



Maine Psychologist Today

Welcome to the Maine Psychologist Today, MePA's new online newsletter!

Message from New MePA President Tom Cooper, PsyD

Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year! While this may seem like a belated greeting, I assure you it was timely when I wrote it. Over the past several weeks I have had many conversations with my clients about New Year's resolutions. This has become an annual tradition, but this year I noticed a wider range in responses. While some put considerable thought into new goals, challenges, and aspirations for the coming year, others were dismissive when I broached the topic. Personally, I find it really helpful to use the start of the year as an opportunity for assessment. At MePA, we're using the start of the year and the scheduled transition in leadership for the same opportunity.



During the upcoming year we will continue work on the Strategic Plan that started under President Collins. Our stated mission is to “advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare.” Both the Executive Committee and greater Policy Council are working to finalize goals within the

Strategic Plan so that we have a product that can be presented to our membership. I want to thank all members of the Executive Committee and Policy Council for the hard work they have put into this initiative. I am especially thankful for the work that Dr. Collins contributed while President over the past two years.

When I think about reactions to the past year and hopes for the upcoming year, I am reminded of a story about Santa and Mrs. Claus. One evening several weeks after Christmas, the Clauses are enjoying a rare moment of respite and reflect on the past year. Mrs. Claus contemplatively looks up at a cloudy sky and says, "It looks like rain, dear."

Yours Respectfully,

Thomas Cooper, PsyD

New Research: The Happier You Are the More Likely You Are to Fight to Make the World a Better Place



An MLK Day reminder from science: there's no trade-off between happiness and activism. New research suggests that happy people don't get lost in their own private bliss and do less for their communities. Instead, personal joy is associated with working harder to better the world.

[Full Article](#)

Integrating Quality Care



Quality care is compromised whenever there is a disconnect between the medical system and behavioral health treatment services. Psychologists can work in concert with primary care providers to increase patient engagement and promote successful outcomes while lowering costs. Here are resources from the APA Division 31, and other states, with practices and materials for integrating primary care:

[Integrated Primary Care Psychology Curriculum](#)

[Vermont Blueprint](#)

APA Accepting Comments: 2011 Guidelines for Dementia



The APA Task Force to Update the 2011 Guidelines for the Evaluation of Dementia and Age-Related Cognitive Change is accepting comments to inform its work. You can now view the [2011 guidelines and input your comments](#) (Deadline for Comments: **February 15, 2020**).

2020 Health Behavior Assessment and Intervention Billing and Coding Guide



APA Services, Inc. is excited to share with you the 2020 Health Behavior Assessment and Intervention Billing and Coding Guide. The updated guide provides an explanation of the extensive changes to the previous codes and describes the structure, function, and utilization of the new code set established through APA's collaborative work with the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Addenda sections of the guide will be distributed in the coming weeks. Additional resources related to the Health Behavior Assessment and Intervention (HBAI) code set that go into effect on January 1, 2020 are publicly available on APA's website.

Legislative Update



The second session of the 129th Maine State Legislature has begun. The legislative committee is hard at work monitoring bills that might impact the practice of psychology in Maine.

Our committee (Lucy Quimby, Michael Dixon, Tom Cooper, Jim Jacobs, James McElligott and Amy Safford) are meeting almost weekly with our lobbyist, Bob Howe, for the next few months to discuss legislative strategies. This is the second and shorter of the two sessions so there are only about 500 bills or so being considered and the session should adjourn by April this year.

We are monitoring various bills including those on universal healthcare, telehealth expansion, MaineCare reimbursement rates, improved early intervention for mental health disorders, increased access for opioid treatment programs, and many others. This week we are sending in written testimony in support of two bills, LD 1974 a bill to allow case management to be provided via telehealth and LD 1937, a bill to

provide improved access to behavioral health services for Maine children exposed to trauma and the impact of the opioid crisis. The session has just begun so stay tuned for more updates.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Tennes, PhD, Legislative Committee Chair

APA Immigration Report to Congress



As many as 100 million people in the world today have migrated to other countries as a result of war, poverty or just the dream of a better life. As the number of immigrants has increased, so has controversy about immigration policies. The debate often centers on economic issues, overlooking the psychological concerns of those adjusting to a new culture. Feelings of loss, culture shock, separation from family, and language difficulties can all contribute to distress.

For successful acculturation, researchers have found, immigrants must integrate their culture of origin with that of their new home (Adapted from the [Encyclopedia of Psychology](#)).

APA staff hand-delivered the immigration report [Vulnerable But Not Broken](#), about the psychosocial challenges and resilience pathways among unaccompanied children from Central America, to all 535 members of Congress. The goal is to educate Congress about the psychological impact immigration can have on unaccompanied minors and to build a personal connection with every member of Congress.

US Census 2020

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau is required by the constitution to count all people living in the United States.

The number of people counted decides how much funding

Maine receives for important federal programs: Medicaid (MaineCare), Head Start, SNAP (food assistance), TANF and many others.



If some residents aren't counted, that means less money for programs. In 2016, over [\\$4 billion dollars](#) came to Maine through federal programs based on Census data! **Join Maine Equal Justice Partners to make sure our social programs have enough resources!** Pledge to be counted in the [#CENSUS2020 here](#).

Call for Student Mentors!

Are you interested in mentoring a psychology student? We are looking for members who have enough experience in their current roles or settings to provide support to a student in their professional development.



GUIDELINES

Mentors and mentees will be introduced to each other via email and encouraged to plan an initial phone meeting to discuss interests, availability, and a plan for following up. Mentor/mentee pairs determine how often they wish to meet; a monthly (telephone) meeting is typical, with additional email contact. The pair also mutually determines for how long the mentoring connection is helpful. If for any reason the

match doesn't work out (e.g., conflict of interest, scheduling difficulty), we can always work to make a different match!

This is your opportunity to provide guidance and professional support to a psychology student. Please [email Amy Safford](#) if you are interested and she will add your name to a list. Mentors can remove their names from the active list at any time for any reason. Once a request from a student comes in, Mentors will be contacted for availability and professional fit.

Upcoming Election to the APA Council of Reps: Looking for Council Representative



MePA must elect one Council representative in the upcoming election. The deadline to submit your name to [Executive Director Amy Safford](#) by **February 17, 2020 at 1:00pm**.

Several procedures and criteria apply to the nomination/election of Council representatives from State/Provincial/Territorial Associations. Visit this MePA [member only web portal page](#) for all requirements.

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