

NJAMHAA NEWS

Fall 2020

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This Issue
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VIRTUAL CONFERENCES CONTINUE TRADITION OF EXCELLENT PROGRAMS AND NETWORKING

Going virtual is one of the major outcomes of the pandemic that significantly changes how we are living our lives. However, one thing remains the same in the virtual world: The quality of NJAMHAA and its Information Technology (IT) Project's virtual conferences will not be affected. They will be highly interactive, just as the popular in-person conferences always were, and participants will come away with a roadmap to success, but at

this time, the ideas will be from an uncharted future resulting from the unprecedented public health crisis.

"We are proud to have not missed a beat throughout the pandemic, as we have continued to offer training relevant to the changing landscape, and our upcoming conferences are two excellent examples. We are excited to provide access to industry experts on a variety of topics essential for all staff at behavioral healthcare

agencies," said Debra L. Wentz, PhD, President and CEO of NJAMHAA.

NJAMHAA and the IT Project have been working with Trusted Provider Network (TPN), which has been offering a digital platform to connect behavioral health professionals, treatment facilities, hospitals and employee wellness programs. "We began hosting virtual continuing education events on behalf of behavioral health

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Illustrating the Value of Behavioral Health Services

Are you testing for the right substances?

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Tramadol • Heroin • Oxycodone • Ecstasy • OxyContin
Dextromethorphan • Morphine • Muscle Relaxants
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From the Desk of Debra L. Wentz, PhD President and CEO

NJAMHAA's FY2021 budget advocacy was met with extraordinary success! A major ingredient to the recipe for such victory, one that I have encouraged, is to generate a groundswell of support and activism that results in thousands of voices being raised in unison that legislators and the Administration cannot ignore. And that is exactly what happened in our most recent budget cycle.

Within days of the release of the Revised FY2021 Budget Proposal, NJAMHAA brought together hundreds of stakeholders, then provided them with resources, messaging and guidance that set the foundation for a groundswell of efforts across the state that included letters to the editor and op-eds; resolutions from towns, cities, school

boards and others; e-mails, letters and phone calls to legislators and the Governor; radio, TV and print media coverage; and social media amplification. The result was a multitude of legislators joining the fight to restore funding to School Linked Services, including the School Based Youth Services Program, which had been zeroed out in the Revised Budget. Not only did full restoration of this funding make it into the final FY2021 budget; restoration of Charity Care and Graduate Medical Education cuts that NJAMHAA simultaneously advocated for made it through, too. All that transpired while maintaining a \$45 million investment in the Children's System of Care!

While NJAMHAA staff are, of course, extremely glad about our budget advocacy success, we are elated about the example this achievement provides to our members and other stakeholders throughout New Jersey. As we gear up to advocate for our priorities in the FY2022 budget, we look forward to once again having the voices of our members raised alongside ours. To keep up with our ongoing advocacy efforts and the resources we make available, join NJAMHAA's Partners in Advocacy program (see details on page 7) and participate in our Membership Meetings and Practice Groups (see details on page 29). Together, we can continue to make a huge and meaningful difference!

I look forward to continuing to work on your behalf through critical advocacy efforts and other initiatives to support the invaluable services you provide, and to having you by my side to contribute to many future successes!

With warmest wishes,



Debra L. Wentz, PhD
President & CEO



“Together, we can continue to make a huge and meaningful difference!”

Debra L. Wentz, PhD,
President and CEO, NJAMHAA



VIRTUAL CONFERENCES CONTINUE TRADITION

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associations throughout the country in response to COVID-19. We are proud to now be the nation's largest virtual conference provider for the behavioral health industry," said Dick MacWilliams, Chief Operating Officer at TPN.

"Based on TPN's technical expertise and extensive understanding of the behavioral health field, I have no doubt that by working together, TPN and NJAMHAA will present virtual conferences that will be as enjoyable and valuable as our in-person events have been," said June Noto, NJAMHAA's Vice President of IT, Human Resources and Administrative Services.

Conferences Offer Invaluable Information, Skill Development and Networking

IT Conference, No Fooling, IT is Critical!, October 21, 2020

Although the theme for this conference was created when the event was originally planned for April 1st, it is still fitting as IT is essential to maximize effectiveness of services. Much of the conference will focus on an especially critical topic – cybersecurity – in the keynote presentation and several workshops. Clearly, this event is for all staff, not just IT specialists.

Emphasizing the importance of investing in cybersecurity, Noto stated, "As if coronavirus wasn't scary enough, scammers are using this pandemic in the most notorious ways by preying on those who are already vulnerable and individuals who are working from home, as well as organizations, especially in the healthcare industry."

With this in mind, the IT Project lined up Daniel Eliot, Director of Education & Strategic Initiatives, National Cyber Security Alliance, to deliver the keynote presentation, *Converting Awareness into Action: It Begins with Culture*. The program will continue with workshops covering more aspects of cyber security and other topics, including transforming data into actionable analytics, incorporating artificial intelligence into clinical programming and working with the cloud.

NJAMHAA and its IT Project are grateful to the IT Conference sponsor, 4River/Chorus Communications. ***Annual Conference, Reimagining Health Care, October 29-30, 2020***

Reimagining Health Care, a theme developed late last year when planning for the conference began, is even more pertinent, in light of the pandemic.

"The public health emergency has exacerbated challenges that have been preventing many individuals from accessing healthcare services since long before the crisis began. Most notable of these challenges are social determinants of health, which include housing, transportation and food security or lack thereof," Dr. Wentz said. "We are thrilled to have several experts share strategies for addressing social determinants of health, as more than 80 percent of health outcomes are attributable to these factors."

The first day of the conference will begin with a discussion with Leana S. Wen, MD, MSc, Visiting Professor of Health Policy and Management and Distinguished Fellow, Fitzhugh Mullan Institute for Health Workforce Equity, Milken Institute School of Public Health, The George Washington University; and Theresa Wilson, MSW, LCSW, President and CEO of South Jersey Behavioral Health Resources, Inc., Executive Vice President, Inperium of New Jersey and NJAMHAA Board Member. The second day will begin with a keynote presentation, *The Behavioral Market: Disruption & Evolution*, during which John Talbot, PhD, Senior Associate, OPEN MINDS, will discuss the rapidly changing behavioral healthcare environment and how providers can prepare for it. Dr. Talbot will follow up this presentation with a workshop to share strategies for ensuring sustainability.

Other workshop topics throughout the two days will include strategies for addressing specific social determinants of health; predicting suicide risk; managing outcomes; achieving organizations' financial sustainability; improving medication adherence and health outcomes; serving veterans and individuals involved in the criminal justice system; and providing integrated care.



