



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

A Pennhurst Proclamation



Richard S. Edley, PhD

Last month, on June 18, the Arc of Philadelphia sponsored an event at City Hall to commemorate the lawsuit and ultimate closing of the

Pennhurst Institution in 1987. There has been so much written over the years about these events as well as numerous documentaries and other programs. Yet even after all these years, there are still a couple of stories that need to be told.

Several members contacted me about this event and wrote about their own thoughts and reflections on this critical time in disability rights history. In fact, the event in Philadelphia also helped to recognize some of the strongest advocates of that time, including Pat Clapp (then PA Arc president) and Eleanor Elkin (then national Arc president), who boldly represented those with disabilities. Their accomplishments, as well as others, were monumental in the history of the system.

For example, in the early 1970s Pat Clapp gave a speech at the 23rd Annual Convention of the PA Arc, which

included the following memorable words:

“... I spoke to you with great concerns about conditions in institutions... we decided to go and we would investigate... what we found was indeed grim... and this in the twentieth century...”

She went on to describe these conditions in detail, including some very specific case examples. Then she said:

“The more I thought about the conditions in that institution, the more I thought about each of the facilities having an advisory board and that somebody should have known what was going on and done something about it. It shouldn’t have been permitted to go on for all this time and so I decided that I had to say something...”

And she, Eleanor, and others did. It changed the system forever.

Many note that Pennhurst was in trouble from the beginning. As early as 1910, administrators were stating their concerns that they could not keep up with the level of admissions, and later limited funding, followed by cuts in

staff and training, led to the inevitable abuse, neglect, and ultimately inhumane conditions. Eleanor Elkin led the 1960s investigation at the Pennhurst State School and Hospital and there was continued pressure from the Arc. Then in 1968, WCAU-TV reporter Bill Baldini aired the shocking report entitled “Suffer the Little Children.”

By 1974, the Halderman v. Pennhurst lawsuit was filed. In 1977, a federal judge ruled in favor of former resident Terri Lee Halderman, and the state finally agreed to shut the facility down in 1985. The final closure came in 1987.

So what parts of the story remain to be told?

First, there is little recognition today of the fact that Pennsylvania community providers, including many of whom RCPA represents, provide critical services that were developed precisely as a result of these events. That is, the community services that our members provide (e.g., residential, vocational, home and community based) were in response to the need for non-institutional alternatives to help disabled individuals integrate into the community – in a real, meaningful way.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

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We must remember where we came from and how far the system in Pennsylvania has come. It can absolutely go even further, but the providers who were there at the time and responded, as well as those who continue the fight today, should be commended. The community services that exist today do integrate individuals into the community and stand as a testament to true system reform when reflecting back on the historical institutions.

What else has been left out of the story?

Several providers who were there at the time have noted that the system was in such shock, upheaval, and transformation, that everyone was scrambling to develop and implement needed services. What was forgotten was that no one really stopped

and took the time to thank the great heroes of this movement, including Pat Clapp and Eleanor Elkin.

So thank you, Pat and Eleanor, and everyone else who so strongly advocated when it was needed. The Pennsylvania system to help those with disabilities lead everyday lives – today and tomorrow – stands as a result of your collective voice and courage.

[Note: A special thanks to Jim Cook, executive director of Cambria Residential Services, for his guidance and assistance with this article. Jim is also an Honorary Board Member of RCPA]

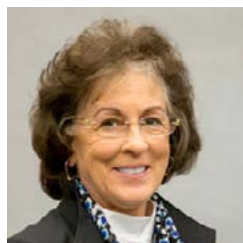
Richard S. Edley, PhD

President/CEO

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

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

RCPA Congratulates Susan Blue for Being Elected National Council Board Chair



At the spring meeting of the National Council for Behavioral Health, the board of directors elected Susan Blue as its new board chair, succeeding Jeff Walter of the Connecticut Community Providers Association. Blue, president and CEO of RCPA member Community Services Group, will serve a two-year term.

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CPARC Launches New Show

The Arc of Cumberland and Perry Counties, also known as CPARC, has developed a new show: *CPARC Central*. The show airs on the organization's YouTube channel, and can be accessed through CPARC's [website](#) or viewers can Google *CPARC Central*. CPARC Executive Director John Reardon, the show's host, is pleased to announce that numerous shows have already been filmed. Reardon stated, "The goal of our show is to share information and educate the public about the work CPARC, and agencies like ours across the Commonwealth, do every day in supporting individuals and families with disabilities...we have received very positive feedback from many viewers."

McConkey Insurance & Benefits Announces New Hires

RCPA member McConkey Insurance & Benefits recently announced the hiring of new team members, as well as promotions of existing staff. See details on their [website](#); look for the "News Links" on their home page.

NEW MEMBERS

FULL PROVIDER

The Northeast Pennsylvania Center for Independent Living

Scranton, PA

Timothy Moran, CEO

Alleghenies United Cerebral Palsy

Johnstown, PA

Tammy Rhoades, executive director

RCPA and BHMCOs/Oversights Search for Operational Compatibilities

RCPA sent an invitation to HealthChoices Behavioral Health Managed Care Organizations (BHMCO) and oversight bodies to participate in a statewide RCPA task force. 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.

RCPA represents over 325 health and human services organizations across the Commonwealth. Many RCPA members have locations and services in multiple sites, even multiple counties. Some are in communities which touch several county-BHMCO contracts. Working with numerous BHMCOs, with wide-ranging differences in operational procedures, causes significant confusion and frustration among the providers. These differences also cause increased errors – and ultimately increased costs – for all involved. In an effort to improve services and access, reduce errors, and ultimately save money, RCPA is requesting that BHMCOs come together with the association to search for potential consistencies and commonalities.

RCPA staff have had numerous conversations with a number of leaders in the various BHMCOs and have received extremely positive responses about the concept. The first meeting is planned for July 16. This initial meeting is not intended as a large forum; rather a smaller discussion and brainstorming with RCPA staff. For additional information contact [Sarah Eyster](#) or [Lynn Cooper](#).

