



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

REHABILITATION & COMMUNITY  
PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 2014

■ RCPA NEWS

## Chapter 51 Settlement Reached October 28

RCPA was pleased to report on October 28 that after lengthy and candid discussions with the Office of the Governor and the Department of Public Welfare relating to the Chapter 51 Home and Community-based Regulations, an agreement was reached on important changes to department policies regarding the vacancy factor and the retention factor. The agreement also provides relief from the potential application of a rate adjustment factor (RAF) through FY 2016/17. (A RAF allows the commonwealth to cut rates midyear.)

Obtaining these changes in the department's policies are part of joint efforts by the association, PAR, The Arc of Pennsylvania, and UCP of Pennsylvania to secure access by

individuals with disabilities and their families to high-quality supports and services. The agreement will better enable providers to maintain and sustain services and supports that meet the needs of each individual. The agreement also reflects that work is not done. Included in the agreement are provisions to continue discussions with the commonwealth on the remaining challenges that Chapter 51 poses for supporting individuals and their families.

For further and more detailed information, please access the [settlement agreement](#), [summary points](#), and the [Alert](#) released to members. Additional questions may be directed to Richard Edley (717-364-3280; [redley@paproviders.org](mailto:redley@paproviders.org)).

## Militello Joins Association as Communications Director



Sharon Militello joined the association in October to serve as its first communications director. Most recently, Mrs. Militello was director of communications at the Keystone Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., Mount Joy. Prior to that, she held various positions in marketing, public relations, advertising, and events planning. In her position with RCPA, Mrs. Militello will be responsible for the association website and social media pages, editing and preparation of communications, preparing and running webcasts, cultivating media relations, and maintaining relationships with technology support vendors.

Winner of a national French competition, Mrs. Militello holds a BA in communications from Rutgers University. She and her husband Jerry live in Harrisburg and enjoy live music, winery and historical tours, and NFL football. She also plays bass in a hard rock band.

"I am delighted that Sharon has joined RCPA. She brings excellent experience in communications and association work and I know she will be an asset to our members."

— Richard S. Edley, PhD  
RCPA President and CEO

*President and CEO*  
**Richard S. Edley, PhD**

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## RCPA Outpatient Rehabilitation Committee Meeting is November 6

In response to member feedback, the first Outpatient Rehabilitation Committee meeting is scheduled November 6, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at the RCPA office in Harrisburg. The meeting will be somewhat of a planning/organizational session to determine committee goals, discussion topics, and future meeting dates. Other key agenda topics include a federal update from the American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association; a state legislative update; and open discussion on regulatory issues, billing issues, etc. Members planning to attend must [register](#).

## Brain Injury Committee Convenes November 5

The Brain Injury Committee will meet November 5, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., at RCPA. Key agenda topics include an update from President and CEO Richard Edley; an update on HR 1064 associated with the Safety in Youth Sports Act; updates from Department of Health Head Injury Program and the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania; and an update on service coordinator training materials. Members planning to attend must [register](#).

## Calling All Western Region Members!

Two Western Region meetings are scheduled November 18 and 19. All western region members are encouraged to attend a meeting. The agendas are identical, but meetings are being held in two locations to make it easier for members to attend. President and CEO Richard Edley will provide an RCPA update and Executive Medicaid Director Leesa Allen, Department of Public Welfare, will provide an overview of Healthy PA. In addition, Jack Phillips, RCPA legislative affairs director, will facilitate a legislative strategic planning session. For additional information please contact [Lynn Cooper](#).

- **Northwest Region Meeting** - November 18, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
Holiday Inn Clarion, Clarion, PA
- **Southwest Region Meeting** – November 19, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
Four Points by Sheraton, Mars, PA

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## BH-MCOs and Consistency



Over the past year, I have heard a lot about the behavioral health managed care organizations (BH-MCOs) in the commonwealth that administer the HealthChoices program. This was a particular topic of interest at our conference last month. The relationship between providers and BH-MCOs is very interdependent (neither can exist without the other) and HealthChoices is a well-established program with many positive elements for the consumers and families served by RCPA members. But what happens when a provider offers services in geographical regions that cross the coverage areas of multiple BH-MCOs?

Too often the answer is inconsistency. Different covered benefits, billing procedures, CPT code recognition and interpretation, audit procedures, quality improvement standards – it becomes an administrative nightmare. While differing policies among payers is a reality that any provider has to deal with, this is one HealthChoices program. The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) needs to look carefully at this issue. The centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services expects one unified program administered by many.

Another example of this problem is in rule interpretation. It begins when the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) issues a clarification. One BH-MCO implements it immediately telling providers to cease and desist

(collaborative documentation). Another waits for the next OMHSAS clarification or set of meetings. Yet a third stays silent on the matter. So what should a provider do? Verbal instructions do not help in an audit, nor does a clarification offered by RCPA.

*RCPA has been meeting with OMHSAS Deputy Secretary Dennis Marion, his staff, and DPW Secretary Bev Mackereth to address these and other issues.*

RCPA has been meeting with OMHSAS Deputy Secretary Dennis Marion, his staff, and DPW Secretary Bev Mackereth to address these and other issues. While we meet often (and with other officials), for numerous reasons we have been meeting on a set basis to discuss issues that are falling through the cracks or that have not been addressed elsewhere. This type of partnership between the association and the commonwealth is necessary for real reform to occur.

BH-MCOs are not the enemy. In fact, they are all members of RCPA and support us. But we need consistency among these organizations in order for administration of programs and services by provider members to be manageable.

Richard S. Edley, PhD, President/CEO  
[redley@paproviders.org](mailto:redley@paproviders.org)

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

# RCPA Conference Highlights

## TOGETHER ONE

One Mission • One Agency  
One Provider • One Person



President and CEO Richard Edley and Director of Legislative Affairs Jack Phillips are joined by Friday speakers Rep. Thomas Murt and Department of Public Welfare Secretary Bev Mackereth.

