

APA Assembly Notes

April 2021

This digest of events summarizes the business conducted by the APA Assembly during the April virtual meeting held via Zoom. Many other reports presented in written form can be found in the Assembly Packet found [here](#). It is best to download or read these abbreviated notes online, but they may also be printed and distributed in hardcopy (without access to the web links). You may use it as is, or edit and modify the content to suit your particular needs. Any errors or omissions should be considered unintentional. Corrections and suggestions may be sent to [James A. Polo, M.D.](#)



Speaker-Elect's (Acting Speaker) Welcome — Mary Jo Fitz-Gerald, MD



Dr. Mary Jo Fitz-Gerald, MD welcomed everyone to the 94th Meeting of the APA Assembly. She noted that this was the second Assembly Meeting being held in a virtual format, given the continuing recommended social gathering restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted that officer reports during the plenary sessions would be abbreviated to allow for maximal time for Assembly business. Full reports from all of the officers can be found in the Assembly Packet. (Key issues addressed in the Speaker-Elect's full report as Acting Speaker included: the COVID-19 Pandemic, structural racism, mental health legislation, APA budget, MOC, and APA governance.) She then led the Assembly to observe a moment of silence for Dr. Joseph C. Napoli, MD, who passed away just 2 weeks prior to the meeting while still serving as our Assembly Speaker.



Report of Recorder (Acting Speaker-Elect) — Adam Nelson, MD



Dr. Adam Nelson, MD declared that sufficient members were present in the virtual Assembly Meeting to constitute a quorum. Minutes & Summary of Actions from November 2020 were approved by the Assembly. He welcomed new members to the Assembly and invited guests to the April 2021 meeting. He also reviewed Voting Strength for the April 2021 meeting and for the subsequent year (Nov 2021 – Apr 2022). He referenced reports from the Assembly Executive Committee which can be found in the full Assembly Packet.

Report of the Rules Committee — Paul J. O'Leary, MD, Chair



Paul J. O'Leary, MD (chair of the Rules Committee) presented the Special Rules of the Assembly for approval which were accepted. As Chair of the Nominating Committee, he announced the newly elected Assembly Officers. The new Speaker-elect (by acclamation) will be Dr. Adam Nelson, MD (Northern California Psychiatric Society, Area 6). The new Recorder (by majority vote) will be Dr. Vasilis (Bill) K. Pozios, MD (Michigan Psychiatric Society, Area 4).

APA Position Statements

The following Position Statements were approved by the Assembly: (by consent, unless noted)

Proposed Position Statement: Recognizing Childhood Trauma in the Setting of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Race-Related Challenges to Human Rights

Revised Position Statement: Substance Use Disorders Among Older Adults (through vote by strength)

Retired Position Statement: Active Treatment

Proposed Position Statement: Interstate Licensure for Telepsychiatry (through vote by strength)

Proposed Position Statement: Racism and Racial Discrimination in the Psychiatric Workplace

Proposed Position Statement: Orchiectomy or Treatment with Anti-Androgen Medications as a Condition of Release from Incarceration

Revised Position Statement: Psychiatric Services in Adult Correctional Facilities

Retained Position Statement: Publication of Findings from Clinical Trials

Retained Position Statement: Use of Animals in Research

Proposed Position Statement: Ongoing Need to Monitor and Assess the Public Health and Safety Consequences of Legalizing Cannabis

Proposed Position Statement: Moral Injury Among Healthcare Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Proposed Position Statement: The Role of Psychiatry in HIV

Revised Position Statement: Core Principles for Alternative Payment Models for Behavioral Health

Retired Position Statement: Principles for Health Care Reform for Psychiatry

Retired Position Statement: Position Statement on Universal Access to Care

Proposed Position Statement: Medical Supervision of Psychiatry Residents and Fellows

Proposed Position Statement: Condemning Rise of White Supremacist Violence

Proposed Position Statement: Communicating with the Public during Public Health Emergencies

NOTE: The Assembly did not approve retirement of the Position Statement on Health Care, effectively retaining it. The Assembly felt that Health Care (inclusive of Mental Health Care) as a human right was important enough that it should remain as a stand-alone position, despite inclusion in the Position Statement on Universal Health Care in the United States which was previously approved by the Assembly in April 2020 and the BOT in July 2020. Although redundant from an administrative perspective, it was felt that this emphasizes its importance.

