



ABH June Committee Meetings

Tuesday, June 1
ATS/CSS, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, June 8
ACCS, 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 9
Outpatient, 10 a.m.

Thursday, June 10
SOAP, 10 a.m.

Friday, June 11
Corporate Compliance,
10 a.m.

Monday, June 14
Billing, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, June 15
OTP, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, June 17
BH CP Exec., 10 a.m.

Friday, June 18
Children's CEO, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, June 22
PWUP, 12 p.m.

Friday, June 25
CBHI, 10 a.m.

ABH Next Steps: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice in Governance

As you know, ABH is committed to advancing equity, inclusion and diversity within our organization. Recent action to advance these goals includes surveying our membership about areas in which ABH can assist members, and based on that feedback, we are in the process of procuring a Diversity Equity Inclusion & Justice (DEI&J) toolkit that will able members to assess their own organizational practices and act on that assessment.

We are likewise committed to advancing equity within our own leadership and governance structures, including:

- Board of Directors; and,
- Committee Chairs

The ABH Board of Directors has formed a subcommittee to make recommendations on incorporating DEI&J principles into our governance structure. The Board subcommittee is comprised of our Officers and our two co-chairs of the Partnering with Underserved Populations Leadership Committee. These conversations resulted in a number of recommendations to the Board that were adopted during our April Board meeting. These recommendations include:

- **Data Collection.** In order to ensure that we are making progress toward broadening the diversity of our leadership, ABH will annually survey our members to ascertain the demographic composition of the ABH Board, Committee Chairs, and ABH Member CEO/ED leadership.
- **Board Nomination Policy.** The Board has formally adopted a Nominating Committee policy to include language reflecting intentionality relative to the promotion of DEI&J across race, ethnicity, gender, age, identities and experience in nominating individuals for Board membership. The policy was proposed for formalization as an amendment to our bylaws. ***This bylaws amendment was passed at the annual business meeting on May 11th.***
- **Committee Leadership Criteria.** Serving as Chair to one of ABH's 21 Committees is one of the primary ways in which leadership is developed within the association. In order to ensure that we are being intentional about promoting DEI&J, the ABH Board adopted a policy to require "due consideration will be

given to the promotion of diversity, equity and inclusion across race, ethnicity, gender, age, identities and experience” among the criteria for selection of Committee Chairs.

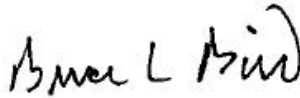
- **Committee Chair Term Limits.** In order to afford greater leadership opportunity within ABH, the Board determined that there should be more ongoing opportunities for growth. Where Committee Chair terms are currently undefined, Chair terms will now be defined as two-year terms and Chairs will be limited to three, two-year terms. The role of the Chair will expand to include mentoring future committee leaders.

Some ABH Committee Chairs have been serving in their roles for more than a decade. The role often requires significant contribution of time and expertise, and ABH greatly appreciates their service to their colleagues and the association, and is sensitive to their long and respected tenure. As such, we will be phasing in the term limits in over a period of 3 years. ABH staff will be outreaching to committee chairs in the coming weeks on next steps.

Sincerely,



Lydia Conley
President and CEO



Bruce L. Bird, Ph.D.
Chair

DSRIP Student Loan Repayment

The Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers (the MassLeague), on behalf of the MassHealth Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Statewide Investments (SWIs) Program, has released a Request for Proposals for the fourth cycles of the **Student Loan Repayment Program** and the **Primary Care/Behavioral Health Special Projects Program**.

The **Student Loan Repayment Program** aims to increase the number of providers practicing in community health centers and community-based behavioral health provider organizations by offering up to \$50,000 in student loan repayment for primary care and behavioral health providers who commit to four years of practice in an eligible community-based setting. *Please note that this will be the last opportunity to apply for student loan repayment under the MassHealth DSRIP Statewide Investments Program.* This final application cycle includes 50 slots dedicated to Masters-prepared unlicensed behavioral health providers in community-based behavioral health provider organizations who intend to become licensed within the next year.