The 2014 RCPA conference at Seven Springs was marked by a record-breaking number of guests participating in four days of education, learning, networking, and the opportunity to discuss new products and technologies with vendors. The theme focused on uniting members into one strong association “representing health and human services committed to effective, efficient, and high quality care.” It highlighted the importance of one person, one provider, one agency, and one mission.



Keynote speaker Thomas Hudgin, MBA, is greeted by President and CEO Richard Edley on Wednesday morning.



Nicole Lodge, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, was the grand prize winner of a \$1,000 Southwest Airlines gift card.

The event featured 55 workshops, a health care leadership keynote from Thomas Hudgin, MBA, a vibrant Exhibit Hall, networking events, time to interact with colleagues, and opportunities for creative thinking. Plenary sessions included legal developments in state government and an interactive discussion with state leaders Representative Thomas Murt and Department of Public Welfare Secretary Beverly Mackereth.

*Continued on next page*



4 A record-breaking crowd eagerly participated in 55 workshops, three plenary sessions, and a film screening in addition to the keynote.



The ever-popular Networking Reception at the Foggy Goggle Lounge was provided courtesy of sponsor PerformCare, Harrisburg.



The Italian pasta bar and grill was a favorite station at RCPA's new event – the Taste of the Nations dinner.

*Continued from previous page*

The association extends special thanks to our sponsors (listed below), exhibitors, and presenters for providing a premier conference for the Pennsylvania provider community. Plan now to return to Seven Springs October 6–9, 2015.

## 2014 SPONSORS

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Guests enjoyed the Directors' Welcome Reception on Tuesday evening, courtesy of sponsor Community Care Behavioral Health Organization, Pittsburgh.



Salisbury/New Story/PAHrtners was selected best in show in Exhibit Hall and will receive a discount to return in the 2015 conference.



Spectators and teams alike enjoyed the PAC Bowling Tournament Thursday night.



The association extends its deepest thanks to the Conference Committee for its exceptional planning and hosting of the 2014 event.

# RCPA Conference Highlights

## RCPA Recognizes 2014 Award Winners

In a delightful Association Luncheon and Award Banquet on October 8 during conference, RCPA recognized 2014 award recipients.

*RCPA Innovation Awards* are presented to an individual or agency in recognition of significant innovation.

- **Donna Phillips, Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital;**
- **Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network;**
- **Geriatric Counseling Service at Journey's Way, Intercommunity Action; and**
- **Tammy Marsico and Wesley Spectrum Services.**

The *Exemplary Service to RCPA Award* is presented to an individual or agency that has shown a strong commitment and dedication in service to the association, its members, and related issues.

- **Family Services of Western Pennsylvania**

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Donna Phillips, Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital



Frank Hyland and Sue Golden, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network



Cyndee Wishkovsky, Intercommunity Action



Tammy Marsico, Wesley Spectrum Services



Steve Christian-Michaels, Will Stennett, and Scott Simon, Family Services of Western Pennsylvania



RCPA President Richard Edley and Rep. Thomas Murt, Pennsylvania House of Representatives

## RCPA Recognizes 2014 Award Winners

*Continued from previous page*

The *Legislative Leadership Award* is presented to an individual who has shown significant leadership and commitment to government affairs and legislative issues on behalf of RCPA and its members.

- **Representative Thomas Murt, 152nd Legislative District**

RCPA's *Administrative Leadership Award* is given to an individual who has shown significant leadership and commitment to government and administrative issues on behalf of the association and its members.

- **Secretary Gary Tennis, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs**



Richard Edley and Secretary Gary Tennis, Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs

The *Community Leadership Award* is presented to an individual in recognition of extending service and knowledge to the community at large and efforts in helping the community understand the needs of individuals served by RCPA members.

- **Bob Hintze, Step by Step**

A *Lifetime Recognition Award* is a special presentation to an individual who has demonstrated a career of achievement and accomplishments dedicated to service on behalf of RCPA, its members, and related issues.

- **Senator Joseph Rock, NHS Human Services**



Richard Edley and Sen. Joseph Rocks, NHS Human Services



RCPA CEO Richard Edley, Bob Hintze, and Jim Bobeck, Step by Step

## New CEO for Community Counseling Center



RCPA member Community Counseling Center has announced the appointment of Clyde "Kip" Hoffman as its new CEO, succeeding Angelo Stamoolis. As a committed community partner and vital resource of behavioral health services for over 50 years, the board of directors understands the importance of

effective and respected leadership. Respected among his peers, coworkers, and community leaders, Mr. Hoffman brings a comprehensive understanding of the demands within behavioral health services. He has dedicated his career to helping others on their recovery journey and has been a member of the leadership team for the past 13 years. Hoffman received his master's degree in social work from the University of Pittsburgh. He assumes the role of CEO November 1. Angelo Stamoolis will remain on hand through a planned transition period assisting with business development. RCPA congratulates Mr. Hoffman on his new position and Mr. Stamoolis on his upcoming retirement.

## CPARC Welcomes New Executive Director

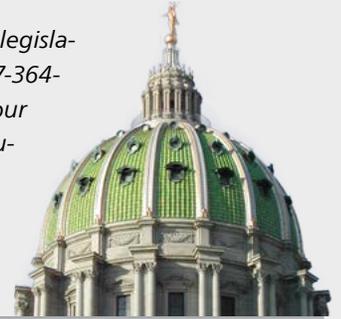


Member organization The Arc of Cumberland and Perry Counties (CPARC) announced the hire of John M. Reardon as its new executive director. Reardon was previously executive director/CEO of Niagara Cerebral Palsy based in New York. Licensed nationally as a speech-language pathologist, Reardon has

a master's degree in speech pathology from Northern Illinois University and a bachelor's degree in speech and hearing from State University of New York, Oneonta.

CPARC Board of Directors President Kelly Neiderer stated, "The search committee conducted an extensive process for approximately five months and was thrilled to conclude the search with recommending John to the board. CPARC is a strong organization and we look forward to John bringing his wide range of experience and knowledge to guide a future path to further enhance services for our program participants." RCPA welcomes Mr. Reardon to his new role.

