



FROM KATHERINE B. MCGUIRE, APA CHIEF ADVOCACY OFFICER

For the Week of August 12–16, 2019

It was great to meet so many of you at APA 2019 in Chicago last week! Although Congress is out of session until September, APA's advocacy team continues to advance our work to protect immigrant families and individuals from discrimination in health care, and to expand support for graduate training and VA psychologists, as well as care for veterans.

In this issue:

- **Calling on Congress to Stop the Administration's Denial of Programs for Immigrant Families**
- **Preserving Health Care Protections for All Under the Affordable Care Act**
- **Preparing Psychology Trainees in Integrated Care and Substance Use Disorders**
- **Advocating for Psychologists with the Acting VA Under Secretary for Health**

Calling on Congress to Stop the Administration's Denial of Programs for Immigrant Families

On Monday, the Trump administration announced a final "public charge" rule that would limit the eligibility of low-income immigrants to access federal programs, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income and health, housing and nutrition programs. In a [statement](#), APA CEO Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD, called on Congress to overturn this measure. At its August meeting, APA's Council of Representatives passed a [new policy](#) statement calling on lawmakers in Congress and statehouses to ensure immigrants and refugees can access medical, mental health and social services.

For more information, contact Serena Davila, JD, at sdavila@apa.org.

Preserving Health Care Protections for All Under the Affordable Care Act

In very strong [comments](#), APA told the Department of Health and Human Services that we oppose a proposed rule that would roll back federal regulations that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age and disability in health programs and activities that get federal financial assistance. APA warned of the serious consequences of limiting the scope and reach of existing regulations under the Affordable Care Act and called on HHS to maintain current regulatory standards.

For more information, contact Leo Rennie, MPA, at lrennie@apa.org.

Preparing Psychology Trainees in Integrated Care and Substance Use Disorders

APA successfully lobbied to double funding to \$18 million for the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) [Graduate Psychology Education](#) (GPE) Program in FY2019—funding that has enabled HRSA to award a record high 49 new GPE grants to APA-accredited psychology training programs. These grants provide stipends for doctoral psychology students, interns and postdocs to provide integrated behavioral health services, including substance use disorder prevention and treatment, to underserved communities. Since 2002, GPE has provided more than \$75 million to doctoral psychology training programs to support interprofessional education of health-service psychology trainees and the program remains one of APA's top advocacy priorities. As part of its overall efforts to combat the [opioid crisis](#), HRSA also awarded \$57.5 million in Opioid Workforce Expansion Program Professionals grants to [48 institutions](#) to provide community-based training to master's, doctoral and medical students.

For more information, contact Karen Studwell, JD, at kstudwell@apa.org.

Advocating for Psychologists with the Acting VA Under Secretary for Health

APA met with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) acting under secretary for health, Dr. Richard Stone, to advance our priorities related to the role of psychologists in the VA. The acting under secretary and his assistant deputy under secretary for clinical operations, Dr. Teresa Boyd, were very responsive to our requests regarding veteran suicide prevention initiatives, mental health provider staffing and ensuring full scope of practice for VA psychologists.

For more information, contact Heather O'Beirne Kelly, PhD, at hkelly@apa.org.