RCPA New Hire

Cindi Hobbes

*Director of the
International Pediatric Rehabilitation Collaborative*



RCPA welcomes Cindi Hobbes to the RCPA staff. Hobbes provides guidance and leadership for members of the collaborative. Her role is to engage pediatric rehabilitation providers to network, share resources, and improve the provision of rehabilitation services for children. She is responsible for meeting planning and facilitation (including webcasts), data management, project oversight, and membership recruitment.

Hobbes also manages all content of the IPRC website. Cindi has a strong clinical background as a pediatric physical therapist and holds a Master of Science Degree in Physical Therapy from Ithaca College. She has over a decade of clinical experience providing physical therapy services for children in inpatient, outpatient, school, and home-based settings, and has a passion for excellence in pediatric rehabilitation.

RCPA Members Save on National Council Conference

The National Council Conference, to be held March 7-9, 2016, in Las Vegas, is the health care industry's foremost behavioral health conference. Each spring, executives, board members, thought leaders, and behavioral health professionals from the nation's community health, mental health, and addiction care organizations come together for this can't miss event that features the latest innovations, science, and business and clinical best practices. Pennsylvania is consistently among the most well represented groups from around the country.

Discount registration instructions for RCPA members:

Please use the coupon code **16memberPA** which gives members an **additional \$225 off** – and of course the earlier you register, the more you save. Contact [Richard Edley](#) with any additional questions.

The screenshot shows the RCPA website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Contact us, and social media icons. Below this is a large banner featuring a young boy in a blue hoodie looking down at his hands. To the right of the banner is a sidebar with several news items, including 'Budget Impasse Questions And Answers', 'Medicaid - Home and Community Based Services Bill Introduced in Senate', and 'Update on State Budget Talks'. A search bar is located in the top right corner.

It's finally here... the new RCPA website is up and running!

- New, sleek design is attractive and easy to follow
- Fewer "clicks" to get where you want to be
- Industry updates in more real-time than ever
- Dynamic content featuring new items daily
- Responsive design for mobile users

Be sure to pay us a visit and send any comments to RCPA Communications Director [Sharon Militello](#). Also, feel free to use the RCPA logo on your own website and/or printed materials to help strengthen your organization's identity — logo decals available as well for your windows, doors, and vehicles at no cost to you. Contact Sharon to request yours today!

To use the digital logo below, just right-click on it and select "save as picture," then name it and save the file onto your computer.

Web/Email



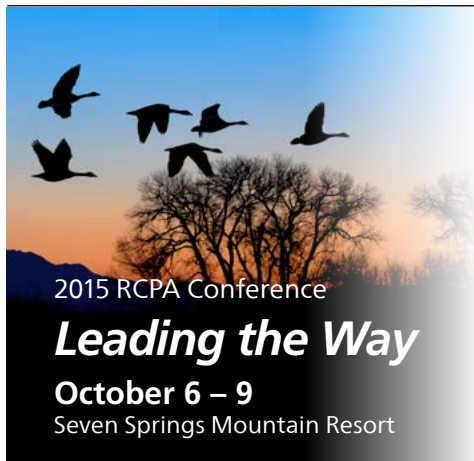
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To request a logo for print, contact [Sharon Militello](#).

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2015 Conference: Leading the Way Is Taking Shape

The RCPA Annual Conference Committee is pleased to inform you that our final conference at Seven Springs Resort is coming together nicely. From a film screening to interesting, innovative workshops and valuable networking opportunities, this year's conference is a must! Watch for our electronic registration brochure to reserve your room and register. Sign up before September 4 to receive the early bird discount. A brand new **conference website** will be launched in mid to late July, so stay tuned!



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.



State Budget Talks and the Effects of a Late Budget to Providers

As of press time, the budget talks are still ongoing. The General Assembly is looking at pensions, online gaming, and privatizing/modernizing the state liquor store system for revenue. The governor is still looking for property tax reform, possible personal income tax increases, and an extraction tax. If the governor and the General Assembly cannot come to an agreement, the General Assembly has indicated that they will pass and send the Governor an on-time budget by the June 30 deadline. If this occurs, one of two things can happen. One, the governor signs the budget bill on time and the

General Assembly will go home for the summer; or two, the governor receives the bill and within ten days he may to decide to sign the bill, line item veto parts of the bill, or veto the bill entirely. If the governor decides to use his veto power, there will be a late budget and the governor and General Assembly will go back to the negotiation table.

In a late budget scenario, our providers will not be able to plan effectively. Member providers may not have sufficient cash balances to provide services to clients, pay staff, and to pay day-to-day expenses. In most instances, when

there are state funding delays, providers have to draw against their lines of credit. In today's tough economic environment, providers are not as financially strong as they were the last time the Commonwealth had a late state budget, so providers will have more difficulties staying solvent. RCPA is asking members to use the [RCPA policy paper](#) and contact your [legislators](#) and the [governor](#), to tell them it is imperative to pass an on time budget – and if they do not, how it will affect your business and the services you provide to residents of the Commonwealth.

■ FEDERAL NEWS BRIEFS

GAO Releases Report on Medicare Administrative Contractors

On June 1, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report, [Medicare Administrative Contractors: CMS Should Consider Whether Alternative Approaches Could Enhance Contractor Performance](#), which requests that the GAO assess the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) implementation of contracting reform, and examine whether CMS could do more to increase the effectiveness of Medicare Administrative Contractors.

Final Rule Updating Medicare Shared Savings Program Released

On June 9, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published the Medicare Shared Savings Program Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) [final rule](#) in the *Federal Register*. This final rule enhances the focus of primary care services and provides additional flexibility in the program, which should increase participation.

Some of the provisions include:

- Creation of a new Track 3 that includes higher rates of shared savings and the opportunity to use new care coordination tools;
- Streamlining of data sharing between CMS and ACOs;
- Establishment of a waiver of the 3-day stay skilled nursing facility (SNF) for beneficiaries that are prospectively assigned to ACOs under Track 3; and
- Refining of policies for resetting ACO benchmarks, to help ensure that the program continues to provide strong incentives for ACOs to improve patient care and generate cost savings.