OF EXCELLENT PROGRAMS AND NETWORKING

NJAMHAA greatly appreciates the generous support of the Annual Conference sponsors: Diamond level Presenting Sponsors, Ammon Labs for Day 1 and TopLab/Health East Medical Alliance for Day 2; Emerald sponsors Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson and Hackensack Meridian Carrier Clinic; Opal sponsor for the Day 2 Keynote presentation, Qualifacts+Credible; Amethyst sponsors for workshops, Acenda Integrated Health, Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, Care Plus New Jersey and Mutual of America; and Oaks Integrated Care, Gold Sponsor for the Courage and Compassion Awards Ceremony.

Conferences also Feature Networking and Award Presentations

The conferences also offer many opportunities to network with vendors and fellow treatment professionals. While networking attracts many people to in-person events, the same interactions can be done virtually, thanks to the chat feature and an open zoom meeting that TPN created. Attendees will be able to click on the "Join Now" button on the main page and session hall for each conference any time they want to communicate with individuals who are already in their networks and to make new connections.

The IT Project will also present its 10th Annual *IT Hero* Awards to highlight individuals' and organizations' excellent use of technology to improve business and/or clinical operations. These awards are open to members of NJAMHAA, including its Councils, and member agencies that contract with the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the Department of Children and Families, Children's System of Care. (See page 6 for a listing of IT Heroes.)

During the Annual Conference, *Courage & Compassion* awards will be presented to honor service providers, agency leaders and an outstanding journalist. Unique highlights of this event will include the presentation of awards to two celebrities. Ricky Byrd, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2015 Inductee with Joan Jett and The Blackhearts, will receive the *Rock & Roll Recovery Troubadour Award* in honor of his music that focuses on substance use recovery and his role as a Certified Recovery Coach. Erik Coleman, former American football safety in the National Football League, will receive the *Intercepting Addiction Award* in recognition of his work speaking to students to prevent substance use and helping individuals and their families who are experiencing drug addiction. (See page 6 for a listing of all award recipients.)

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCES!

NJAMHAA's 2020 IT Project Conference:
**No Fooling
- IT Is Critical!**
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imagining
**2020 NJAMHAA
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
HEALTHCARE**
OCTOBER 29-30, 2020
NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION AGENCIES, INC.

**CLICK HERE
to Register**

VISIT WWW.NJAMHAA.ORG/EVENTS FOR LINKS TO ALL PROGRAM DETAILS AND REGISTRATION PAGES

CONGRATULATIONS, AWARD RECIPIENTS!

Courage and Compassion *Awards Ceremony*

Outstanding Peer Leader

Thomasine Gaines, For My Baby and Me Liaison,
Rescue Mission of Trenton

Outstanding Direct Care Provider

Jamesena Nairn, New Jersey Drug Court Liaison,
Rescue Mission of Trenton

Outstanding Leader in Innovation

Peggy Swarbrick, PhD, FAOTA, Director of
Practice and Wellness, Rutgers University
Behavioral Health Care

Outstanding Leader in Technology Innovation

Jerome Scriptunas, CEO, Youth TimeBanking New
Jersey, Former Director of Quality Improvement and
Technology, MonmouthCares

Outstanding Leader in Children's Services

Shelisa Foster, MA, LPC NCC, Chief Operating
Officer, Bergen's Promise

Outstanding Leader in Adult Services

Therese Benyola, MA, CCS, ICCS, Senior Director,
Child Protection and Welfare Reform Substance Use
Disorder Program, Center for Family Services

Outstanding Provider of the Year

Integrity House



Ricky Byrd
*Recovery Troubadour
and Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Famer*



Erik Coleman
*Addiction Recovery Advocate
and Former NFL Safety*

IT Heroes



Andrew MacMath, MA

Director

Organizational Development
and Technology

Ocean Partnership for Children, Inc.
*IT Hero Award for Performance
Improvement Excellence*

Elliott Liebling, MPH

Manager, Research and Development
RWJBarnabas Health Institute
for Prevention and Recovery
*IT Hero Award for Innovation and
Analytics*

Ancero, LLC

IT Hero Technology Partner Award

PARTNERS IN ADVOCACY PROGRAM ACHIEVES GREATER IMPACT ON LEGISLATION

NJAMHAA's Partners in Advocacy group is comprised of representatives from members who are committed to participating in NJAMHAA's advocacy efforts by sending e-mails, making phone calls, signing petitions, doing outreach on social media and otherwise adding their voice on issues of importance to NJAMHAA members. Some have built, or are willing to build, relationships with their state representatives at their local offices, and occasionally join NJAMHAA staff at meetings either in Trenton or locally.

It is critical to successful advocacy to be heard by legislators and the Administration in large numbers. Whenever possible and appropriate, staff from member organizations are encouraged to involve other stakeholders, including clients and their family members, as well as others in their communities, to be involved in advocacy.

NJAMHAA provides its Partners in Advocacy (and all members) with advocacy resources that include an annual advocacy campaign document, policy papers, details and insights on priority legislative and budgetary issues, advocacy training, data from survey results, legislative alerts and more!

Your ongoing advocacy at the local level supplements the advocacy NJAMHAA does directly with legislators each year, and serves to better educate legislators about the work our members do in their districts, as well as the importance of our member organizations to the communities the legislators represent.

Building these relationships at the local level opens the door to stronger commitments by a greater number of legislators – not just those who are already connected to our issues through their committee appointments or past experience, both personal and professional – and to greater advocacy success!



“It is critical to successful advocacy to be heard by legislators and the Administration in large numbers.”



For further information or to join NJAMHAA's Partners in Advocacy group, please contact Mary Abrams at mabrams@njamhaa.org.

NJAMHAA BOARD OFFICERS SHARE INSIGHTS ON NJAMHAA

While having strong, visionary leaders is always important, this is even more true because we are in an unprecedented pandemic. That alone has introduced numerous new challenges. In addition, this public health crisis has given rise to and exacerbated other serious issues that NJAMHAA members have been helping vulnerable individuals cope with: mental illnesses, substance use disorders (SUD) and social challenges – most notably, injustices that have become a greater focus as a result of incidents that have occurred in recent months.

One constant that continues to challenge providers is financial limitations. Fortunately, the FY2021 State Budget sustains funding and provides several increases. However, the demand for services constantly increases and has done so exponentially during the pandemic due to the mental health impact of coronavirus, which is expected to continue for long after the crisis is declared to be over. Therefore, NJAMHAA has been persisting in its advocacy on the state and national levels for sufficient funding.

NJAMHAA's Board members are essential to developing NJAMHAA's strategies for advocacy and for continually strengthening the association. NJAMHAA is extremely grateful for the time that Board members dedicate aside from the many hours they invest in operating their own organizations.