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).



## Why Vote?

Things are looking pretty bleak in the political world these days. At the federal level, it seems as though elected officials are always caught flat footed on issues such as Ebola, health care, terrorism, or many other issues. In corridors of the state capitol it isn't any better. No matter what level of government being viewed, there is a perceived lack of leadership. It doesn't seem like anyone at any level of government is listening to the people that elected them. So, people ask, "why should I vote?"

Why vote? Vote because every election matters. Vote because the choices you make matter. Vote because elections aren't simply about your representatives in Washington or Harrisburg. Who you choose this November to lead federal, state, and local governments – whether as your congressman, governor, state senator, state representative, mayor, or township/borough council member – will have a serious impact on you. When we vote for elected officials, we make choices that have very direct and concrete effects on daily life.

Voting matters. When voters don't turn out to choose representatives, they receive a government that doesn't represent them. Voting for candidates has real consequences. The federal and state government may be unproductive, but the health and prosperity of communities isn't determined solely by Washington or Harrisburg. It is determined by every voter. Every eligible and registered voter must turn out this and every time to elect candidates who represent their views.

Election Day is November 4 and the polls are open 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Please exercise your right to vote for the candidates of your choice!

## Key Legislation Passed in the 2013/14 Session

Bill Number Act Number	Prime Sponsor	Brief Description	Action History
HB 21 Act 21	Rep. Glen Grell	Amends the Mental Health Procedures Act in criminal justice determinations, further providing for incompetence and for procedure.	Approved by the governor March 19.
HB 993 Act 132	Rep. Thomas Murt	Amends the Public Welfare Code changing the name of the Department of Public Welfare to the Department of Human Services, providing for a transition period and establishing a toll-free fraud tip line.	Approved by the governor September 24.
HB 1075 Act 55	Rep. Dan Moul	Amends the Public Welfare Code providing for Medical Assistance payments, coverage, copay, and premiums; payments to counties for services to children; quality care assessment, trauma systems stabilization, and the human services block grant program.	Approved by the governor July 9, 2013.
HB 1437 Act 1A	Rep. William Adolph	Act to provide from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Departments; the public debt; and public schools for fiscal year July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014.	Approved by the governor June 30, 2013.
HB 1559 Act 71	Rep. Frank Farina	Amends the Public School Code in terms and courses of study, providing for youth suicide awareness and prevention and child exploitation awareness education.	Approved by the governor June 26.
HR 226	Rep. Thomas Caltagirone	Resolution calling on the Joint State Government Committee to conduct a study of all aspects of Pennsylvania's mental health system and report back with specific recommendations for amendment and improvement.	Adopted May 13, 2013.
SB 21 Act 33	Sen. Kim Ward	Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations) in provisions for reporting suspected child abuse, further providing for definitions of persons required to report, reporting, procedure, documentary evidence, and education and training.	Approved by the governor April 15.
SB 807 Act 179	Sen. Charles McIlhinney	Amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act further providing for definitions, license required, licensing agency and functions, reciprocity, penalties and renewal, and unlawful practice.	Approved by the governor October 22.

## ACA Initiative Supports Care Coordination

On October 15, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [announced](#) the availability of a new initiative for Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) participating in the Medicare Shared Savings program. This initiative, known as the [ACO Investment Model](#), will include efforts to encourage quality improvement and better care coordination to rural and underserved areas by providing up to \$114 million in upfront investments to up to 75 ACOs across the US. ACOs are one part of the overall effort provided by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to help lower costs and improve care and quality.

Eligibility is targeted to ACOs who joined the Shared Savings Program in 2012, 2013, 2014, and to new ACOs joining the program in 2016. The application deadline for organizations that started in the Shared Savings Program in 2012 or 2013 is December 1. The application period for ACOs that started in 2014 or will start in 2016 will open in summer 2015. For programmatic questions regarding the ACO Investment Model, please contact [AIM@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:AIM@cms.hhs.gov). Technical questions directly related to the online application tool can be directed to [CMMI-ForceSupport@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:CMMI-ForceSupport@cms.hhs.gov) or 888-734-6433.

## VA Accepting Applications to Extend Program for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury

On October 21, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [announced in a press release](#) it is accepting proposals for the Assisted Living Pilot Program for Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury (AL-TBI). Under the [AL-TBI Program](#), veterans meeting eligibility criteria are placed in private sector TBI residential care facilities specializing in neurobehavioral rehabilitation. The program offers team-based care and assistance in areas such as speech, memory, and mobility. There are currently 94 veterans enrolled in the pilot. The extension of this program provides the opportunity for additional providers to participate in the program.

VA is accepting proposals through November 20. To be eligible, contractor facilities must meet federal, state, and local standards and be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities in Residential Rehabilitation/Brain Injury Program. The contracts are expected to be awarded in February 2015.

## CMS Announces 2015 Medicare Premium and Deductible Amounts

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released calendar year 2015 [inpatient hospital deductible and co-insurance amounts](#) and [Medicare Part B rates and deductibles](#). The notices appeared in the October 10 *Federal Register* and become effective January 1, 2015.

## MedPAC Meeting Focused on Medicare Policy Issues

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) met October 9 – 10. The [agenda](#) included a variety of Medicare policy issues, including international comparison of rates paid to hospitals, sharing risk in Medicare Part D, potentially inappropriate opioid use in Medicare Part D, the next generation of Medicare beneficiaries, private-sector initiatives to manage post-acute care, and validating relative value units in Medicare's fee schedule for physicians and other health professionals.

## Adjustments Announced in Controversy Threshold Amounts for ALJ Hearings

The September 26 *Federal Register* contained a notice announcing the annual adjustment in the amount in controversy (AIC) threshold amounts for Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) hearings and judicial review under the Medicare appeals process. Calendar year 2015 AIC threshold amounts are \$150 for ALJ hearings and \$1,460 for judicial review. The adjustments to AIC threshold amounts will be effective for requests for ALJ hearings and judicial review filed on or after January 1, 2015. The effective date of the notice is also January 1, 2015.

