



FEDERAL ACTION NETWORK

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Services, Inc.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 2019

- Ψ [Medicare Mental Health Access Act Reintroduced](#)
- Ψ [APA Witness Testifies at Hearing 'Examining the Failures of the Trump Administration's Inhumane Family Separation Policy'](#)
- Ψ [Psychologist Testifies Before Senate HELP Committee Hearing on 'Access to Care: Health Centers and Providers in Underserved Communities'](#)
- Ψ [APA Government Relations Staff Meet the New Congress; Shares Immigration Fact Sheet and Report](#)
- Ψ [Atrocity Prevention Bill Signed into Law](#)
- Ψ [APA Government Relations Staff Provides Advocacy Training to Psychology Faculty](#)
- Ψ [Additional APA and Coalition Advocacy Documents](#)
- Ψ ICYMI:
 - [APA's Grant Writing Master Class Webinar: HRSA's Graduate Psychology Education Program](#)
 - [Webinar - Public Service Loan Forgiveness: How You Get It, and Why We're Fighting to Preserve It](#)
 - [New HRSA Program Will Help Clinicians and Patients in the Fight Against Opioid Addiction](#)
- Ψ [Federal Funding and Other Resources](#)

Medicare Mental Health Access Act Reintroduced

One of [APA's top legislative priorities](#), the "Medicare Mental Health Access Act" ([H.R. 884](#)), was reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives for the 116th Congress on January 30th. If enacted the bill would add "psychologists" to Medicare's "physician" definition aligning psychologists with optometrists, podiatrists, chiropractors, and dentists in the program. Being added to the definition would remove burdensome physician oversight requirements for psychologists in several facility settings. This unnecessary oversight often acts as a barrier to care, especially in health professional shortage areas where access to services can be extremely limited.



Medicare remains the only large-scale health insurance program that requires physician oversight of psychological services. Private sector health plans, TRICARE, the VA, and Medicare Advantage plans let clinical psychologists practice independently in all treatment settings.

APA staff secured bipartisan sponsors to reintroduce the bill on key health committees. Representatives Judy Chu (D-CA), Jason Smith (R-MO), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), and Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) as original sponsors will guide the provision through the House Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce committees. APA staff is working to garner additional sponsors in the coming weeks. [Read more.](#)

APA Witness Testifies at Hearing 'Examining the Failures of the Trump Administration's Inhumane Family Separation Policy'

APA played a leading role in the recent [family separation hearing](#) on Capitol Hill before the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce, [Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations](#), chaired by Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and ranking member Rep. Brett Guthrie (R-KY), on February 7th. The hearing was designed to educate members of Congress about why family separations have occurred and the health impacts of such a policy. All of the subcommittee's members attended the hearing. The event also received wide attention from the press.

APA member, Dr. Cristina Muñiz de la Peña (Center for Child Health and Resiliency & Terra Firma Immigrant Youth Clinic), presented a compelling oral statement explaining the adverse health impact of immigrant family separation. She highlighted examples of the immigrants she works with as well as the psychological research that supports her findings. Dr. Muñiz also submitted [written testimony](#) along with APA's June 2018 [letter](#) to the President on family separation for the hearing's record.



The day-long hearing consisted of two panels. The first panel included federal officials from the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Members of Congress probed government officials with questions regarding how a family separation policy could have ever existed. The members of Congress and the witnesses concluded the panel by emphasizing that any federal policy implemented should be done in the best interest of the child.

The second panel consisted of outside, non-governmental witnesses. Dr. Muñiz joined five other health experts to address the damaging health detriments that result from family separation. Congressional questions focused on the specific health issues that can result from toxic stress and family separation. Throughout the hearing, Dr. Muñiz continually discussed the psychological distress caused by family separation.

Psychologist Testifies before Senate HELP Committee Hearing on 'Access to Care: Health Centers and Providers in Underserved Communities'



On January 29, psychologist Dennis Freeman, PhD, Chief Executive Officer of Cherokee Health Systems in Tennessee, [testified](#) before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) convened the bipartisan hearing, "[Access to Care: Health Centers and Providers in Underserved Communities](#)", to shed light on the need to extend funding for Community Health Centers, the National Health Service Corps and the Teaching Hospitals Graduate Medical Education Programs. Funding for these programs is set to expire on September 30, 2019, which could impact health care services for millions of Americans and the training of the primary care workforce.