NJAMHAA News recently spoke with the FY2021 Board Officers about their insights on the trade association and its role in supporting members as the behavioral healthcare system continues to evolve.

Chair Susan Loughery, MBA, Associate Executive Director, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Board and lead the Board. We're a forward-thinking group of individuals who are passionate about the services we provide and the communities we serve. It's really an opportunity to bring organizations together for advocating for the needs of agencies and the needs of those we serve," Loughery said.

"I'm excited about our strategic plan to elevate the voices of member agencies through legislative advocacy," she added, referring to the goals that the Board identified at the beginning of this fiscal year. (Please see the sidebar on page 11.)

"Our underlying opportunity is to innovate and adapt. We have great opportunities to reposition NJAMHAA, broaden its reach, and enhance how NJAMHAA engages with legislators," Loughery emphasized. "We're at a critical time to move forward our advocacy on the use of technology and telehealth, and NJAMHAA is playing an essential role in agencies being able to build the infrastructure."



"We're at a critical time to move forward our advocacy on the use of technology and telehealth, and NJAMHAA is playing an essential role in agencies being able to build the infrastructure."

Susan Loughery, MBA, Chair



AND THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM

“NJAMHAA has been keeping the system going with quick responses to COVID-related issues. NJAMHAA has also played a vital role in advocacy and member engagement and has provided an effective system for communication among providers for sharing best practices, understanding the legislative landscape and advocacy for the safety needs of provider agencies,” Loughery added. “In fact, NJAMHAA has saved organizations by identifying and advocating for a plan for broader use of telehealth, thereby creating a safety net for providers, the workforce and clients.”

Vice Chair Jacques Hryshko, MS, LPC, Chief Executive Officer, FAMILYConnections “With more than 150 agencies and a presence in every county, NJAMHAA is an incredible collection of mission-driven providers. We are the safety net for mental health care and substance use treatment, from individual practitioners to large healthcare systems. We all have to change, and we are striving for those changes to be as strategic as possible,” Hryshko stated, explaining that “change that is forced on you is not strategic.”

“Strategy can only happen with good information and NJAMHAA’s network is the best place to get this information,” Hryshko added. “Strategy also relies on relationships – which we have with the state – and vision. All of these components are critical for survival of the agencies and also the field.”

“Being on the Board is a huge responsibility because we’re not just representing our agencies; we’re representing the needs and perspectives

of all agencies in determining the best next steps to move the system forward,” Hryshko said. On a personal level, serving on the Board is “an inspirational and educational experience,” he noted.

“During the pandemic, many challenges have been hurled at us. We can’t just be dodging boulders, though that can’t be avoided. With this onslaught, we need to push for a vision for the future, for changing the vision of what the future should be,” according to Hryshko.

Treasurer Anthony Comerford, PhD, President & Chief Executive Officer, New Hope Integrated Behavioral Health Care

“The decisions made by the NJAMHAA Board not only impact member organizations, but also have the potential for positively affecting the availability and effectiveness of mental health care and related social and medical services across New Jersey. I’m proud to serve with others who have come to a place in their careers that allows for collaboration and the reflective delivery of meaningful input that can be made actionable through NJAMHAA and its membership,” Dr. Comerford said.

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“We can’t just be dodging boulders...
We need to push for
a vision for the future.”

Jacques Hryshko, MS, LPC
Vice Chair



NJAMHAA BOARD OFFICERS SHARE INSIGHTS ON NJAMHAA

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“Rightfully, given the times, NJAMHAA’s goals and strategies for the coming year are general, but aspirational. Under this broad umbrella, it’s important that we experiment with a lot of different approaches in responding to the turbulence of the times,” he added. “It’s also important that we continually measure the results of our efforts and fine tune the approaches that have merit.”

Dr. Comerford stated, “It is difficult for individual organizations to have any meaningful influence on broader public opinion or policy. NJAMHAA provides the opportunity for sifting through all the issues affecting individual organizations so that priorities can be set for collective action with NJAMHAA at the lead. This includes making training, education and technical support available to raise the quality bar for its overall membership.”

Secretary Mary Pat Angelini, MPA, CPS, President and CEO, Preferred Behavioral Health Group

“NJAMHAA is a viable trade association because we’re not afraid to assess our surrounding environment and speak out about what needs to be changed in order to help our members. Our strategic planning process is not a static process, but one that is dynamic and vigilant to our environment.” Angelini said.

“NJAMHAA lends a voice to its many members in a cohesive manner that makes policy makers listen. Our federal and state governing bodies and policy makers need to hear a strong voice on mental health and addiction issues, and NJAMHAA is that voice,” she emphasized.

“Serving on NJAMHAA’s Board affords me the opportunity to listen and learn from other members and it enables me to advocate at a higher level,” Angelini shared.

“During COVID-19, NJAMHAA has proven more than ever its relevance in advocating for its members and bringing to light the many unique situations that our field has experienced to our policy makers and legislators. These issues will affect the behavioral health field in years to come,” Angelini added.

“Most recently NJAMHAA’s loud stance on the need to reverse budget cuts to New Jersey’s Human Services Departments has undoubtedly saved lives,” Angelini went on to say. “Their continued support to extend telehealth is integral to the future of our field.”

“I’d like to stress the importance of participation in all of NJAMHAA’s work groups and subcommittees. I know for a fact that my staff have benefitted greatly from learning from their colleagues across New Jersey,” Angelini stated.



“The Legislature and policy makers need to hear a strong voice on mental health and addiction issues, and NJAMHAA is that voice.”

Mary Pat Angelini, MPA, CPS
Secretary



AND THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM



“Rightfully, given the times, NJAMHAA's goals and strategies for the coming year are general, but aspirational.”

Anthony Comerford, PhD, Treasurer



MEMBERS DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP AND



younger staff in their 20's and 30's "embodied leadership, established what it looks like without reading about it. As a result, people received telehealth, food, medicine, water, personal protective equipment [PPE] and personal hygiene products, which are difficult to get during a pandemic. It was a remarkable thing," Davison shared. "When the time came, they answered the call. I had to hold some staff back to ensure they followed the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] guidelines and they didn't put themselves at undue risk or danger." That is quite a compelling testament to NJAMHAA members' dedication.

As the coronavirus pandemic has required many changes in business operations and service delivery, NJAMHAA members have demonstrated excellence not only in adapting to these new requirements, but also in turning challenges into opportunities, and strengthening their organizations as a result. NJAMHAA thanks members for sharing their strategies during interviews so that their colleagues and ultimately, their clients, can benefit.