## Resolution Passes; Directs LBFC to Review Safety in Youth Sports Act

On October 15, [House Resolution \(HR\) 1064](#) passed and directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of the commonwealth's program of providing intervention for young athletes who sustain a brain injury, as required under the [Safety in Youth Sports Act \(Senate Bill 200\)](#). The LBFC is directed to report its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives within 12 months of the adoption of the resolution. The resolution was generated and passed because of the hard work and diligence by members of the Pennsylvania Brain Injury Coalition, a collaborative effort between individuals or family members of those with brain injury, RCPA, the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania, the Acquired Brain Injury Network of Pennsylvania, and the Disability Rights Network. Primary sponsor of HR 1064 was Representative Stevenson with 30 plus co-sponsors. Reps. Stevenson and Briggs serve as co-chairs of the Brain Injury Caucus.

## DOH Ebola Resources

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) has created an [Ebola information page](#) on its website about the Ebola situation in the US and other countries. The page addresses the disease, how to protect yourself, and what to do if you think you have Ebola. It also includes information and materials such as frequently asked questions, checklists, and posters.

## Obama Signs IMPACT Act

On October 6, President Obama signed into law [HR 4994](#), *The Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation Act of 2014* (IMPACT Act). The provisions in the IMPACT Act will affect inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IRFs) and a broad range of post-acute care providers including home health agencies, skilled nursing facilities, and long-term acute care hospitals. Facets of daily operations of these post-acute care providers will change as a result of the act and ensuing regulations, including what information providers must collect and report, information the public will receive about post-acute care providers, and the method of determining future Medicare payments to post-acute care providers

## NHSN Quality Data Submission Deadline Extended to November 15

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) Quality Reporting Program has extended the deadline for first quarter 2014 quality measure data submitted via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) to November 15. This new deadline pertains to NHSN data only and aligns with the previously established second quarter 2014 quality measure data submission deadline, effectively requiring the submission of both first quarter NHSN data and all second quarter 2014 quality data by November 15. This deadline extension for IRFs is only for quality measure data submitted via the CDC NHSN. CMS strongly encourages all facilities to submit data several days prior to the deadline to allow time to address any submission issues and provide opportunity to review submissions to ensure data is complete.

## New IRF PAI Training Manual Released

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a new Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Patient Assessment Instrument (IRF PAI) training manual, available from the CMS [website](#). The manual includes the final version of the [IRF PAI](#) (Version 1.3) from the IRF prospective payment system (PPS) fiscal year 2015 final rule and provides instructions for completing IRF PAIs on or after October 1. The new IRF PAI includes the therapy mode recording section, a chapter devoted to comorbid conditions and comorbidity tiers look up tables, and a chapter of charts that list what is mandatory and voluntary for clinicians to complete on the IRF PAI. Some revisions made to the manual include:

- A more in-depth and comprehensive quality measures section, which discusses all of the quality measures that must be fulfilled and the steps for fulfilling them; and
- A detailed section for assessing various stages of pressure ulcers at admission and discharge.

## RACs Identified \$3.75B in Improper Medicare Payments

A new report, *Recovery Auditing in Medicare for Fiscal Year 2013*, released by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services shows that fee-for-service Medicare Recovery Audit Contractors (RACs) identified and corrected 1,532,249 claims for improper payments (\$3.75 billion) in fiscal year 2013. Of this total, \$3.65 billion was attributable to overpayments and \$102.4 million in identified underpayments paid back to providers. Included in the results section is information on outpatient therapy reviews.

## CMS Issues Correction to 2015 IRF Final Rule

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published a notice in the October 1 *Federal Register* that corrects technical errors that appeared in the Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) Prospective Payment System final rule for fiscal year 2015. The corrections are effective October 1.

## Finding Your Way After Brain Injury Conference Planned

The Moss Rehab Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model System and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research are sponsoring a one-day conference, "[New Roads, New Directions: Finding Your Way After Brain Injury](#)," November 8, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia. The conference is geared toward persons with brain injury and their family members, offers networking opportunities, lectures, workshops, and hands-on opportunities for learning. An inspirational keynote address will be provided by Doug Markgraf, a young man who sustained a severe TBI in a bicycle accident. In 2011, Doug biked across the US to raise awareness of TBI and also made a film of his journey, "This Beats a Coma." Participating partners in the conference include the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania, Bancroft, Beechwood NeuroRehab, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, Community Skills Program, Magee Rehabilitation Hospital, ReMed, and the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey

## TBI Advisory Board Meets November 7

The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Advisory Board will hold a public meeting November 7, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Conference Center, 2nd Fl, Giant Food Store, 2300 Linglestown Rd, Harrisburg. This quarterly meeting will provide updates on the number of people served by the Department of Health Head Injury Program and the number of people waiting to be served. In addition, meeting participants will discuss budgetary and programmatic issues, community programs relating to traumatic brain injury, and available advocacy opportunities. For additional information, contact Julie Hohney, Division of Child and Adult Health Services (717-772-2762).

## Article Focuses on how TBI Affects Behavioral Health

"[Traumatic Brain Injury Affects Behavioral Health](#)" was published in the September 25 edition of *Behavioral Healthcare*. The article focuses on the many ways behavioral health difficulties result from traumatic brain injury (TBI) that often occur immediately after the injury and may linger for an indefinite period of time.

## Webinar: Managing Deficit Awareness After Brain Injury

The Brain Injury Association of America is offering a caregiver webinar November 5 at 3:00 p.m. The webinar, "[Practical Strategies for Managing Deficit Awareness After Brain Injury](#)," will offer an overview of what "deficit awareness" is and offer strategies and tools to assist the family and the person with a brain injury better manage deficits as the individual continues to recover.