Committee on Ways and Means Sends Letter to CMS Regarding ICD-10 Disruption

On June 1, the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee sent a [letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), requesting they take steps to prevent widespread disruption with the October 1 implementation of the ICD-10 diagnosis codes. Included in the letter are recommendations, such as making public contingency plans for how Medicare will process claims in the event CMS is unable to process ICD-10 diagnosis codes; allowing for “clinically accurate but less granular codes” to be accepted during a transitional period; etc.

Second Medicare FFS ICD-10 Testing Successful; Interactive Case Studies Created

During the time frame of April 27 through May 1, Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) health care providers, clearinghouses, and billing agencies, participated in a second successful ICD-10 testing. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) was able to accommodate most volunteers, representing a broad cross-section of providers, claims, and submitter types. The [results](#) from the testing provide additional information. In addition, CMS has released [interactive case studies](#), to assist providers with understanding key ICD-10 documentation concepts. The case studies include clinical scenarios, short quizzes on related coding concepts, and documentation tips.

CMS Proposes Rule to Strengthen Managed Care for Medicaid and CHIP Enrollees

Hidden Benefits for Behavioral Health Information Technology and Electronic Health Records

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed to [modernize](#) Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) managed care regulations to update the programs’ rules and strengthen the delivery of quality care for beneficiaries. This [proposed rule](#) is the first major update to Medicaid and CHIP managed care regulations in more than a decade. It would improve beneficiary communications and access, provide new program integrity tools, support state efforts to deliver higher-quality care in a cost-effective way, and better align Medicaid and CHIP managed care rules and practices with other sources of health insurance coverage. Overall, this proposed rule supports the agency’s mission of better care, smarter spending, and healthier people.

Per our partners at National Council, contained within that rule was language that would allow states to reimburse behavioral health providers, among others, for the adoption and use of interoperable health information technology through Medicaid. This would be an incredibly important opportunity for provider groups that were left out of the electronic health record (EHR) incentive program back in 2009. Comments on the proposed rule are due by July 27.

“The wise man will want to be ever with him who is better than himself.”

— Plato

DHS/Aging Releases Discussion Document on MLTSS

On June 1, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Department of Aging issued a [press release](#) announcing the issuance of a [discussion document](#) that supports Governor Wolf's plan to improve care coordination and to move to a Medicaid Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) program contracting with Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). Governor Wolf has directed DHS and Aging to explore MLTSS as an avenue to increase opportunities for older Pennsylvanians, and individuals with physical disabilities, to remain in their homes. The discussion document highlights how Pennsylvania plans to move forward with this initiative, the design of the plan, and the implementation process.

Dual eligible adults (excluding individuals eligible for Medicaid-funded and Base-funded programs available through the Office of Developmental Programs) over the age of 21, who are entitled to Medicare Part A and/or Part B and Part D, and are eligible for Medicaid benefits, all nursing facility clinically eligible non-dual eligible adults age 18 and older who are eligible for the Pennsylvania Medicaid Program, and Non-Medicaid recipients of the Act 150 Program, will be enrolled in MLTSS. Public comments are encouraged and will be accepted through July 15. In addition, six public input meetings were scheduled across the state during the month of June where public comments were accepted. Additional information can be obtained on the MLTSS [web page](#). RCPA has scheduled a meeting with members to discuss comments on July 1.

NASBO Releases 2015 Budget Processes in the States Report

The National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO) released the 2015 edition of [Budget Processes in the States](#) report. The report provides a comparative analysis to demonstrate diversity in the state budgeting practices and is referenced by many interested in the state budget process across state governments. State-by-state comparative information is included on numerous aspects of the state budget process, such as balanced budget requirements, executive branch authority, rainy day funds, revenue estimating procedures, and the use of performance data.

Collaborative Care Summit Presentation Materials Online

RCPA was pleased to have played a role in Pennsylvania's Collaborative Care Summit. This joint effort focused on the importance of strengthening the link between meeting individuals' physical and behavioral health care needs, and the collaboration between medical and behavioral health professionals. Presentations at the summit ranged from efforts to address complex health and mental health conditions, foundational skills for collaboration, and telemedicine to the training of physical and behavioral health care professionals to better provide collaborative care. The [presentation materials](#) from the summit are now available to practitioners, providers, health system and health insurance leaders, and policymakers across Pennsylvania.

Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania Seeks Support

The Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring a home within reach of every Pennsylvanian – especially those with low incomes – is on a mission to increase the state's investment in affordable homes this year. The Housing Alliance, and [173](#) other organizations across the commonwealth, are supporting [HB 792](#) and [SB 566](#) to provide statewide funding for the state housing trust fund known as [PHARE](#).

Why invest in affordable homes now when the state is facing a large budget deficit? Because the shortage of affordable homes is a hidden driver of that deficit. Medical Assistance expenditures are high in part because people who are not well housed are sick more often, experiencing both physical and mental illnesses. People who cannot afford simple home modifications to accommodate their disabilities end up in nursing homes at the government's expense. And too often, people experiencing homelessness find themselves in the criminal justice system, while people released from prison without a stable home are 2½ times more likely to be rearrested.

HB 792 and SB 566 would build on PHARE's success in shale counties where Act 13 impact fees have provided funding for rental assistance, new construction and rehab for rental and homeownership, homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing, and blight remediation. The bills will direct up to \$25 million from future growth in revenue from the realty transfer tax to PHARE for use in all 67 counties. There will be no impact on the state budget in the coming year. For more information, contact [Cindy Daley](#), policy director, Housing Alliance of PA, 717-909-2006.