Leadership Strategies

"Leadership starts at the top, and not necessarily an individual – meaning the values, vision and mission of the organization. Leadership decisions are made through a collaborative

process broadly with the Board and individual staff," stated Bob Davison, MA, LPC, Chief Executive Officer, Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris (MHA). Throughout the pandemic,

"I learned as a CEO for 20 years that many people confuse activity with productivity. There's much more to leadership than increasing speed. We focused more on productivity and it made a difference," Davison added. In March and April, many



"Leadership starts at the top, and not necessarily an individual – meaning the values, vision and mission of the organization."

Bob Davison, MA, LPC, Chief Executive Officer, Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris (MHA)



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INNOVATION THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

MHA staff were still going out into the field without knowing exactly what they were doing in the context of the pandemic, according to Davison. "It was nothing less than heroic. At that time period, *they* were providing leadership for the agency, not me. In times of crisis, leadership comes from the bottom up. Leaders' job is to value innovation and enable it on behalf of the staff. Don't get caught up in providing guidance documents, rules and regulations," he advised.

At the Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey (HFC), Carlos Cartagena, MSW, Chief Executive Officer, and Michel Acevedo, Chief Operations Officer, started their new careers right around the time the health crisis hit. Acevedo joined HFC about nine months ago, just seven or so weeks before the pandemic started, and Cartagena joined the agency a couple of months ago.

"This is a time for compassion, kindness and understanding more than any other time. We need to focus on creating safe spaces for communication and look at our policies, how we can be more diverse and inclusive," Cartagena said. "As leaders today compared to 20 years ago, we have to be more servant like; we must be ready to serve more so today than ever. And we need to stay in touch with our emotional intelligence and see how our response or lack thereof affects others."

At Maryville Addiction Treatment Center, Chief Executive Officer Kendria McWilliams, MBA, and her management team have been holding daily calls since early March. In all of their discussions and decision making, they continually reinforce their mission, values and goals, and they have been determined to find ways to manage increased costs.

Service Delivery

Most members have been offering services via telehealth during the pandemic. For some agencies, this was new and they put everything in place within a week or two of Governor Murphy's stay-at-home order. However, some clients continued to need in-person services, and providers met those needs outside of clients' homes, in parks and other locations in the safest ways possible. In some cases, agencies provided technology to clients to facilitate telehealth. Many organizations recently implemented hybrid scheduling to follow social distancing guidelines at their facilities and they are offering both in-person and telehealth services.

Providers' resourcefulness, dedication and innovation

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"You can't thank staff enough for what they do every day. Many go above and beyond."

Kendria McWilliams, MBA
Chief Executive Officer
Maryville Addiction Treatment Center



MEMBERS DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP AND

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were further demonstrated by the initiatives they undertook to ensure their clients received everything they needed, including basics, as well as treatment.

For example, within one week, MHA “became a major food, medication, clothing and PPE distribution center because consumers couldn’t get these necessities otherwise,” Davison shared, adding that the agency provided 1,000 meals per week. The staff also brought books, games and other items to clients to help them stay busy and cope with the pandemic outside of counseling sessions.

Additional adjustments were needed as the school year began. “We needed to adapt to how schools are operating, as some are online and this will affect staffing and service delivery,” Cartagena said.

Maryville implemented new strategies to expand access, which led to increased quality, according to McWilliams. “Nurses are conducting curbside assessments of new clients following administrative staff intakes. We have been emphasizing personal hygiene and social distancing; increased infection control; and secured PPE through donations and private sources. We also increased our staff complement by 10% during the pandemic. We hired additional nurses, counselors, counselors in training, housekeepers, admissions staff and others. And we implemented flexible scheduling for staff with children and other family members

to care for, so we now have day and evening hours available for medication-assisted treatment and groups. It made our scheduling more robust.”

At SERV Behavioral Health System, not only were similar changes made to increase access, but also technology is being used to keep clients connected with their families. “Loved ones were no longer able to visit residences, so we set up Zoom visits and developed a website that keeps people updated on the activities that are taking place in our programs,” said President and CEO Regina Widdows.

Staff-focused Initiatives

Naturally, the pandemic has had a significant impact on staff, not only on the way they are performing their jobs, but also mentally and emotionally. Agency leadership implemented new strategies to address needs related to these consequences of COVID, as well.

“We recognized that many of our staff members were experiencing devastating personal losses and trauma. Often, people who give care don’t take the time to seek the care they need, so we made sure to provide them with the resources they needed and to listen to them. Listening to our staff was vital. They needed to talk through what they had experienced. Many of them still do,” Widdows said. “We instituted a staff wellness program last year and are adjusting the programming to ensure that we are meeting the needs that have arisen due to the pandemic.”

In addition, Widdows and her team survey the staff regularly to obtain their feedback on protocols that have been implemented. “We get a sense of their well-being and we take immediate action to address concerns,” she said.

In addition to implementing flexible scheduling at Maryville, new middle-management roles were created to “increase communication and supervision, which led to more advancement opportunities and succession planning,” as McWilliams described. “We help staff turn challenges into opportunities and we encourage them to express concerns and offer suggestions,” she added.

Messages of Hope and Optimism

“I can’t imagine a scenario in which people respond in a more hopeful fashion. Our team clearly chose life and chose to support life, and they did so for the greatest good because they believe in the future,” Davison said.

“During these times, the best of people comes out. We will continue to pivot and adapt to these changes. That’s how we’re going to get through this,” Cartagena stated.

Acevedo shared that “the past few months have given us the opportunity to polish. We’re ready to transition, for example, if we need to shut down again. We’re excited to learn what the needs are and continue to get creative with what we can offer remotely.”

INNOVATION THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

"We must maintain positivity for staff and clients and educate clients on how to ensure their safety and their families'. We focus them on building their long-term recovery and accepting the realities of their fears and concerns," McWilliams said. She and her team share success stories with all staff and have them participate in goal setting during quarterly staff meetings. McWilliams also hosts regular staff lunches. "You can't thank staff enough for what they do every day. Many go above and beyond. This is no time to sit back, throw up your hands and say 'oh, well'. We believe we will continue to succeed and clients will succeed," she emphasized.

"We are still very much in this pandemic, but I have a lot of hope for the future," Widdows said. "SERV Behavioral Health System is a stronger organization than it was before the pandemic. A crisis has a way of bringing you together or pulling you apart, and our team became more unified. We have developed resiliency and discovered resiliency that we never knew we had. The pandemic has required us to think outside the box, and we continue to innovate."



"We have developed resiliency
and discovered resiliency
that we never knew we had."

Regina Widdows
President and Chief Executive Officer
SERV Behavioral Health System



CBIZ EMPLOYEE BENEFITS EXPLORES INNOVATIVE



Before the pandemic, both employers and employees were looking to save money wherever possible. It's even more important now as the health crisis has led to significantly more expenses, and health insurance costs continue to increase every year.