## ■ VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

### OVR Needs Assessment

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is conducting a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment to address the state plan requirements in the amended Rehabilitation Act of 1973. There are two OVR survey: one for [consumers and individuals with disabilities](#) and a second for [advocates, providers, employers and others](#). Both surveys are available until December 10. For questions on the surveys, contact Eva Weiss (215-204-9544 or [OVRCSNA@temple.edu](mailto:OVRCSNA@temple.edu)).

### Transition Practices Webinar Series

The Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Special Education is offering a webinar series sponsored by the Pennsylvania Community on Transition and in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network. This series, “2014–15 Community of Practice: Making Transition Happen: Dream, Believe, Achieve” will address a variety of topics regarding effective transition planning to employment, post-secondary options, and transportation resources. Details and registration are [available](#). The October 22 webinar featured the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation addressing transition and employment services for youth with disabilities. Highlights included overviews of:

- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation services, supports, eligibility, and processes;
- Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services;
- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services;
- Hiram G. Andrews Center;
- Career assessments including psychological, psychiatric, career assessment, community-based work assessment, and assistive technology evaluations;
- Initiatives including Early Reach, Project Promoting Academic Success, Project SEARCH, and On-the-Job Training; and
- Pennsylvania’s secondary transition [website](#) and OVR’s [webpage](#).

### VR Services for Persons With CP

The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center for Evidence-based Practice in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) developed a research summary, “[How VR Services Affect Employment Outcomes for Adults with Cerebral Palsy](#).” This was undertaken because the rate of employment for those with cerebral palsy (CP) is reported to be lower than for those with other disabilities. The five vocational rehabilitation services shown to be of assistance for employment success include:

- job placement assistance,
- on-the-job training,
- on-the-job support,
- rehabilitation technology, and
- maintenance including food, shelter, and emergency health care.

## ■ MENTAL HEALTH HEADLINES

### OMHSAS Collaborative Documentation Update

On October 23, the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) sent an update that the work of the collaborative documentation group has been reviewed by OMHSAS executive staff and sent to the Office of Medical Assistance Programs (OMAP) for its review. Upon completion of the OMAP review, the proposed guidelines will be sent to the Bureau of Program Integrity. If changes are needed OMHSAS will determine if the collaborative documentation work group should reconvene. No timeline for review has been shared.

### Older Adult Resource List

The Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition updated its older adult resource list to include geriatric psychiatric units, psychiatric nursing facilities, and older adult substance use facilities in Pennsylvania. Information can be found [here](#) or by contacting [Sarah Eyster](#).

## RCPA/Pennsylvania SBIRT Project Begins

RCPA has teamed up with the National Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (SBIRT) Center in Pittsburgh to develop a Pennsylvania-based SBIRT project with members. The first planning call was October 24 with interested agencies, RCPA, and SBIRT staff. Plans are for providers to complete the Addiction Technology Transfer Center SBIRT 101 course with 12 hours of online content. This course is composed of six parts and covers all components of the SBIRT model (screening, brief intervention, referral to treatment). Following the online course face-to-face Motivational Interviewing (MI) training will be provided. An online MI booster will follow with additional coaching. Another planning call will be held in December with training to begin in 2015.

## New D&A Regs Published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin

Three sets of regulations from the Department of Drug and Alcohol (D&A) Programs were published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* October 18. The following regulations can be found under the section "Rules and Regulations:" General Provisions, Standards for Licensure of Free-standing Treatment Facilities, and Transfer of Regulations. This makes the process FINAL! RCPA once more thanks all the dedicated members that worked on recommendations for needed changes.

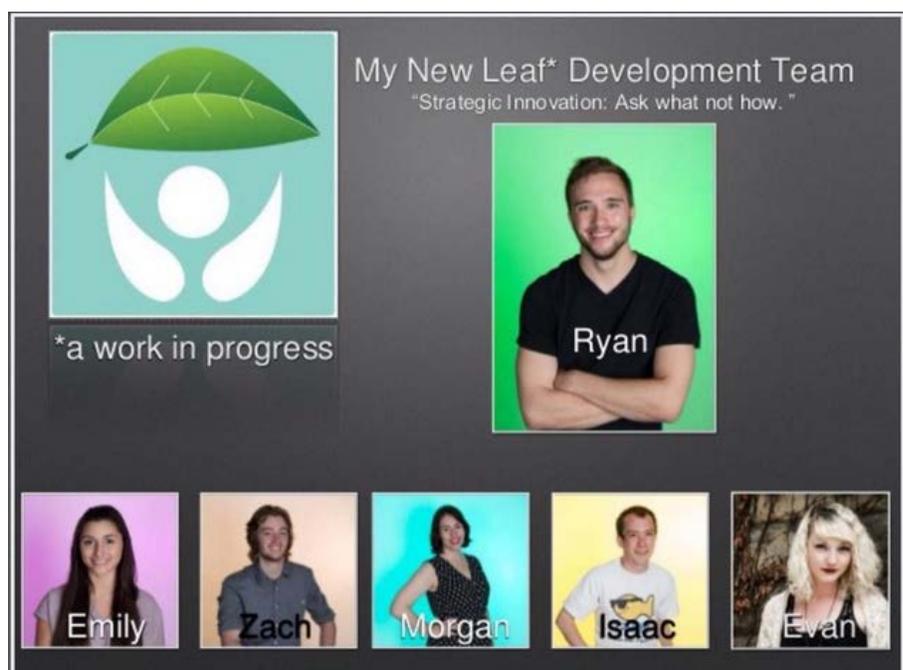
## "My New Leaf" Presented in Seven Springs

RCPA was pleased to introduce Ryan Brannon, inventor of addiction recovery app "My New Leaf," to a select group of members at conference. This mobile and web-based app targets 14–24-year-old substance abusers who represent a "largely invisible population of young substance abusers who have begun to recognize that they need to change their behavior but are not ready to be part of a 12 step program or seek out help from addiction professionals."

Mr. Brannon presented his ideas, explaining his product development process and timeline, and took comments and questions from members in attendance. "I belong to a digitally wired and always-on generation," he explained. "I want to take advantage of that cyber connectedness with a gamified app that is based on sound research principles. My goal is to have the app engage, motivate, and inspire recovery through instantaneous feedback loops that reward the user with virtual and real goods."