Assembly Action Papers

Action Papers approved during this meeting included:

- ✓ 12A – Psychiatric Care is Not a Consumer Product nor Subject to Online Consumer Reviews
- ✓ 12E – Tracking the Numbers of Active Psychiatric Practitioners of Various Disciplines
- ✓ 12F – Eliminating Mandated Possession of Less Lethal Weapons by Physicians Employed by Law Enforcement Agencies
- ✓ 12G – American Psychiatric Association (APA) Position Statement on Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)
- ✓ 12H – Task Force for Development of an Appropriate APA Component on Neuromodulation
- ✓ 12I – Addressing Bias and Capacity for Law Enforcement Personnel
- ✓ 12J – Addressing Bias in Law Enforcement Personnel and Correctional Staff
- ✓ 12K – Addressing Structural Racism in the APA Through District Branch Recognition
- ✓ 12N – Addressing Structural Racism in the APA Through Public Outreach
- ✓ 12P – Establishment of a 45-day Period Prior to Closure of Action Papers

Final versions of all Action Papers with delineated resolutions can be found [here](#).

You can view all current and previous Action Papers and track their current status at Action Paper Central on AITS [here](#).

Items from the DSM Steering Committee

The following items were approved:

- ✓ 10.B.1 – Elimination of extraneous specifiers in Persistent Depressive Disorder
- ✓ 10.B.2 – Changes in the text of the specifiers for Bipolar and Depressive Disorders
- ✓ 10.B.3 – Addition of Olfactory Reference Disorder (Olfactory Reference Syndrome)
- ✓ 10.B.5. – Correction of the error (*use of the word “partner”*) in example #4 in Other Specified Schizophrenia Spectrum or Other Psychotic Disorder
- ✓ 10.B.6 – Proposal to reconcile discordant versions of Criterion A (symptomatic criterion) in Substance/Medication-induced Bipolar and Related Disorder due to Another Medical Condition

Report on APA Finances – Kevin Madden, CFO, APA

Kevin Madden, CFO for the APA provided a high-level overview of the APA’s financial position which continues to be strong. Although actual performance indicated a total Net Loss of \$1.3M for 2020, this was far better than was expected given the confluence of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The greatest loss of revenue occurred as a result of canceling the April 2020 Annual APA Meeting. This was somewhat offset by strong publishing results which was over budget. The APA’s Net Investment Return was also higher than expected, with unrestricted Net Assets increasing by \$8.5M over 2019. A full Treasurer’s Report & Financial Dashboard can be reviewed in the Assembly Packet

Report of the APA President – Dr. Jeffrey Geller, MD



Dr. Jeffrey Geller, MD who will relinquish the role of President at the conclusion of the 2021 Annual Meeting was provided limited time to address the Assembly. The theme of his presidency focused on diversity and inclusion through the creation of a Presidential Task Force to Address Structural Racism throughout Psychiatry. Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic which forced all work to be conducted in a virtual environment, multiple workgroups and workstreams contributed efforts to complete a comprehensive and transparent internal assessment of the APA. While much of that effort focused on identifying actionable items for change and led to the apology letter issued by the Board of Trustees in January ([APA Apology](#)), additional work will be needed for many years to come. This year’s annual meeting highlights our complex journey to eliminate disparities and achieve equity with its theme, “Finding Equity Through Advances in Mind & Brain in Unsettled Times”.