"The average trend is 10 to 12%. Even if it's only 7 or 8% – compound that year after year, and you can imagine the impact on companies and individuals," said Stuart Klein, Vice President of Employee Benefits at CBIZ Employee Benefits, a NJAMHAA Approved

Vendor and Integrated Healthcare Council member. "We take a comprehensive and proactive approach with our clients. We try

to think of things employers might not think of," he stated.

CBIZ uses its in-house expertise and relationships with hundreds of partners across the healthcare spectrum nationwide to explore every creative approach and resource. For example, they have sought alternative funding strategies to allow smaller companies with lower claims to reduce their insurance rates. Strategies include level-funded, self-insurance and captives, which are multiple companies grouped together so they are considered as one large company and

of their health plans and outsource that to a company that can obtain prescriptions at lower costs. This has led to 20 to 30% savings on prescriptions, according to Stuart.

Another strategy is to work with employers to offer additional, voluntary benefits to employees such as life, accident, critical care and pet insurance. This saves workers from having to pursue individual coverage, which is very expensive.

One such offering that is available through CBIZ is Convenient Care Plus, a low-cost, primary care direct access program that includes telehealth, generic medications and access to health centers – all for a minimal monthly fee. "This service can be provided to

both full- and part-time employees, regardless of whether they have health insurance or not," Stuart said. "In addition, independent contractors, who don't have access to employer benefits, can utilize this program, as well."



CBIZ uses its in-house expertise and relationships with hundreds of partners across the healthcare spectrum nationwide to explore every creative approach and resource.

can benefit from cost savings. Furthermore, for employers who choose to be self-insured, CBIZ can take the prescription drug part out

"Unfortunately, many brokers don't explore these alternatives, so employers are not aware of all the options available to them," according to Stuart.

OPTIONS TO HELP PROVIDERS SAVE MONEY

"We don't use the term 'broker', which denotes a transactional relationship. Instead, we prefer 'consultant' because we service the clients throughout the year. Of course, we will broker their renewals like everyone else, but that is only a four- to six-week process. It's what we're doing for the clients the rest of the year that differentiates CBIZ from the rest of the industry."

Education is a large part of the services and value offered by CBIZ, which is one of the largest benefits firms in the country. "Our expertise is delivered by many in-house specialists. We are unique in that we don't have to outsource any part of our service delivery, like other firms do," Stuart said. He noted that CBIZ's in-house experts

include actuaries, labor attorneys and benefit analysts.

In addition, CBIZ is the only such company that has an entire department dedicated to wellbeing solutions for clients. "Other companies outsource this or don't focus on it at all. Wellbeing specialists develop programs for employers to help them support workers in managing stress, which is especially important this year," Stuart stated.

Another unique aspect of CBIZ is their focus on employee communications. One such example is explaining the benefits at open enrollment, so employees better understand their options and can make the best choices. "Communication about benefits

shouldn't come only from employers," Stuart said.

"We are proud to have been serving the nonprofit sector for many years. We have more than 500 nonprofit clients nationally and many in New Jersey," Stuart noted, adding that one of his clients is SERV Behavioral Health System, a NJAMHAA member.

"We have a good understanding of the challenges nonprofits have been facing before and during the pandemic, and we are honored to bring our experience and expertise to help NJAMHAA members. Members don't have time to research areas that vendors specialize in, and we are glad to provide the information that is critical to their businesses," Stuart said.

Share Your Organization's News in *NJAMHAA News* or *Newswire*

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Public Affairs and Member Services
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LSI COUNCIL CO-CHAIR SHARES HIS

Johnson & Johnson

NJAMHAA News spoke with Chris Womack, PhD, Director, Healthcare Policy and Advocacy (NY/NJ), Johnson & Johnson North American Pharmaceuticals, about initiatives that J&J and Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of J&J have undertaken and his role as Co-chair of NJAMHAA's Life Sciences and Innovation Council (LSIC).

NJAMHAA News: Please describe J&J's and Janssen's initiatives related to the coronavirus pandemic and mental health.

Dr. Chris Womack: We recognize the challenges that individuals and communities are facing in these unprecedented times. We're mobilizing our global reach, deep scientific expertise, and extensive partnerships to address the critical needs of families, communities, healthcare professionals and our employees around the world while working toward mitigating and ultimately ending the COVID-19 pandemic. To help those in need, and continue our collective work toward mitigating and ultimately ending this pandemic, we are: collaborating to accelerate the development of a vaccine for COVID-19; screening compounds to determine if any could help treat those who have the virus; continuing to supply the critical medicines, devices and products

customers and patients depend on; enabling startups in the life-science ecosystem to pursue COVID-19 focused solutions; taking precautions to support the safety and well-being of our employees, contractors and the communities in which we live and work; and mobilizing to provide equipment, training, our products and financial donations to support communities and healthcare workers on the front lines. We will continue to bring forth our full breadth of resources in an effort to deliver the best

science, scale up production and support communities as we combat this pandemic.

In March, the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies and the Johnson & Johnson Foundation committed \$50 million dollars to support and supply frontline health workers—in addition to mental health support, this also covers meals, protective equipment and extra training. This commitment expands upon a \$250 million multi-year commitment made earlier this year to support those at the frontlines, guided by the Johnson & Johnson Center for Health Worker Innovation.



"The sharing and cultivating of ideas are important in order to continue to serve an ever-changing community with mental health needs."

Chris Womack, PhD, Director
Healthcare Policy and Advocacy (NY/NJ)
Johnson & Johnson North American Pharmaceuticals



VISION AND J&J'S INITIATIVES

NN: Please share your thoughts about co-chairing the LSIC and your vision for this group, as well as the behavioral healthcare field overall.

Dr. CW: Co-chairing the NJAMHAA Life Sciences and Innovation Council has been an unexpected gift for me. Having access to hear what I consider great thinkers and builders in the mental health arena is fantastic. When you bring those individuals together in a meeting to present a wealth of knowledge, it can help other organizations with their plans. Sometimes we all get locked into the silos of our roles and the art of open dialogue and learning is lost. We only want to focus on things that impact our specific area or function. The Life Sciences and Innovation Council brings various areas of knowledge together that normally may not be in the same room. The Council encourages cross pollination of ideas to help strengthen

organizations. My vision for the Life Sciences and Innovation Council is for more people to participate and bring their ideas. I would like for it to develop into an incubator for ideas to be developed and implemented. The sharing and cultivating of ideas are important in order to continue to serve an ever-changing community with mental health needs.

NN: What inspired you to pursue a career in mental health advocacy?