OIG Releases FY 2015 Work Plan Mid-Year Update

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) for Health and Human Services (HHS) released its [Fiscal Year 2015 Work Plan Mid-Year Update](#), which outlines the new and ongoing reviews and activities that they plan to pursue with respect to HHS programs and operations during the current fiscal year and beyond. The update removes items that have been completed, postponed, or canceled, and includes new items that have been started since October 2014. Some of the investigations the OIG is expected to review include:

- Analyzing Medicare payments for clinical diagnostic laboratory tests, including the top 25 clinical diagnostic laboratory tests by Medicare expenditures in 2014;
- Reviewing compliance with various aspects of the **inpatient rehabilitation facility prospective payment system (IRF PPS)**, including the documentation required in support of the claims paid by Medicare;
- Reviewing the extent that providers participating in ACOs in the Medicare Shared Savings Program use electronic health records (EHRs) to exchange health information to achieve their care coordination goals;
- Summarizing OIG audits, evaluations, legal opinions, and investigative work on Medicare Part D and providing progress information on recommendations to improve CMS, Plan Sponsors, and Medicare Drug Integrity Contractor (MEDIC) oversight of the Part D program;
- Describing trends in Part D billing from 2006 to 2014, including changes in billing for commonly used opioid drugs.

■ BRAIN INJURY

Study Determines Knowledge Level of Return-to-Learn Concussion Management Guidelines

A recent [project/study](#), *Educational Professionals' Current Knowledge of Concussions and Return to Learn Implementation Practice*, was conducted for secondary school educational professionals. The findings from the study show that, although educational professionals have adequate knowledge in identifying concussion symptoms in concussed students, the care within the classroom is still underemphasized. In addition, communication is limited and educational professionals are not informed of concussed students needing potential accommodations.

BIAA Announces Upcoming Webinars

The Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) recently announced a number of upcoming webinars for brain injury professionals scheduled during the summer months. [Details and registration information](#) are located on the website.

RCPA Brain Injury Committee to Convene on July 15

The RCPA Brain Injury Committee will meet for its bi-monthly meeting on July 15, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Agenda topics for the upcoming meeting include: update on Medicaid Managed Long-Term Services and Supports, update from Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL), update from Department of Health, and a presentation/update from the Adult Protective Services Director on the program.

Use of Yoga Therapy Assists Traumatic Brain Injury Patients

A [story](#) was recently highlighted from a news station in Stillwater, Minnesota on how a neurologist from a rehabilitation institute prescribes yoga for his brain injury patients to assist with the recovery from Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Yoga has been found to improve balance and coordination, and reduce stress in the patients' lives.

MENTAL HEALTH HEADLINES

Pennsylvania to Apply for Excellence in Mental Health Act Grant

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) has received permission for the governor's office to pursue the Excellence in Mental Health grants through SAMHSA. Twenty-five states will be selected to participate in the demonstration project by October 2015. OMHSAS will need to identify providers to participate in the pilot to become Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHC's). RCPA has been supportive of this initiative and has offered the services of our interested members to the OMHSAS team.

Providers are required to conduct a readiness assessment to become a CCBHC. The National Council, in conjunction with MTM Services, has prepared a [readiness tool](#) for providers to use. RCPA encourages interested providers to utilize this or other tools to assess agency readiness to become a CCBHC.

RCPA Rural Work Group Update

The Rural Work Group met on June 5 for its third meeting. Led by Chairperson Rochelle Von Hof, the group worked to analyze and prioritize areas to address. Transportation related to reimbursement and access were indicated as high priorities. Recruitment of all staffing levels, with a focus on licensed staff, was also identified. Related to recruitment was the discussion of using doctorate level pharmacists for medication management. The next meeting, date TBD in August, will be held by conference call to prepare for the in-person meeting with invited OMHSAS and OMAP officials on September 16 at 1:30 pm.

Evaluation and Management (E&M) CPT Codes sent to the Office of Medical Assistance Programs and Actuary for Review

OMHSAS leadership has indicated that the coding related to E&M codes has been reviewed and recommendations made to OMAP. In addition, Mercer is conducting a financial impact study. RCPA does not know when this will move forward, but continues to discuss with OMHSAS leaders at monthly meetings.

DRUG & ALCOHOL ACTION

Request to OMHSAS and DDAP to Review D&A MA Outpatient Regs

RCPA sent a letter to the leadership and support of the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) and the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), requesting that a task force be formed to review and change the extremely outdated drug and alcohol medical assistance outpatient regulations, *Chapter 1223 Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Clinic Services*. OMHSAS did an outstanding job of organizing a task force and developing regulation changes for mental health outpatient services. These much improved regulations are in the last stages of being finalized. The same process needs to be implemented for drug and alcohol outpatient services. As stated many times before, outpatient treatment in Pennsylvania is at risk of collapse.

A number of years ago, RCPA (known as PCPA at the time) developed a [white paper](#), which highlights the value of outpatient services, reviews the current challenges/threats to services, and outlines what needs to happen to assure the viability of these critical services. The paper emphasizes that when utilized appropriately, outpatient treatment can save millions of dollars in inpatient and emergency room costs. The paper also highlights specific clinical, regulatory, and financial challenges, and makes recommendations for changes in both mental health and drug and alcohol services.

As with the mental health outpatient regulation changes, changes in the drug and alcohol outpatient regulations will save money, improve access and services, reduce unnecessary paperwork, update clinical terminology, update treatment trends, and improve outcomes.

RCPA requested that a time limited group of stakeholders be convened to evaluate drug and alcohol outpatient medical assistance regulation issues and make recommendations for much needed changes. Given the current issues that exist, this task force needs to be implemented as soon as possible. Contact [Lynn Cooper](#) with questions or for any additional information.

RCPA Training on Drug and Alcohol Regulations Planned for Fall

It was decided at the last Regulatory Work Group meeting that a training session on drug and alcohol regulations would be helpful to members. Such a training is being planned for this fall, to review changes that have been made, and discuss changes on the horizon and what is needed. More information will be sent out soon.