Brannon drew inspiration for his recovery app from several sources: his personal experience, his academic interest that came primarily from his time as a pharmacy major at Duquesne University, and his father, the director of conferences and training at the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Research and Training Institute, Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

He expects an alpha version of his product in late spring 2015 and is looking for agencies willing to test it with clients and provide feedback. Brannon plans to monetize his business venture through a subscription-based service to agencies and a "free" version with upgrade potential to online app stores. He plans to raise additional start-up development money through crowdsourced funding sites and/or partnerships with agencies. Members can follow Mr. Brannon's progress on Twitter (@My\_NewLeaf) or Facebook. Direct inquiries can be sent to Mr. Brannon (rtbrannon126@gmail.com).



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

**Announcement #070-14:** ODP Year 7 Cost Report Training Audio Replay/PowerPoint Presentation. The materials are available from the [ODP Provider Information Center](#).

**Announcement #072-14:** ODP Year 7 Cost Report Website Now Available. All Year 7 Cost Reports were due by 11:59 p.m. October 30. If a provider's cost report was not successfully submitted by October 30, it will not be included in the desk review process and will not be considered during the 2015/16 rate development process.

**Announcement #073-14:** Provider Monitoring 2014-15 Tools Now Available. All providers must complete the annual self-assessment using the monitoring tool. Each provider must complete one tool submission for the entire agency before the self-reporting phase concludes November 30.

**Informational Memo #074-14:** Provider Monitoring and Qualification Information and Changes for Fiscal Year 2014-2015. All providers are required to complete a yearly self-assessment and to participate in an Administrative Entity on site review at least once per cycle.

**Announcement #075-14:** Pennsylvania Academy for Direct Support Professionals. New no-cost online training curriculum for direct support professionals is available at the ODP Provider Information Center.

**Informational Memo #076-14:** Employment Outcome Training Available Free on SELN Website.

**Informational Packet #077-14:** Service Delivery Documentation for Unlicensed Residential Habilitation (URH). ODP is issuing clarification on service content and documentation requirements for URH services.

**Announcement #078-14:** ODP Year 7 Desk Review Training Registration for AEs.

**Announcement #079-14:** Pennsylvania Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Professionals Curriculum Training. Five of the curriculum training modules are being offered across the state by Health Care Quality Units.

**Informational Packet #080-14:** Provider Payment for Start-Up and Family Living Initiative. ODP has established procedure codes to support 55 PA Code Chapter 51.111 for start-up costs associated with residential habilitation services.

**Announcement #081-14:** Benjamin Settlement Approved: Protecting Freedom of Choice for Individuals in ICFs/ID. Questions regarding this settlement agreement may be directed to Ron Melusky ([rmelusky@pa.gov](mailto:rmelusky@pa.gov)) or Mary Ellyn Fogarty ([mfogarty@pa.gov](mailto:mfogarty@pa.gov))

**Announcement #082-14:** ODP Year 7 Desk Review procedures, Excel 2013 Update and Cost Report Submission Deadline Reminder. The initial cost report submission attempt is October 23. Final cost reports and supplemental schedules deadline is October 30.

**Announcement #083-14:** Outcome Concerns: A Bridge to Action. Supports Coordinator required training available until December 31.

**Personal Care Homes Clarification.** Policy clarification released regarding Personal Care Homes for persons in the P/FDS Waiver and completion of form MA51 Supplement.

## APSE Conference

The June 2015 National Conference for the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) will be held in Philadelphia. The call for proposals has been released and responses are due by January 12, 2015. The conference is open to families, individuals with disabilities, rehabilitation and employment professionals, employers, and policymakers interested in advancing Employment First. If interested in submitting a session proposal, contact [apseconference@apse.org](mailto:apseconference@apse.org) or 301-279-0060. Conference strands are:

- Innovative Practices in Integrated Employment,
- Transition from School to Adult Life,
- Public Policy and Funding, and
- Leadership for the Future.

## Home Rule Delay

The US Department of Labor has announced a [delay in the enforcement](#) of the Home Care Rule known as the companionship exemption. The effective day has not been changed, but enforcement actions in the first six months will be delayed. The effective date for the rule remains January 1, 2015. A time-limited, non-enforcement policy will be effective from January 1 – June 30, 2015 where the department will not bring enforcement action against non-complying employers of the Fair Labor Standards Act. From July 1 – December 31, 2015 the department will exercise its discretion regarding enforcement actions. [Additional information](#) is available. Questions may be directed to [homecare@dol.gov](mailto:homecare@dol.gov).

## Electronic/Video Monitoring/Surveillance

As technology continues to evolve, many human service agencies are dealing with issues created by technology. Many states are or have developed legal guidelines for the use of electronic surveillance in various public and private settings. RCPA has developed this list of resources that can be used by agencies when developing policies related to the use of technology.

A search of Internet resources and sample policies has generated the following information.

- State of Illinois' Department of Human Services 2008 report, [Current and Potential Uses of Electronic Monitoring and Recording](#). This was a study regarding electronic monitoring and recording for purposes of preventing and identifying abuse and neglect within state-operated developmental centers and developmental disabilities services. Issues that must be addressed include liability, privacy and dignity, rights restrictions, and employee/union rights.
- The eHow website has a variety of articles addressing this subject. These include: [Video Surveillance Laws in Pennsylvania](#), Regulations on Surveillance Cameras, Camera Surveillance Laws, How to Legally Use Security Cameras to Avoid Breaking Privacy Laws, Rules on the Legal Use of Video Surveillance, and Different Types of Surveillance Equipment and Their Uses. The article on video surveillance laws indicated the state has one of the toughest laws and that even law enforcement agencies are prohibited from using this surveillance in many situations without prior court approval.
- An article of interest from Massachusetts, "[The Group Home Surveillance Camera Debate](#)," discusses some of this complicated issue such as determining if cameras are a protection or an intrusion.