Dr. CW: That is an interesting question. The first reason is family. I had two family members who suffered from mental health challenges. One was my age and served in the military and was gainfully employed when he departed the armed services. He showed no signs whatsoever of a problem. He was funny, extremely bright and engaging. Slowly, he entered a dark place

that eventually caused him to take his own life. Another is my nephew, again who had no signs and enjoyed life. He began to battle with hearing voices, and he knew something was wrong; thus, he would self-admit to a clinic for treatment. Then, he started on drugs to control the voices. He passed away from an overdose (he was in his early 20's). I have other stories of family and friends who continue to battle with mental health issues. Being able to touch it, see it, and feel it connects you to the pain associated with it. When someone has a heart attack, a team jumps in to try to save that person. When someone has a mental episode, where is their team? I had to find a way to provide my voice to the struggle to eliminate the stigma, and let people suffering from mental health issues know that I'm not behind you, I'm by your side.

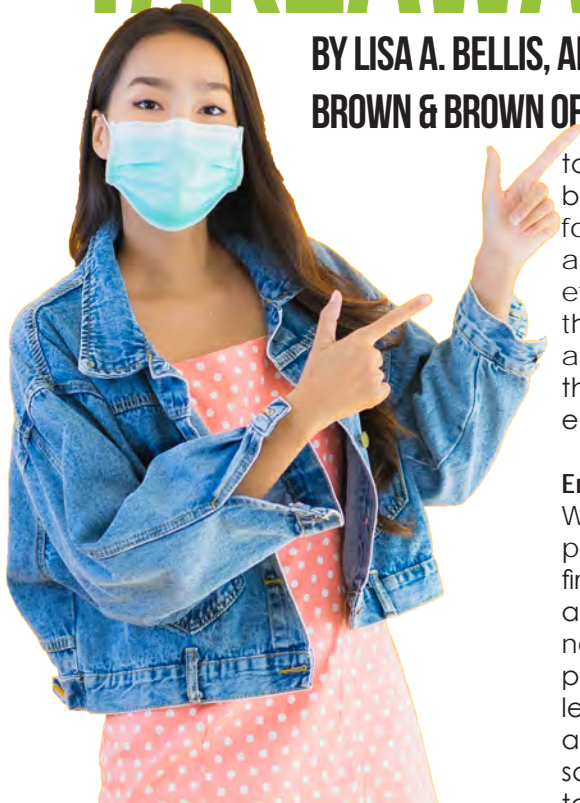
Get Involved and Make a Difference!

Share your insights to inform our advocacy!

See page 29 for details on Membership Meetings, Practice Groups and Councils that you and your staff can join!

TAKEAWAYS AND LESSONS

BY LISA A. BELLIS, ARM, CSM, CIC, CRIS, DIRECTOR OF RISK MANAGEMENT & LOSS CONTROL
BROWN & BROWN OF LEHIGH VALLEY, LP, A NJAMHAA APPROVED VENDOR



Seven months ago, the United States found itself dealing with the unthinkable – a global pandemic. As the government struggled to protect the nation, businesses grappled with understanding and executing continually evolving regulations. The nation now finds itself succumbing to a “new normal”, where face masks and social distancing have become mandatory in many places.

The first lesson is, there had better be a take-away from all of this. We’ve had seven months to wrap our minds around the unimaginable. By now, although we are still struggling to learn more about SARS-CoV-2, we know more about what worked and what didn’t work than we did at the start. It’s critical to review the

takeaways and turn situations that backfired into solutions moving forward. That means development and implementation of practical, effective procedures for protecting the health and well-being of staff and consumers. Here are some of the most critical lessons learned by employers in recent months:

Emergency Action Plans

While most organizations had plans outlining procedures for fires, tornadoes, active shooters and bomb threats, many did not address procedures for a pandemic. Organizations quickly learned the difficulties in executing a plan that does not exist. Many scurried to appoint employees to entirely new roles and responsibilities. Others learned that ongoing communication with all employees was central to reducing apprehensions and staying focused. In the midst of this crisis, we found ourselves scrambling to develop a new way of going about business.

Emergency Action Plans (EAP’s) enable consistent, clear communication on the continuity of operations during an emergency. Successful EAP’s define:

- Your Pandemic Response Group
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Workplace Safety Precautions/ Infection Control Guidelines
- Human Resources Issues/ Employee Absenteeism
- Communication Methods
- Essential Records Management

- Travel Restrictions
- Supplies/Personal Protective Equipment
- Self-Reporting/Quarantine Requirements
- Potential Shut-Downs and Services that Cannot Be Interrupted
- Remote Work
- Reopening Guidelines

Once your EAP is finalized and approved by the Executive Director, it should be rolled out to all employees. Every employee needs to understand his/her roles and responsibilities during an emergency. Each year, this plan should be reviewed and updated based upon changes in operations, locations, technology, etc. Annual training is recommended and new hires should be brought up to speed on all emergency plans.

Reopening Safely

As states began to lift restrictions, organizations were faced with a whole new challenge – reopening safely. If a portion of your business, or your entire business, has been closed, or if staff have been working remotely, you’ll want to develop and prepare for a safe reopening. This should be outlined in your EAP. Reopening guidelines should include the anticipated return-to-work date, disinfecting and deep cleaning measures, employee screening procedures, employee safety training, procedures for individualized requests, updates to the office layout, and social distancing protocol.

LEARNED DURING COVID-19

Safe re-openings are a team effort. Every person in your organization must commit to keeping their co-workers and consumers safe. This means voluntary self-reporting and quarantine if they are sick or infected with COVID-19. Once your organization develops reopening procedures, managers and supervisors have an important role – lead by example! If your guidelines require face masks, managers and supervisors should be wearing them properly (not below the nose or chin). Each employee should be held accountable for following

these procedures, without exception.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Another lesson learned is that *cleaning* is no longer enough. To control the spread of germs, it's important to *first clean, then disinfect* every area and surface. Cleaning removes some of the germs, but it does NOT kill germs. Disinfecting applies chemicals to kill the germs and viruses that remain after cleaning. Since

disinfectants are defined as "hazardous chemicals" by the Occupational Safety

Data Sheets (SDS'), which provide information relating to occupational safety and health for the products, and the product labels before using them. Utilize the appropriate concentration and application method per the manufacturers' instructions. ...and NEVER mix disinfectants or cleaning solutions!

This can result in toxic fumes and can be fatal!

Organizations should start by updating their inventories of hazardous chemicals to include any new disinfectants and cleaning products introduced into the workplace. All hazardous chemicals should have SDS', which must be made readily accessible to employees during each work shift. Next, all disinfectants and cleaning products, as well as other hazardous chemicals, should be labeled. Container labels must never be removed or defaced, and if a chemical is transferred to a new container, it must be properly labeled.