National Recovery Month Planning Partners Honors Pennsylvania's Gary Tennis

The Eighth Annual Ramstad/Kennedy Award for outstanding leadership recognized the extraordinary impact of Gary Tennis, the Single State Authority for the State of Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol, for his leadership in recovery support across his state and nationally. The award was presented in Charleston, South Carolina during the 2015 Annual Meeting Awards Luncheon of the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD). This award was established in honor of Congressmen Jim Ramstad and Patrick Kennedy. The two congressmen have become vocal advocates of recovery treatment in all forms, and championed localized efforts to support prevention, treatment, and recovery. The 2015 honoree has worked to spread this positive message, and the message that prevention can be effective in helping to break the cycle of addiction in families.

"Gary Tennis is recognized for his leadership in the establishment of *Building Bridges to Recovery*, reaching out to physicians to educate them about recovery. In this time of unprecedented opioid addiction and overdose, Secretary Tennis has given value to those individuals in the throes of their disease and offered hope that these lives are worth saving and that appropriate treatment must be available as well as supports to maintain recovery," said Sis Wenger of National Association of Children of Alcoholics (NACoA), a Recovery Month partner.

■ IDD FOCUS

ODP Staff Changes

■ **NANCY THALER** will be the new Deputy Secretary of the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) beginning June 29. Thaler recently served as the executive director of the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, assisting 50 state agencies in policy and program development, where she was involved in strategic planning, managing the operating budget, and directing the association's activities. She also previously served as the director of quality improvement for the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and Deputy Secretary of ODP for both Republican and Democratic administrations.

■ **H. PATRICK "PAT" CLANCY** will be joining the Department of Human Services (DHS) as the special advisor to the secretary, focusing on employment issues and the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act. Clancy has a strong background in developing and managing career and workforce development programs. He recently served as the director of workforce initiatives at Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County. He will join the department on July 13.

■ **STEVE SUROVIEC** will become the special advisor to the secretary, focusing on employment issues for people with disabilities, where he will bring the impressive leadership skills he demonstrated as deputy secretary at ODP. Before joining DHS, Steve served admirably as the executive director of Pennsylvania's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. He will share his counsel and expertise in this crucial area beginning June 29.

No Wrong Door

The US Administration for Community Living, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Veterans Health Administration, are sponsoring grants for up to six cooperative agreements for a total of \$4.2 million. These grants are to establish the “No Wrong Door” systems to allow individuals with disabilities to access services through a “one-stop-shop” approach. The PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources, in cooperation with the Departments of Aging, Human Services, and Military and Veteran’s Affairs, are in the process of developing a three-year plan to implement a No Wrong Door system.

Information sharing sessions were held across the state in June. A No Wrong Door system includes:

- Shared statewide approach to long term services and supports;
- All populations included, regardless of age, income, ability, or program eligibility;
- All payers included: federal, state, local, and private;
- Increased public awareness of cross agency sources; and
- Person-centered counseling using options counseling, which include goals and resources.

“Who Am I”

The [Campaign for Disability Employment](#) is a collaboration between disability and business organizations to promote employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Resource materials, including public service announcements, are available to encourage employers to fully include individuals with disabilities in the workplace.

Toolkits available include:

“[Who I Am](#)” – features a range of integrated materials to support this message with public service announcements and discussion guide to facilitate staff training.

“[Because](#)” – features public service announcement featuring seven individuals with various disabilities who are pursuing and realizing their goals for everyday lives.

“[I Can](#)” – includes a public service announcement featuring seven persons with disabilities at work. The [workplace discussion guide](#) fosters can-do attitudes at work.

“[What Can You Do?](#)” – is the theme of this campaign and includes posters, web, and print ads, and other information to promote positive employment outcomes.

ODP Updates

ODP has released the following information:

- [Informational Packet: 2nd Reissue: #028-15](#): Changes to Approved program Capacity Process Resulting from the Provider Settlement Agreement; please read changes in red; deadline for an approved program capacity change request is July 15.
- [Informational Packet #041-15](#): Preparations for Fiscal Year 2015/16 Intellectual Disability ISP Renewal Period.
- [Announcement #042-15](#): ODP’s Quality Management Certification Program: Leadership Resources Available.
- [Announcement #043-15](#): PA Department of Human Services Medication Administration Training Program: New Vendor, Transition Activities and Trainings Scheduled; Beginning June 1, ODP’s Medication Administration Program will be managed by Temple University Harrisburg. Classroom trainings will be held across the state during June.
- [Announcement #044-15](#): Review and Comment Period for the Updated ODP Values Draft.
- [Announcement #045-15](#): Invitation to Join July 2 or July 7, 2015 College of Direct Support Stakeholder Call.
- [Informational Packet #046-15](#): Agency with Choice Financial Management Services Wage Ranges and Benefit Allowance and Corresponding Department Established Fees for specific Participant Direct Services; effective July 1.
- [Informational Packet #047-15](#): Vendor Fiscal/ Employer Agent Financial Management Services Wage and Benefit Ranges for Specific Participant Directed Services; effective July 1.

ODP Futures Planning

The Office of Developmental Program's (ODP) Futures Planning initiative continues to move forward with eight work groups developing [recommendations](#) to be implemented over the next ten years.

RCPA Policy Specialist Linda Drummond is serving on the Futures Extended Team, Work Group #4 on Meeting Changing Needs (behavioral and physical) and its "Gap" Subcommittee, and the Values Work Group. The Values Work Group has developed an initial draft document; *"My Life, My Way: Everyday Lives in Action,"* which provides an overview of values that we all expect and that should guide every decision made by, for, or about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Work Group #4: Meeting Changing Needs has held several meetings which have focused on a review of the current services to address these issues through the lifespan. An action plan is under development by this committee and priorities will include:

- Implement a risk screening process to identify potential stressors that may trigger a crisis event;
- Develop person-centered methodology to identify these potential stressors and a plan to prevent, minimize, and respond to a crisis, should one occur;
- Identify changes needed in the current ISP plan and process; and
- Develop a communication strategy to inform stakeholders of progress made.