## FLSA Toolkit

The National Resource Center for Participant-Directed Services has released a resource, "[FLSA Home Care Rule Toolkit](#)" to assist stakeholders regarding the new Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regarding wages of home care workers. On January 1, 2015 this federal rule will extend federal minimum wage and overtime to home care workers. RCPA has asked Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) for guidance on this rule change and its impact on any participant-directed services. As of October 16, ODP was still awaiting a state legal decision.

## HCBS Toolkit

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network has published a [toolkit](#) on assisting individuals with disabilities receive home and community-based services in integrated community settings. The toolkit includes resources for advocates, families, state administrators, systems professionals, and a research brief on supported housing.

## Dual Diagnosis Trainings

Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care is offering several Pennsylvania Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Curriculum trainings in the Philadelphia area in December. Sessions are free and include:

- December 12 – Role of Everyday Lives and Recovery and
- December 12 – Communicating with the Psychiatrist.

Additional training being offered by the agency includes:

- November 14, 10:00 a.m., End of Life Planning
- November 14, 1:00 p.m., Grief and Loss
- November 21, 10:00 a.m., Falls
- November 21, 1:00 p.m., Navigating the Mental Health System

## Health Care Checklist

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has developed a guide for youth and families with special health care needs to assist them through the transition process from school to adult services. The “[Transition to Adult Living in Pennsylvania: Transition Health Care Checklist](#)” includes resources such as health care, education, agency services, and benefits. The checklist was developed in conjunction with various state agencies, advocates, and families.

## ASERT Focus on Social Skills Programs

Autism service providers who have accessed the Autism Service Education Resource and Training (ASERT) website have noticed a growing focus on social skills programs. The primary reason is that data from the Autism Needs Assessment conducted in 2011 showed that social skills training is an overwhelming need for the autism community in Pennsylvania. The ASERT social skills groups are designed to give adolescents tools and supports for improving their skill and ability to make friends, develop relationships, and better succeed in school and employment settings. Learn more about ASERT social skills groups at [www.PAautism.org/socialskills](http://www.PAautism.org/socialskills).

## Making the Most of School

In a recent publication from the Autism Service Education Resource and Training (ASERT) Center, a group of young adults and volunteers from an ASERT social skills group shared experiences and perspectives. For these eight young adults, high school was a positive experience. Whether through a job, an extracurricular activity, or during classes these individuals enjoyed the experience of meeting new people and making friends. One of the things they reported missing the most about school was lunchtime with friends. Even though most of them have lunch in groups in the workplace and post-secondary settings, the group agreed that many memories were created with friends in the high school cafeteria. Below is a list of social skill development opportunities and tips from the experiences of these authors for others on the autism spectrum:

- **Get involved** – join an extracurricular activity, academic club, sports team, or student government organization.
- **Step out of your comfort zone** – be willing to try new things and gain new experiences.
- **Be yourself** – embrace your unique interests and find others who share them.
- **Find advisors** – pursue relationships with teachers or guidance counselors who can help you plan for what comes after high school.
- **Get a job** – working is a great opportunity to learn responsibility and help you prioritize your time, and it is always nice to have extra money.

## Expanding the SKN Respite Program

Caregivers of a child with special health care needs can feel overwhelmed and may experience depression, guilt, anger, sleep disorder, and strained relationships. Respite gives caregivers time to themselves while someone else cares for their loved ones. The Department of Health Special Kids Network (SKN) and the SKN Respite Program are funded by a Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant. The department is working with Temple University to increase access to respite care. The goal is to increase access to services that are low or no cost, planned or unplanned, for children and youth with special health care needs. Temple is recruiting faith- and community-based organizations interested in developing a volunteer program or increasing the amount of time offered in an existing respite program. Organizations will receive funding, resources, and training using an evidence-based curriculum.

Temple is working with the Watson Institute to train organizations on how to implement the program and provide respite care. Following training, organizations will recruit volunteers to provide respite and recruit families who need care. The families being recruited must have a child or youth with special health needs. The organizations will match families with volunteers who were trained to provide respite and agree to follow the core components of the program, which include obtaining child abuse clearances and criminal background checks for all volunteers. With this initiative, the department expects that more hours of respite care will be available and anticipates that more children and youth will receive services. The program began in July with a focus on the southeast region of the state. The plan for this year is to expand to the southwest and southcentral regions of the state. For more information contact Ana Milicevic ([amilicevic@pa.gov](mailto:amilicevic@pa.gov) or 717-772-2763).

## School Nurses Address Mental Health Needs

Senator Robert Casey recently gathered school nurses in Philadelphia to make his case for enough funding to restore and expand the ranks of nursing personnel in schools. Casey is supporting legislation to create a Department of Education grant. The federal government, states, and local schools would share the cost of hiring more nurses to improve nurse-to-student ratios. Many nurses divide their time between several schools. The president of the Pennsylvania Association of School Nurses reported that just 45 percent of Pennsylvania schools have a certified school nurse on site all day, every day.

State law requires one nurse for every 1,500 students, while the Education Law Center said a safer ratio is one nurse for every 750 students. In addition to meeting the challenges of the growing number of students with significant physical health care conditions, school nurses play an important role in identifying and addressing students' mental health needs. In a national survey of school-based mental health services, school nurses reported spending approximately one-third of their time providing mental health services. An estimated 20 percent of students may have mental health problems that go undiagnosed and untreated.

## CPSL Foundation Training Goes Live

Six hundred individually licensed professionals are among staff working at RCPA organizations who will participate in the November 3 pilot testing of the Child Protective Services Law (CPLS) foundational mandated reporter training. This training is now required for licensure and license renewal for thousands of health and human service professionals. On November 17, this web-based training will be available to all mandated reporters and other concerned and interested citizens in Pennsylvania. It is important to note that the mandated reporter training will NOT be required for licensed Behavior Specialists who must renew their license by December 31.