Employees responsible for using these chemicals must be trained to understand the physical and health hazards associated with each chemical, measures they can take to protect themselves, and how to read labels and SDS'. Training should occur in the work areas at the time of initial assignment, and each time a new chemical is introduced into the work areas.

[continued on page 24]



"Now more than ever, leaders need to model the changes that will be necessary for the continuity of their organizations."

Lisa A. Bellis, ARM, CSM, CIC, CRIS, Director of Risk Management & Loss Control
Brown & Brown of Lehigh Valley, LP



and Health Administration (OSHA), procedures must be developed to keep your employees safe.

Disinfectants should always be selected based upon the type of surfaces you wish to disinfect (fabrics, wood, plastic, metal, etc.). Always read the Safety

TAKEAWAYS AND LESSONS

[continued from page 23]

Personal Protective Equipment

The first step in determining the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is to conduct an exposure analysis. Is each worker in a low-, medium- or high-exposure category? The next step is to apply engineering and administrative controls to attempt to reduce the exposure. Engineering controls include physical barriers, ventilation systems, automatic doors, etc. Administrative controls include social distancing, staggered work shifts, employee screening, prohibiting unnecessary visitors, and cleaning and disinfecting. Once you've applied both of these controls, it's time to decide what type of PPE is necessary. PPE is always the last line of defense and is required if the exposure still remains after all other controls have been exhausted.

Employees in a low-exposure category have little or no contact with consumers or co-workers. These employees would require cloth face coverings if they are unable to socially distance themselves. Employees in a medium-exposure category have close, frequent contact with consumers and co-workers. These employees should wear face masks when in contact with others. Respirators are not typically required for this exposure level. Employees working in a high-exposure category work closely with individuals who have tested positive for, or are exhibiting symptoms of, COVID. These employees will need several forms of PPE, including respirators (N95 or approved KN95), gloves, face shields, and gowns, to perform their jobs safely. Regardless of the exposure category, frequent and thorough hand washing is critical.

Many employers are unaware that N95 and KN95 masks are actually respirators. OSHA requires a formal respiratory protection program for employees who are required to wear respirators. OSHA also requires the completion of the Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire, which identifies medical conditions that could place employees at risk of serious medical consequences if respirators are used. Information regarding OSHA's enforcement guidelines on filtering respirators can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/y9e6e5ev>.

Workers' Compensation Claims

One of the most frequently asked questions since the start of the pandemic is, "Does Workers' Compensation insurance cover COVID-19 claims?" Lawsuits have erupted country-wide and some states responded by enacting coverage for essential workers. On July 30th, the New Jersey Assembly adopted Senate Bill 2380, which was signed into law on September 14th. It creates a "rebuttable presumption of compensability for a broad set of COVID-19 positive workers qualifying as 'essential employees,' [as] long as the . . . individuals worked somewhere other than their own residence at the time of infection" (*National Law Review*, 2020). Under this bill, the burden of proof falls on the employers to rebut the claims by providing evidence showing the workers were not exposed to the virus in the workplace. Governor Phil Murphy stated that the law will take "immediate effect" and will also apply retroactively to the date New Jersey declared a state of emergency (March 9, 2020).

One provision of the law that may initially seem positive for employers is that COVID claims will not be entered into the calculations of experience modification. This may actually impact the ability of non-profits in health and human services to secure Workers' Compensation coverage in New Jersey. Under SB 2380, health and human service organizations are deemed *essential*, thereby providing Workers' Compensation benefits for COVID claims. Since the bill was enacted, many carriers may begin to pull out of the health and human services market, since they are unable to recoup the cost of these claims by way of the experience modification. This has the potential to leave many employers faced with no option other than to enter the assigned risk pool. At this point, it's too early to tell what the final impact will be.



LEARNED DURING COVID-19

For now, employers should continue to work with their brokers and workers' compensation insurance carriers to determine compensability on a case-by-case basis, as situations arise.

OSHA Reporting

In determining whether to record cases in the OSHA 300 log, employers in health care, emergency response and correctional institutions must first have confirmed cases of COVID, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and they must be considered work-related. Since COVID-19 is considered an *illness*, Section (M) – Illness must be completed by selecting (3) Respiratory Condition. If an employee requests anonymity, the employer must enter it as a "PRIVACY CASE" in lieu of the employee's name. Any other information that could potentially identify the employee must also be omitted or altered to protect the anonymity.

Communication

According to the *Harvard Business Review* (2020), employees are looking for frequent communication, a "safe channel" to provide feedback, assistance in working effectively while working remotely, assurance of job security, and a plan for moving ahead. Now more than ever, leaders need to model the changes

that will be necessary for the continuity of their organizations. Good leaders communicate hope and reassurance that their organizations will get through this crisis. They request and listen to feedback from all employees about how their organizations have handled the crisis. Now more than ever, it's important for leaders to start reviewing their takeaways and feedback from the pandemic. The actions taken and words spoken by leadership will ultimately determine whether or not organizations will get through the crisis.

If you have any questions or are interested in resources related to the information provided, please feel free to reach out to Lisa Bellis at lbellis@bbinslv.com.

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Share your insights to inform our advocacy on your behalf!
Network with and learn from other providers!

Membership Meetings

Share your ideas and concerns with NJAMHAA Board, other members and the NJAMHAA staff!

- November 18, 2020 from 10:30 a.m. to Noon

Information Technology (IT) Groups

Future meetings are scheduled when these groups meet.

- Billing Supervisors Practice Group
- IT Professional Advisory Committee
- Compliance and Performance Improvement Committee
- Human Resources

Chief Financial Officers Practice Group

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

November 23, 2020

Population-Focused Practice Groups:

Addictions, Adult Mental Health, Children's, ICMS, PACT

- Focus on policy issues, not clinical issues.
- Provide updates on budgets, legislation and regulations.
- Can establish ad hoc subgroups.
- Are encouraged to raise issues to the Board during the Membership Meetings, which are open to all members.

New Practice Group: Evidence-Based Practices (EBP)

Upcoming Meetings:

Addictions
10:30 p.m. to 12:00 p.m.
November 12, 2020

Children's
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
November 17, 2020

ICMS
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
December 1, 2020

Adult Mental Health
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
November 30, 2020

EBP
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
November 2, 2020

PACT
1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
November 20, 2020

Councils:

**Hospital Community
Integration**
10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
December 15, 2020

HMO
1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
December 4, 2020

Life Sciences and Innovation
TBD

Meetings will be held solely via Zoom until further notice.

For more information or to join any groups, write to smoses@njamhaa.org.