Freeman testified about the health and economic benefits of the integrated primary care model that Cherokee implemented to provide services to underserved populations in Tennessee. He further testified that the recent national attention on opioid addiction brought additional focus on integrated primary care as an effective treatment approach for opioid addiction and other comorbid conditions, but that successful treatment of addiction requires a more comprehensive approach than grants tied only to opioids. Freeman concluded by mentioning that the Department of Health and Human Services' health workforce programs, including the Graduate Psychology Education Program, are also valuable recruiting efforts for grantees like Cherokee as, "training providers is the best-recruiting strategy."

APA Government Relations Staff Meet the New Congress; Shares Immigration Fact Sheet and Report

APA Public Interest Government Relations staff visited more than 30 Republican and Democratic offices of new members of Congress as the 116th Congress convened on January 3rd, 2019.

Staff shared APA's [immigration fact sheet](#) and the powerful immigration [report](#), ***Vulnerable But Not Broken: Psychosocial Challenges and Resilience Pathways among Unaccompanied Children from Central America***, written by psychologists who are

experts in immigration work, with Congressional staff. APA staff heard from many offices that immigration would be a top priority in the new Congress, as evidenced by the recent partial government shutdown. The new members of Congress will have the benefit of starting the 116th Congress with the immigration report written by psychologists in hand. APA anticipates the wall and immigration policy will certainly continue to be part of a heated debate as Congress gets to work.

Atrocity Prevention Bill Signed into Law



On January 14, the President signed the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act (S.1158, [Public Law 115-441](#)) into law. The statute enhances America's capacity to prevent mass atrocities as a national security interest. For example, the bill supports training for Foreign Service Officers in atrocity prevention and mandates an annual Presidential report to Congress on efforts to prevent atrocities and genocide.

[APA supported the bill](#) and will work to implement it.

APA Government Relations Staff Provides Advocacy Training to Psychology Faculty

On January 24th, APA Government Relations Staff presented an applied [advocacy training](#) at the National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology's (NCSP) 2019 Mid-Winter Conference in New Orleans, LA. Approximately 75 psychologists attended the session.

Karen Studwell, JD, Associate Executive Director of Government Relations, and Alix Ginsberg, Senior Legislative & Federal Affairs Officer, offered helpful strategies aimed at increasing effective communications with Members of Congress and their staff around strengthening the psychology workforce.

Studwell and Ginsberg encouraged participants to ask their Members of Congress to support the psychology workforce by maintaining funding for the [Graduate Psychology Education \(GPE\)](#) and [Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training \(BHWET\)](#) Program within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), as well as support the Department of Education's [Public Service Loan Forgiveness \(PSLF\)](#) Program. They further assisted participants in performing background research on their members of Congress and prepared them to schedule meetings with their Representatives this spring.



Additional APA and Coalition Advocacy Documents

APA actively participates in numerous coalitions with other scientific and professional organizations to pursue shared advocacy goals. Below are the letters APA initiated or signed on to as part of a coalition.

- [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#) – APA's response to the Request for Information (RFI) related to regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
- [Act 4 JJ Campaign FY 2019 Appropriations Sign-on Letter](#) – a broad network of organizations representing all states, territories, and the District of Columbia support full funding for the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) in Fiscal Year 2019.
- [Children's Budget Coalition](#) -- 75 child-focused organizations collectively dedicated to ensuring children are prioritized in the federal budget process urged Congress to restore a regular budget process and facilitate the re-opening of the government.
- [CNSF Partial Government Shutdown](#) –a broad-based group of professional organizations, businesses, universities, and scientific societies that advocate for sustained, robust federal support for the National Science Foundation (NSF) expressing concerns about the impact of the government shutdown on America's research enterprise.
- [Excellence Act Expansion](#) – national mental health and substance use disorder organizations in the Mental Health Liaison Group urges quick action to extend and expand the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) demonstration.
- [Partnership for Part D Protected Classes Sign-on Letter 2019](#) – opposes sections of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Proposed Rule: Modernizing Part D and Medicare Advantage to Lower Drug Prices and Reduce, which would establish broad exceptions to Part D's protected classes policy.
- [Public Health Group Comments on U.S. – United Kingdom FTA](#) - public health and medical organizations' comments on Docket No. USTR-2018-0036.

