



**American Hospital
Association**

To: Members, AHA's Section for Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Services
From: Rebecca B. Chickey, Director, AHA's SPASAS
Subject: Update on Key Issues in the Behavioral Health Care Field: June, 2011

June 29th Innovative Practices Call

Don't forget to register for the AHA members only conference call, scheduled for Wednesday, June 29th, 3:00-4:00 pm ET: [Reducing Avoidable Readmissions and Stress on the ED and Other Hospital Outpatient Departments.](#)

The call will feature Rick Hafer, Ph.D., vice chair of clinical services, psychiatry, University of Wisconsin Hospitals & Clinics Madison, WI. Dr. Hafer will share how they established a behavioral health "urgent" care clinic to allow patients to receive immediate outpatient treatment, post discharge or as needed. He will also provide insights into the economic viability of such an endeavor. To register go to: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2RVGTKS>
Dial in information, and materials will be sent to you 24 hours prior to the call.

June Behavioral Health Update

Attached is this month's Behavioral Health Update, a joint communication from the AHA and the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems. This June issue includes information on the, Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Demonstration, Senate and House letters requesting regulatory guidance on outstanding parity issues; and National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month among others.

Call for Nominations: Deadline June 17th

Reminder, the Nominating Committee of the AHA Section For Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Services is soliciting nominations of highly qualified candidates for 3-year terms commencing January 1, 2012. For additional information [click here](#), or go to: <http://www.aha.org/aha/content/2011/pdf/AHAPsychcallNom.pdf>. A nomination form is available: <http://www.aha.org/aha/content/2011/pdf/AHAPsychNominationsFORM.pdf>
To see a roster of current Governing Council members and work of the Section, go to www.aha.org/psych.

Mental Health Month

AHA worked to spread the word of the importance of May as Mental Health Month. Check out the [Vantage Point](#) comments by AHA President Rich Umbdenstock on the importance of behavioral health care and his [comments](#) in the May 20th edition of AHA News, along with other [articles](#) and [resources](#).

Regulatory Issues

In follow-up to the May Behavioral Health Update, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued its inpatient psychiatric facility (IPF) prospective payment system (PPS) [final rule](#) for rate year (RY) 2012. AHA's recent Advisory: *Medicare Inpatient Psychiatric PPS: The Final Rule for Rate Year 2012* provides a detailed summary, including changes in the rate update period, the market basket, and the intern and resident cap. AHA recently [told](#) the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that it must revise its proposed rule for the new accountable care organization program to "restore balance to the risk versus reward equation." AHA also recommends allowing all ACOs to share in first dollar savings, reducing the number of required quality measures at the outset, and assigning beneficiaries prospectively. AHA also submitted comments on proposals regarding [antitrust issues](#) and the need for additional [tax guidance](#), which were released in conjunction with the ACO rule.

On May 2nd, CMS issued a [final rule](#) implementing changes to the Medicare Conditions of Participation (CoPs) for the credentialing and privileging of telemedicine physicians and practitioners. It allows the hospital receiving the telemedicine services to rely upon credentialing and privileging information from the hospital providing the telemedicine services as long as certain conditions are met. For more info read AHA's May 20th [Advisory](#).

Last month, CMS published a [proposed rule](#) that would require a standardized, transparent process for states to determine if provider payment rates create access problems for their Medicaid beneficiaries. The AHA believes that the proposed rule is a step in the right direction toward creating a more transparent process for provider payment rate setting and holding state governments more accountable for their actions. AHA will comment on the proposed rule.

Advocacy

As lawmakers consider deficit-reduction plans, the AHA and other national organizations including NAPHS recently launched an [ad](#) to oppose any further reductions to hospital care. The ad, reminds Congress and others that “[Enough is enough...Hospitals are already doing more with less](#). There are other ways to reduce the deficit – don't hurt patient care.” Our [Advocacy Action Alert](#) details proposals Congress is considering, our position, and actions we are urging the field to take to work aggressively against further cuts to payments for hospital services.

Resources

If you were unable to join us last month for the free AHA member call: ***Decreasing LOS for Psychiatric Patients in the Emergency Department***, it's available online. The PowerPoint, materials, and recording can be found at: <http://www.aha.org/aha/issues/Mental-Health-Services/110505call.html?group=hospital&oamfd=t>

Here's to a great Summer.

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P. S. If you receive this communication via fax, please send your email address to rchickey@aha.org. Include your name, title, and organization, and we will update our files.