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HIPPA Compliance Mobile Application	\$990
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Discover the Many Benefits of NJAMHAA Membership!

The New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies' (NJAMHAA's) mission is to promote the value of its members as the highest quality behavioral healthcare providers for the residents of New Jersey through advocacy and professional development.

NJAMHAA advocates on systemic issues, as well as matters that affect providers of specific types of services.

NJAMHAA's advocacy has achieved visible impact with notable results on the state and federal levels through frequent meetings and ongoing correspondence with legislators and policymakers, and relationships with representatives from numerous media outlets.

Gain Critical Information that Affects your Organization

- Receive up-to-the-minute information about changes in state and federal legislation and regulations
- Act on "ahead-of-the-curve" information updates on funding opportunities
- Learn from and make important business decisions based on up-to-the-minute news on policy, practice and fiscal issues

Build Awareness of your Programs and their Value

Communicate your organizations' perspectives on the impact of policies, legislation and regulations in the quarterly NJAMHAA News.

- Share your agency's news and events in the tri-weekly NJAMHAA Newswire.
- Exhibit and advertise at events throughout the year at reduced rates.

Enhance your Ability to Serve Clients and their Families

- Participate in training events throughout the year.
- Learn even more through e-learning programs, offered at great rates by NJAMHAA's business partners.

Plus:

NJAMHAA houses the Information Technology (IT) Project, which provides all organizations contracted with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services a wide range of technological services, expert consultation and technical assistance.

Gain valuable tips to keep your computer systems working safely and efficiently, as well as important news related to IT and the behavioral healthcare field from the IT Project's biannual Bits & Bytes publication.

"NJAMHAA continuously promotes equal access to quality Mental Health and Addiction Services for all New Jersey residents. We appreciate NJAMHAA's commitment and shared partnership. Their advocacy efforts help us to preserve precious resources as we confront multiple challenges in health care today."

– Lynne Chandler, LCSW
Administrator
Saint Clare's
Behavioral Health



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Questions? Contact:
Shauna Moses, Vice President of
Public Affairs and Member Services
www.njamhaa.org/member-services
609-838-5488, ext. 204
smoses@njamhaa.org.

Employment Opportunities

With the many changes taking place in the behavioral healthcare environment and the reconfiguration of agencies, many staff openings are becoming available, and many staff members are seeking positions. As a result, NJAMHAA has been offering its members this service: Alerting members about openings or availability of staff via e-mail, on the website and in NJAMHAA News for a charge. Fees for e-mailing, posting and publishing ads are paid for by the organizations advertising these positions.

For information about placing classified ads, please contact Shauna Moses at smoses@njamhaa.org



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St. Joseph's Health is recognized for the expertise and compassion of its highly skilled and responsive staff. The combined efforts of the organization's outstanding physicians, superb nurses, and dedicated clinical and

professional staff have made us one of the most highly respected healthcare organizations in the state, the largest employer in Passaic County, and one of the nation's "100 Best Places to Work in Health Care".

We currently have openings for Advanced Practice Nurses, Crisis Counselors and a Screening Center Supervisor. Please visit njamhaa.org/employment-ads for details on these opportunities and how to apply.

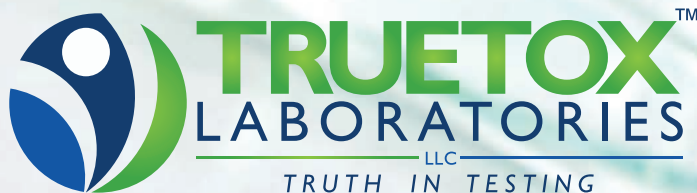
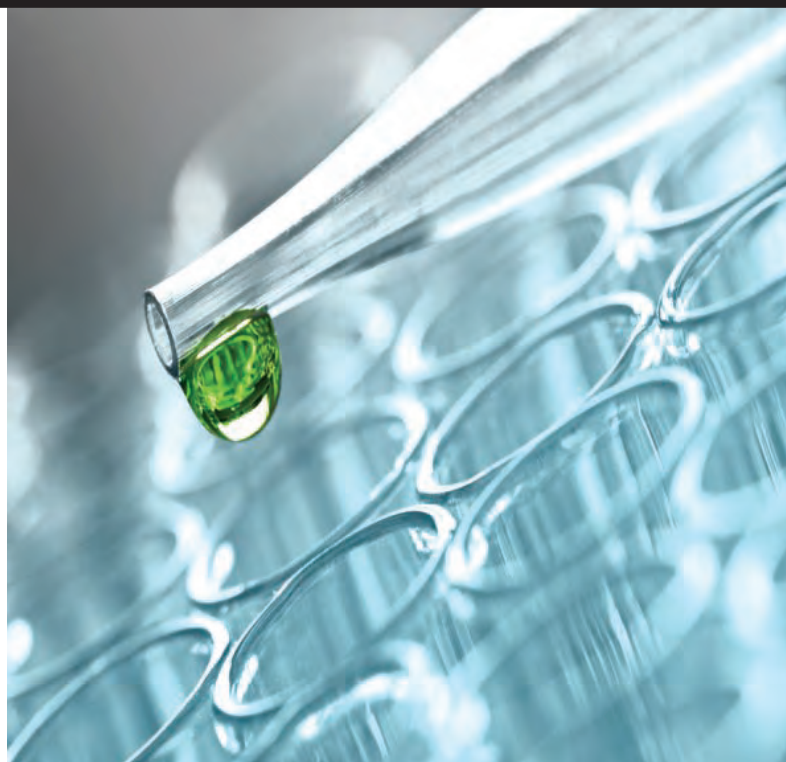


We are no longer in the business of providing just results; we are now in the business of providing powerful intelligence data that assists clinicians in better patient outcomes.

Clinical Services

Truetox Laboratories, LLC., is a highly specialized toxicology laboratory located in Garden City Park, NY. In addition to providing excellent toxicology services, we are now in the business of providing clinically actionable data to assist providers in driving better patient outcomes. We are fundamentally changing the way laboratories provide useful information to clinicians. TRAC (Trending Report Analysis Console) is a powerful tool created for providers by providers utilized for trending usage and assisting in predictive analysis. Truetox has harvested useful intelligent data to prepare treatment providers for Value Based Reimbursement.

How will you prepare?



More Than A Result

50 Rose Place Garden City Park, NY 11040

844-878-3869

www.truetoxlabs.com

NJAMHAA's Mission

To promote the value of its members as the highest quality behavioral healthcare providers for the residents of New Jersey through advocacy and professional development

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We keep you informed on mental health care and substance use policy, services and supports and NJAMHAA's advocacy. We provide updates on trainings, events and resources available.



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Continuously Promoting the Highest Quality Care for the People of New Jersey



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