (CRR) and state updates. Members are interested in convening a work group to review CRR regulations and offer recommendations to the Bureau of Human Services Licensing and the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), if they are interested in partnering with RCPA.

OMHSAS provided updates on the following: outpatient regulation review with DHS legal; lack of support for co-location and two PROMISE numbers; the requested change to the CPT evaluation and management codes; and a collaborative documentation informational bulletin that would be released in the near future.

Finally, OMHSAS reported that they had submitted an application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, to be funded to develop Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics. The complete minutes of the meeting can be found [here](#).

## CALENDAR

OCTOBER		
<b>Tuesday–Friday, October 6–9</b>		
		2015 RCPA Conference <i>Seven Springs, Champion, PA</i>
<b>Thursday, October 15</b>	9:00 am – 10:00 am	Government Affairs Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
NOVEMBER		
<b>Tuesday, November 3</b>	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	SW Regional Meeting Pittsburgh Cranberry
<b>Wednesday, November 4</b>	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	NW Regional Meeting Clarion Radisson Hotel
<b>Wednesday, November 18</b>	10:00 am – 2:00 pm 10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Brain Injury Committee Human Resources Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Thursday, November 19</b>	9:00 am – 10:00 am 10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Government Affairs Committee Outpatient Rehabilitation Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>