Report of the APA CEO/CMO – Dr. Saul Levin, MD



- Dr. Saul Levin, MD provided a summary of his CEO/CMO Report. The 4 key issues included:
1. **APA Communications** – Media engagement for 2020 was greater than any previous year with 16.5% of those occurring through major national outlets. Of note, the APA’s Apology became the most viewed media post of the past 5 years with almost 75,000 pageviews since posting.
 2. **Membership** – The APA’s membership count was down by 3.6% for a total of 37,420 members. A decline was anticipated, as renewal pace slowed in March 2020 in conjunction with the pandemic.
 3. **APA Publishing** - This year proved to be challenging for the publishing industry as channels of distribution were disrupted, and hardcopy sales associated with meetings and conferences dipped. Demand for online material remained strong, as well as sales for hardcopy DSM-5. Total net revenue was still \$2M.
 4. **MOC (Maintenance of Certification)** – Active discourse continues between the APA and ABPN to address key concerns with respect to MOC. Key concerns raised by the Assembly were conveyed to the ABPN to include that the APA will be acknowledging the National Board of Physicians and Surgeons (NBPAS) as a potential alternative board for APA members who need to participate in MOC. Additionally, the APA will be conducting a feasibility study of establishing its own board for both initial and ongoing certification.

Report from the Assembly Awards Committee – Dr. James R. Batterson, MD, Chair



Dr. James R. Batterson, MD announced the winners of this year's Assembly Awards. They were:

- **Ronald A. Shellow Award** – Established in 2004 in honor of Ronald A. Shellow, M.D., past Speaker of the Assembly, this award recognizes departing members of the Assembly who have served the Assembly far beyond the general standards of service shown by most members of the Assembly. This year's recipient was **Dr. Eliot Sorel, MD** (Area 3).
- **Assembly Award for Excellence in Service and Advocacy** – Established in 2011, this award recognizes activities by women that promote mental health and reduce stigma related to psychiatric illness, particularly on behalf of women and members of disadvantaged population groups. This year's recipient was **Dr. Pamela Montano Arteaga, MD**.
- **Profile of Courage Award** – this award recognizes an APA member who has, at risk to her/his professional and personal status, taken an ethical stand against intimidating pressure for the good of patient care and in keeping with APA Principles of Ethics. This year's recipient was **Dr. Mohammad Y. Abu-Salha, MD**.
- **Best Practice Award (Small District Branch)** – Maine Association of Psychiatric Physicians (COVID Response)
- **Best Practice Award (Large District Branch)** – North Carolina Psychiatric Association (Emergency & Preparedness)
- **Award for the Area Council with the Highest Percentage of Voting** – Area 1 (22%)
- **Award for the District Branch with the Highest Percentage of Voting:** WA State Psychiatric Association (47%).

Comments from the President-elect – Dr. Vivian B. Pender, MD

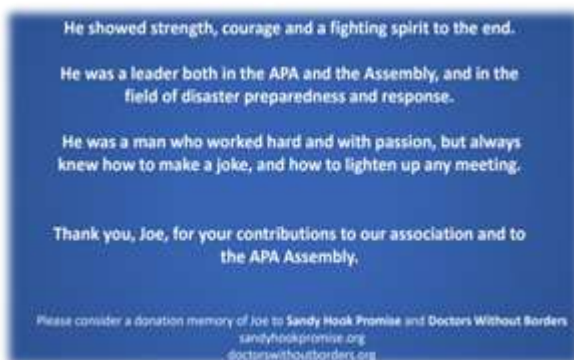


Dr. Vivian B. Pender, MD who will assume the role of President at the conclusion of the 2021 Annual Meeting was provided limited time to address the Assembly. She highlighted that as the COVID-19 Pandemic subsides, we cannot return to the 'normal' that was left behind. She noted that the COVID-19 Pandemic exposed multiple challenges that threaten the health and well-being of all society. To that end, she reiterated that she will focus her Presidency on addressing these challenges through the creation of a Presidential Task Force on the Social Determinants of Mental Health. She briefly outlined the four broad areas (social, economic, environmental, and political) that ultimately have the greatest adverse impact on mental health. As experts in mental health and mental illness, our efforts will be focused through the lenses of population health and systems of care. The goal is to, "educate psychiatrists, the private sector, and the government and advocate for solutions."

Commendations



Many thanks to Drs. William Greenberg, Leslie Gise, Eugene Lee, and Nazanin Silver who presented a tribute in Memoriam for Dr. Napoli at the beginning of our Assembly Meeting, and those who remained online after the meeting to offer respects.



Next Assembly Meeting

November 5 – November 7, 2021 (scheduled to be virtual)