New Jersey IDD Providers Needed

The New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) is reaching out to Pennsylvania direct service providers which might be interested in offering services to New Jersey adults, age 21 and older, with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This division is launching a new Supports Program and implementation of a Medicaid-based, Fee-for-Service System. The [Primer for New Providers](#) is a webinar for prospective providers which provides an overview of the state's system.

Also available is the draft of their [Supports Program Policies and Procedures Manual](#) that includes a list of service definitions, qualifications, limitations, and the fee schedule. Any questions may be directed to the [fee-for-service help desk](#).

Upcoming IDD Conferences

- **JULY 22–24:** [2015 Pennsylvania Community on Transition Conference: Navigating the Road to Success](#) at the Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. The primary purpose of this conference is to expand the capacity of schools, agencies, and communities, in partnership with youth, young adults, and families, in promoting the successful transition of youth/young adults with disabilities to post-school outcomes of employment, post-secondary education and training, community participation, and healthy lifestyles. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about effective practices to assist youth/young adults with disabilities to explore possibilities, take advantage of their opportunities, and actively advocate for their futures.
- **JULY 29–30:** IM4Q Annual Statewide Training at the Hilton Hotel, Harrisburg. The Office of Developmental Programs Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) training provides a variety of sessions for self-advocates, families, IM4Q staff, direct service providers, and supports coordinators. Sessions include Adult Protective Services, IM4Q Recommendations, Responding to Considerations, Housing and Assistive Technology, Person-Centered Thinking, and Compassion Fatigue.
- **AUGUST 3–6:** [2015 National Autism Conference: Progress through Partnership](#), at the Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. The autism conference provides comprehensive, evidence-based information to assist educators, other professionals, and families in developing effective educational programming for all students with autism spectrum disorders.
- **SEPTEMBER 15–16:** [2015 Aging/Intellectual Disability Cross-Systems Conference: Building Bridges](#), at the Holiday Inn, Grantville.

ASERT Survey on Meeting Autism Training Needs

One of the gaps that the Autism Service Education Resource and Training Center (ASERT) has identified in Pennsylvania's service delivery system is the need for widespread access to autism-specific training and information for adults with autism, their family members, and the providers who support them. To address this need, ASERT and the Bureau of Autism Services are working to develop training opportunities. Autism service providers, as well as individuals with autism, spouses, significant others, family, roommates, and friends, are being invited to share their suggestions regarding training, information, and other needs. Providers, individuals, and families can take a brief [survey](#) of training and information recommendations.

Autism Transition Resources

According to the Pennsylvania Autism Census, there are over 10,300 individuals ages 18-21 with autism who are preparing for the transition to adulthood. Providers working with individuals in this age range can find a list of key transition resources that Autism Service Education Resource and Training Center (ASERT) has assembled. Providers, individuals, and family members can view the list of helpful transition resources at www.PAautism.org. In addition to these online resources, the staff of the ASERT Center is available by phone at 877-231-4244 or by [email](#) to answer questions about this resource, or any other autism related topics.

Pitt Wins Autism Treatment Study Grant

A substantial federal grant was recently awarded to the University of Pittsburgh researcher Shaun Eack, to explore two types of behavioral therapy for adults with autism. The \$3.2 million grant from the National Institute of Mental Health will support the study of two different therapy approaches. Over the next 18 months, the project will involve 100 adolescents and adults, ages 16 to 40, who have autism and will focus on cognitive enhancement therapy and enriched supportive therapy. The study will work to determine how and for whom these two therapies can best be used for treating autism.

■ CHILDREN'S CORNER

State Conducts Children's Bureau System Partners Focus Groups

At the request of leadership of the Department of Human Services, the RCPA Children's Steering Committee and policy specialist were invited to participate in a Children's Bureau System Partners Focus Group on June 10. The purpose was to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in communication, collaboration, and oversight of the HealthChoices Behavioral Health Managed Care Program children's system. The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services contracted with Mercer Government Human Services Consulting to facilitate this group. The Children's Steering Committee members were selected to represent the children's behavioral health care providers in the Commonwealth. Similar focus groups were conducted with representatives from county administrators and behavioral health managed care organizations.

Act 62 External Work Group Reconvenes

After a hiatus of several years, the Departments of Human Services, Insurance, and State have renewed meetings with managed care representatives, families, advocacy groups, and providers, including RCPA staff and member representatives. The work group has begun to update and refine information for families on the Autism Insurance Act for release across the Commonwealth in coming weeks. The group has also begun to discuss ways to improve the process for compelling commercial insurance to cover autism services, and to assess the impact of the law on the current and future availability of behavior specialists available to work with this population. The state is now working with managed care organizations to conduct a survey on current service capacity. Providers who are experiencing or expecting to see a gap between service demand and staffing capacity should inform their managed care companies in writing of these concerns.

Adult Protective Service in Programs Serving Youth

RCPA is reminding members that the Department of Human Services (DHS) has released information regarding the reporting obligation required by the Adult Protective Services (APS) law. This law applies to residential treatment facilities, as well as *"an organization or group of people that use public funds and is paid, in part, to provide care and support to adults in a licensed or unlicensed setting."* Since the law applies to programs and services for individuals ages 18 through 21 that may be served in adolescent and transition age youth programs, it is important that adolescent service programs be familiar with the law, and have policies and procedures in place to comply. Information about APS, including the forms to be used by mandated reporters, may be found on the department's [website](#); select the "Report Abuse" icon on the left. The DHS website also provides other [resources](#), including a webinar explaining APS and how to handle mandatory reports. Questions may be submitted via [email](#) or by calling 717-736-7116. The statewide Protective Services Hotline at 800-490-8505 is used for reporting cases. The Disability Rights Network also has a [fact sheet](#) on the APS law.