ICYMI: News You Can Use

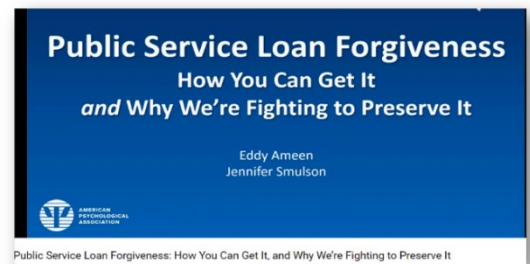
APA's Grant Writing Master Class Webinar: HRSA's Graduate Psychology Education Program



The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program is a federal program that supports interprofessional practicum, internship, and postdoctoral training throughout rural and urban settings in underserved communities. APA anticipates HRSA will release a Funding Opportunity Announcement for the FY 2019 grant cycle soon. Accordingly, APA-accredited programs should be preparing now to apply to ensure that these funds have a maximum impact. An archived recording of the webinar recording is available at [APA Online Academy](#)

Webinar - Public Service Loan Forgiveness: How You Get It, and Why We're Fighting to Preserve It

The APA Office of Early Career and Graduate Student Affairs within the Education Directorate sponsored a webinar to discuss the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF). A non-captioned recording link to the PSLF webinar is available [here](#), along with the [webinar slides](#) and Hill Visits [Talking Points for PSLF](#).



New HRSA Program Will Help Clinicians and Patients in the Fight Against Opioid Addiction

Program	Service Commitment	Award Amount (Full Time)	Award Amount (Half Time)
NHSC Loan Repayment Program	2 YEARS	UP TO \$50K	UP TO \$25K
NHSC SUD Workforce Loan Repayment Program	3 YEARS	UP TO \$75K	UP TO \$37.5K

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) launched the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program. The program will support the HHS Five-Point Opioid Strategy through the increase of patient access to high-quality substance use disorder preventive, treatment, and recovery services. For how to apply, see HRSA's [website](#). **Applications are due February 21, 2019.**

Federal Funding and Other Resources

Department of Education

- [Grants and Funding](#)

Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health

- [Youth Health Equity Fellowship](#) – February 22

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

- [Funding & Grants](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

Health Resources & Services Administration

- [Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#)
- [Faculty Loan Repayment Program](#)
- [National Health Service Corps Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program – Feb. 21, 2019](#)
- [Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program – March 11](#)
- [Licensure Portability Program for Telehealth – March 11](#)

National Institutes of Health

- [Grants and Funding](#)
- [Predoctoral Training in Advanced Data Analytics for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research \(BSSR\) - Institutional Research Training Program \[T32\]](#)
- [NIH Loan Repayment](#)
- [Research Training and Career Development Programs](#)
- [NIMH Programs to Enhance Workforce Diversity](#)
- [Office of Disease Prevention – How to Apply for Funding](#)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- [Grant Announcements and Awards](#)
- [Provider’s Clinical Support System - Medication Assisted Treatment Grant – February 26, 2019](#)
- [Cooperative Agreement to Support the Southeast Asia Regional Technology Transfer Center for HIV and Substance Use and Mental Health- February 26, 2019](#)

National Science Foundation

- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Harnessing the Data Revolution \(HDR\): Institutes for Data-Intensive Research in Science and Engineering - Frameworks \(I-DIRSE-FW\)](#)
- [Harnessing the Data Revolution \(HDR\): Transdisciplinary Research in Principles of Data Science Phase I](#)
- [Growing Convergence Research \(GCR\)](#)
- [Dear Colleague Letter Supporting the Re-Entry of Women and Women Veterans in the STEM Workforce through NSF INCLUDES](#)
- [Cyberinfrastructure for Sustained Scientific Innovation \(CSSI\): Elements and Framework Implementations](#)
- [Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\)](#)
- [Mid-scale Research Infrastructure-2](#)
- [Dear Colleague Letter: Mid-Scale Research Infrastructure \(Mid-scale RI\) Opportunities](#)
- [EHR Core Research \(ECR\): STEM Learning and Learning Environments, Broadening Participation, and Workforce Development \(NSF 19-508\)](#)
- [Improving Undergraduate STEM Education: Education and Human Resources \(NSF 17-590\)](#)
- [Faculty Early Career Development Program \(CAREER\) \(NSF 17-537\)](#)
- [Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier: Core Research](#)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- [Funding Opportunities](#)