## Advancing Development of Transition Age Peer Specialists

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) Mental Health Planning Council Children's Committee recently engaged in discussion focused on the potential for developing a transition age youth certified peer specialist position in Pennsylvania. Committee members agreed this support is much needed and something that would greatly benefit transition age youth in their recovery journey. Formal action was taken giving new momentum to the committee's transition age youth and young adult work group recommendations and goals. Due to overwhelming consensus, the Children's Committee has charged the work group with advancing this initiative and the potential for developing and implementing a certified peer specialist position for transition age youth. The work group will be led by Lauren Kelly Gallaher, a young adult member of the OMHSAS Mental Health Planning Council Children's Committee and youth involvement specialist at the Pennsylvania System of Care Partnership.

## New Resource for Trauma Informed Care and Treatment

[Trauma Informed Care: Perspectives and Resources](#), is a web-based resource tool from the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health. The center is working to help build state policy and provider capacity to serve children and youth who have experienced trauma. Both five-minute and 90-second promotional videos can be downloaded and used in advocacy efforts. This comprehensive web-based, video-enhanced resource tool is designed to augment ongoing efforts at the federal, state, local, and provider levels to become more trauma-informed.

## Rate Methodology Task Force Update

The Rate Methodology Task Force continues to work on the development of a cost of care model for county-based community and in-home child welfare and juvenile justice services. Much of the current work is centered on the program description and fiscal report information counties may need from in-home providers to be able to negotiate rates and determine "reasonable" operational costs. Recent meetings of the task force included a presentation from the Bureau of Financial Operations on how to determine direct versus indirect costs. As county, state, and provider representatives present the challenges and complexities each faces, the task force retains a shared willingness to work together to develop recommendations to be sent to the General Assembly by the end of the year.

## Active Minds for Consumers on Campus

As the holidays approach, many young people served by community providers will come home from college and check in with family, friends, and former treatment providers. One resource for these young adults is [Active Minds](#). Active Minds is a campus-based non-profit dedicated to reducing the stigma that surrounds mental health with over 400 student-led chapters across North America. Active Minds is the only organization working to utilize the student voice to change the conversation about mental health on college campuses. By developing and supporting student-run mental health advocacy groups on college campuses, Active Minds is increasing students' awareness of mental health issues, providing information and resources regarding mental illness, and bridging the gap between students and mental health professionals. Pennsylvania has more than 30 chapters dedicated to "changing the conversation about mental health to make sure that no one suffers alone in silence." The organization is working to reach its ultimate goal of a chapter on all 4,000 college campus in the US.

## Expanding the Early Childhood Safety Net

In October, the governor signed legislation that expands the focus of the early intervention system to more fully include homeless infants and toddlers. There are an estimated 6,000 homeless infants and toddlers under the age of three across the state. The new law addresses a critical gap in Pennsylvania's child service safety net. Until now, these very young children had no assurance they would be connected with services. They are now automatically eligible for tracking and to receive services if needed. RCPA joined with the Campaign for What Works and a coalition of nearly 80 organizations who advocated on behalf of this legislation.

## IDD Committee

The September Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee featured discussion with Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Deputy Secretary Steve Suroviec regarding the 2014/15 budget and evolution of the ODP Futures Planning initiative. Members provided "mini-testimony" to Pennsylvania legislative staff. Testimony topics included IDD and Aging; Dual Diagnosis; Residential Rates, Lifesharing Costs and Delays; Sheltered Workshops; Competitive Employment; Workforce Retention; and State Funding and ODP Policy Issues. [Comprehensive notes](#) and links to mini-testimony are available.

## SCO Subcommittee

The September Supports Coordination Organizations Subcommittee featured a presentation by Total Mobility Services who provided customized mobility vans for members to tour. Office of Developmental Programs staff attending included Ron Melusky, Maureen Veety, Jackie Epstein, and Jen Fraker. Information covered included implementation of the Harry M. lawsuit settlement, the deaf service initiative, and recommendations for training. [Comprehensive notes](#) are available.

## Vocational Rehabilitation Subcommittee

Discussion at the September Vocational Rehabilitation Subcommittee focused on "Project SEARCH," an innovative workforce and career development model for training youth and young adults with disabilities. A presentation by Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Chief Special Program Division Dana Baccanti, covered the work being done to train OVR staff to understand the rules, regulations, and policies from the Office of Developmental Programs for individuals with intellectual disability and autism. Members were reminded about recommendations regarding pilots, options and/or new service ideas that will assist in the continuation of necessary community supports, focus on everyday lives and address the needs of those that may not be capable of competitive employment. [Comprehensive notes](#) are available.

*“The two words “information” and “communication” are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.”*

– Sydney J. Harris

## CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

<b>Wednesday, November 5</b>	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Brain Injury Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Thursday, November 6</b>	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Outpatient Rehabilitation Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Monday, November 10</b>	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Legislative Affairs Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Wednesday, November 12</b>	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Human Resources Committee <i>RCPA Conference Room</i>
<b>Thursday, November 13</b>	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Southeast Region Meeting <i>Horizon House, Philadelphia</i>
<b>Friday, November 14</b>	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Northeast Region Meeting <i>Children’s Service Center of Wyoming Valley Wilkes-Barre</i>
<b>Tuesday, November 18</b>	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Northwest Region Meeting <i>Clarion Holiday Inn, Clarion</i>
<b>Wednesday, November 19</b>	1:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Southwest Region Meeting <i>Four Points by Sheraton Pittsburgh North, Mars</i>

### DECEMBER

<b>Tuesday, December 2</b>	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Criminal Justice Committee Drug and Alcohol Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Wednesday, December 3</b>	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Children’s Committee Mental Health Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Thursday, December 4</b>	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. 2:45 – 4:45 p.m.	Supports Coordination Organization Subcommittee Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee Vocational Rehabilitation Subcommittee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
<b>Thursday, December 11</b>	1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	LEAN and CPI: Implementation of These Principles in Even the Unique Rehab Environment <i>IPRC Webinar</i>
<b>Thursday, December 11</b>	10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Medical Rehabilitation Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>