BHSL Draft 3800 Compliance Guide

The Department of Human Services Bureau of Human Services Licensing (BHSL) has released a draft Regulatory Compliance Guide (RCG) for Chapter 3800, relating to child residential and day treatment facilities. The RCG is intended to provide guidance about how the Department of Human Services will interpret and apply the chapter's regulatory requirements during licensing inspections and investigations. BHSL is inviting RCPA to work with members to review and comment on this draft guide. RCPA will collect provider input and share that information with the leadership of BHSL. [Comments](#) are due to RCPA by July 10, for submission to BHSL by July 17, and the plans are to issue a final document later this summer.

Act 168 School Background Disclosure

The "Sexual Misconduct/Abuse Disclosure" law for individuals working in school settings was designed to prevent schools from allowing school staff, or others working with students, to resign their positions and move from school to school after committing an act of sexual misconduct or abuse. It's important for providers of school-based services to be aware that Act 168 disclosure and background checks apply to school-based mental health and medical rehabilitation providers (occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language therapists, health aides, etc.). The requirements of the law also apply to preschool and early intervention providers that have direct contact with children. These requirements are in addition to the clearances and background checks required under the Department of Human Services Child Protective Services Law.

School employees and contractors must provide contact information for the following:

- Current employer (regardless of whether the current employer is a school entity or where the applicant is employed in a position that involves direct contact with children);
- All former employers that were school entities; and
- All former employers where the applicant was in a position that involved direct contact with children.

RCPA has provided a link to the Department of Education's Act 168 "[Procedures and Forms](#)" and "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)" documents.

Project LAUNCH Goes Live

July will see Project LAUNCH move from the planning to the implementation phase in Allegheny County. *Project LAUNCH* (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) is a federal grant program administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The project provides Pennsylvania with an opportunity to create an integrated and comprehensive plan to promote the wellness of young children, from birth to age eight.

Grantees are funded to work with a pilot community for five years, pursuing dual goals of improving systems and services at the local and state level. Guided by local and state Young Child Wellness Councils (YCWCs), PA Project Launch is supporting the implementation of evidence-based programs and activities to improve child wellness in three demonstration sites in Allegheny County, with the goal of countywide implementation in the last two years of the grant. The experience in Allegheny County will be shared with other counties in the state to encourage statewide expansion. With RCPA members and staff working as participants of both the state and local YCWC, our colleagues can expect the tools and lessons learned from the initiative to be shared across the Commonwealth.

Updates from Children's Committee

The focus of the June meeting of the RCPA Children's Committee was to support members as they implement activities to comply with the range of Child Protective Services Laws impacting their programs, services, and employees. Representatives from the Department of Human Services and the Department of Education provided information, addressed questions, and provided clarification for members with regard to protective service, law enforcement, and prior employer background checks, as well as training and reporting requirements. The leadership of the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Children's Bureau provided updates on a range of initiatives. RCPA staff reviewed the status of state budget negotiations as well as several legislative and administration initiatives. The presentation materials, handouts, and a [recording](#) of the June 9 meeting of the RCPA Children's Committee are now available online.

CPSL Now in Full Implementation

The Department of Human Services (DHS) reports that from when the electronic system went live in late December, to the end of May, the number of requests for clearances was 512,583. The state police have processed 828,579 criminal history record checks between January and May. With the full implementation of the many Child Protective Services Laws, employees who have direct contact with children will be required to obtain new clearances every 36 months:

- Employees hired prior to December 31, 2014 who have clearances completed within the past 36 months are required to obtain new clearances within 36 months of the dates of their current clearances.
- Employees hired prior to December 31, 2014 who have clearances older than 36 months must obtain new clearances no later than December 31, 2015.
- Employees hired prior to July 1, 2008 that were not required to obtain an FBI criminal background check must obtain one prior to December 31, 2015.

Organizations that are licensed/certified by the DHS, as well as individuals who are licensed professionals, must receive three hours of training prior to the re-issuance of a license, approval, or registration certificate, and three hours of training every five years thereafter. This includes current operators, current employees having direct contact with children, current caregivers and employees in family day care homes, and current foster parents.

Volunteers having contact with children must obtain background checks prior to beginning services and every 36 months thereafter. Volunteers are exempt from obtaining FBI criminal background checks if they meet the criteria found in 23 Pa.C.S. § 6344.2 (related to volunteers having contact with children). Students would fall under the category of volunteers unless they are paid, in which case they would have to meet the clearance standards related to new hires.

More information about clearances required under the Child Protective Services Law can be found at www.keepkidssafe.pa.gov. Individuals seeking clearances can go directly to this [website](#) to create an individual account and apply for their child abuse clearance electronically.

Thanks to Longtime CASSP *Alert* Editor

In October 1992, the first edition of the *Alert* was published with Harriet Bicksler as "managing editor." The purpose of that new publication was to "disseminate information on new programs and personnel, provide status reports on various bulletins and policies... and break news as it happens." As long-time readers and occasional contributors, RCPA (and formerly, PCPA) staff and members can confirm that Harriet and her colleagues have accomplished that purpose. The first issue contained announcements about then Governor Bob Casey's creation of a Children's Cabinet, the receipt of three federal grants, and the beginnings of the expansion of "community wraparound services," now known as Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services. In June, our longtime friend and CASSP *Alert* editor announced that she will be retiring as editor after 23 years. Stan Mrozowski, children's bureau director, noted, "The CASSP *Alert* has been instrumental in facilitating communication about children's services throughout Pennsylvania over the past 23 years. The need is as great as ever for good communication in the complicated world of children's services. Plans are in the works for replacement of the CASSP *Alert* as well as the *PA CASSP Newsletter*."

Expanding the Use of Child Development and Wellness Screening Tool

Most providers of services to young children are familiar with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Ages and Stages Social Emotional (ASQ-SE), as well as other commonly used tools to screen young children for a range of developmental delays, including social and emotional health and development. In recent years, the American Academy of Pediatrics has expanded their efforts to encourage the use of screening and surveillance tools and techniques. Today, there are several projects active across the Commonwealth focusing on broad, cross-system selection and use of these screening tools by health care, child care, education, and human services providers. One tool that is being reviewed by several groups is the [Survey of Wellbeing of Young Children \(SWYC\)](#). The SWYC is a freely available, comprehensive screening instrument for children under five years of age, written to be simple, short, and easy to read. The entire instrument requires 15 minutes or less to complete and is straightforward to score and interpret. The screening tool is available in several languages and is increasingly being used by pediatric health care systems in Pennsylvania. RCPA members may want to learn more about it and share it with their health, education, and human services colleagues.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee

The June 11 Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee featured discussion with the Bureau of Human Services Licensing Director Matt Jones, Adult Protective Services Director Kathy Zumbur, Adult Protective Services Vendor Kirk Golden, Office of Developmental Programs Bureau Chief Patty McCool, and RCPA Government Affairs Director Jack Phillips. Licensing issues included the review of licensing regulations to attempt to match funding requirements with the Chapter 6400, 6500, and other regulations. Draft 3800 regulations for children's residential and day treatment programs will be released next week for provider comment.

The newly created Adult Protective Services Program (APS) is located in Licensing. It provides protective services to adults between 18 and 59 years who have physical or mental impairments. Liberty Healthcare Corporation is the vendor which is required to:

- Investigate allegations and determine if abuse, neglect, exploitation, or abandonment has occurred
- Cooperatively develop a service plan with the adult, adult's guardian or family, and service provider to offer services in the least restrictive and most integrated setting

The statewide Protective Services Hotline at 800-490-8505 will complete a Report of Need in the Social Assistance Management System. Mandatory reporters include assisted living and domiciliary care facilities, home health care agencies, intermediate care facilities, nursing facilities, personal care homes, and residential treatment facilities.

ODP Bureau Chief McCool discussed provider enrollment is now being coordinated by ODP, rather than the Office of Medical Assistance Programs, to reduce the timeframe for authorization. So far, 506 new services and providers have been enrolled with 350 revalidations, and the process is only taking 4-6 weeks. ODP is seeking providers interested in serving individuals currently residing in state-operated ICF/ID who wish to transition to community living. Interested providers may find information about individuals who wish to move to the community at the [ODP Provider Information Center](#).

An update on the ODP settlement agreement related to cost-based residential rates indicates that there have been 90 requests for the exceptions process for the vacancy factor. Seventy-four have been approved to date.

Mental Health Committee

The June 9 Mental Health Committee meeting included a discussion about regulatory changes needed at the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). This information was shared with Ellen DiDomenico and Dennis Marion of OMHSAS. While not finalizing the review order, the following regulations were identified as needing updated: case management, family based mental health, all regulations still in draft form, long term structured residence (LTSR), and partial hospitalization. In addition, the committee asked OMHSAS to review the most frequently waived services and waiver requests to determine a path forward.

The committee also discussed suggestions around licensing frequency and content with Matthew Jones and Amy Hubbard of the Bureau of Human Service Licensing (BHSL) and Angela Douglas of OMHSAS. In addition, the committee asked Angela to discuss with OMHSAS the continued need for letters of agreement, which are difficult to get even one time, let alone annually for licensing purposes. The committee agreed that we need to learn more about Adult Protective Services, and continue dialogue with BHSL and OMHSAS. Appropriate guests have been invited to the next meeting on September 15 at 9:30 am.

Criminal Justice Committee

The Criminal Justice Committee met on June 9. The committee received a legislative update from RCPA Government Affairs Director, Jack Phillips. In addition, Cindy Daley, Program Director at the Housing Alliance provided a report on housing needs in Pennsylvania, along with an overview of funding opportunities for housing. Mary Finck from the Department of Corrections (DOC) gave an update on DOC changes in the identification of the offenders with mental health problems, and the new gender-specific programs developed for the female population. Issues came up that some providers are having with county jail programs; it was suggested that providers seek their local Criminal Justice Advisory Board to seek assistance. The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs reported on the pilot program in county jails that focuses on expedited enrollment for people needing residential treatment. The goal is to have the offenders' Medical Assistance turned on the day of release. The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services staff reported on the work being done to support certified peer specialists, and to improve the timeline for competency for trial.

Drug and Alcohol Committee

The Drug and Alcohol Committee met on June 9. Wenona Wake from the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) provided the committee with excellent news. DDAP is working to allow for an agency to have an audit every two years, rather than every year, if their audit is very good. This is something the field has been requesting for a number of years. DDAP is also working to reduce the time it takes to get approval for flexing beds. Of utmost importance are the changes that will be taking place when a provider is opening a new site or changing locations; providers will only be required to submit a one page form if everything has remained the same. Deputy Secretary Dennis Marion from the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services voiced strong support for using a similar process used to revise the mental health outpatient regulations, to revise the drug and alcohol regulations. He discussed expedited enrollment and upcoming changes to improve the process for getting a PROMISe number from the Department of Human Services.

Supports Coordination Organizations Subcommittee

ODP Program Representatives Jen Fraker and Sonya Hipple provided updates regarding the Individual Support Plan (ISP), upcoming trainings, and the eligibility process issues. The ISP requirements are under review, with the changes being based on individual outcomes. Trainings are being offered to supports coordinators on this issue.

As per [ODP Announcement #093-13: Corrective Action Plan Process](#), a process is being standardized regarding non-compliance identified through ODP monitoring and when the compliance score falls below 86%. Cycle 3 of the SCO Monitoring Review contains 35 scored questions. A total of 54 SCOs were monitored during cycle 3.

The eligibility process issues presented by the SCOs indicate that many schools do not list intellectual disability as the transitioning student's disability, but use autism as the disability. It was recommended that ODP share this concern with the Department of Education to move toward accurate disability identification, which will assist the student in transitioning to the correct service system for adult services.

■ CALENDAR

JULY		
Wednesday, July 15	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Brain Injury Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
AUGUST		
Tuesday, August 4	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	IPRC Webinar Exploring Equilibrium: Vestibular & Balance Training
Wednesday, August 19	10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Human Resources Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>
Thursday, August 20	10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Outpatient Rehabilitation Committee <i>Penn Grant Centre</i>