For more information about the Student Loan Repayment Program and application materials, please visit the following link: <https://www.massleague.org/Programs/DSRIPStatewideInvestments/StudentLRP.php>.

The **Primary Care/Behavioral Health Special Projects Program** aims to engage and retain primary care and behavioral health providers in community-based settings while also supporting innovative on-the-ground projects that advance the ability of community-based provider organizations to succeed in an accountable care environment. To that end, the program makes available up to \$40,000 to support provider-led projects in eligible organizations.

For more information about the Primary Care/Behavioral Health Special Projects Program and application materials, please visit the following link:

<https://www.massleague.org/Programs/DSRIPStatewideInvestments/PCBHSpecialPjts.php>.

Applications for both programs are due on **June 7, 2021 by 5:00pm EST**.

Pre-recorded informational webinars for both programs are available via the MassLeague website. Questions will be accepted in writing through **June 1, 2021**.

Please direct all questions to the MassLeague DSRIP Statewide Investments email: StatewideInvestments@massleague.org.

ABH COVID-19 Landing Page

ABH has created a COVID-19 resource page where we are collecting the guidance most relevant to ABH members:

<https://www.abhmass.org/newsroom/announcements/guidance-on-covid-19.html>.

EOHHS Behavioral Health Roadmap Updates

As you know, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) has initiated a multi-year strategy to transform the behavioral health delivery system to expand access to treatment, promote evidence-based treatment, and improve health equity. The blueprint for implementation is called the Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform.

Previously published Roadmap materials are available here:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/roadmap-for-behavioral-health-reform>.

Listening Session Questions and Answers Published:

EOHHS has published Questions and Answers stemming from listening sessions held on March 8th and March 15th. The Q&As may be found here:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/roadmap-for-behavioral-health-reform-faqs>.

Public Session Slides:

Additionally, on April 27th, as part of the ongoing behavioral health redesign, EOHHS held a public session providing a detailed overview of Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs), which are intended to serve as an entry point for timely, high-quality mental health and substance use treatment on an urgent and ongoing basis and receive enhanced funding to support flexible, person-centered treatment. The slides from this presentation can be viewed [here](#).

ABH will continue to update our members as more information is released.

New HHS Buprenorphine Practice Guidelines

The Federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will be releasing new buprenorphine practice guidelines, which will exempt eligible providers from federal certification requirements related to training, counseling and other ancillary services that are part of the process for obtaining a DATA waiver (known as the X waiver) to treat up to 30 patients with buprenorphine.

Please see the following link to access the full press release from HHS regarding these new practice guidelines: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/04/27/hhs-releases-new-buprenorphine-practice-guidelines-expanding-access-to-treatment-for-opioid-use-disorder.html>. Please note that before treating patients with buprenorphine for opioid use disorder, providers will still need to submit a Notice of Intent to SAMHSA under currently established protocols.

Proposed Rates for BSAS SUD Services

The state recently released the proposed rates for certain BSAS services covered by 101 CMR 346, which can be accessed [here](#). The Notice of Public Hearing announcement for these rates and the state's rate methodologies have not been posted yet. ABH will notify you as soon as these documents are posted.

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BSAS Services Slated for a Rate Review for July 1, 2021 Implementation

Funding for Rates: EOHHS/MassHealth has identified trust fund dollars from the 1115 Waiver for investment in SUD service settings to support several concrete enhancements to services. High level priority areas for EOHHS include ATS, CSS, and RRS services. Upon promulgation of the rate regulations, the MassHealth managed care entities will begin payment of the higher rates as well for the services they procure.

If you have any questions, contact Connie Peters at cpeters@abhmass.org.

Senate Ways and Means Budget

On May 11, the Senate Committee on Ways and Means (SWM) released their recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget (S.3), totaling \$47.6B. S.3 relies on a consensus revenue number for FY22 of \$30.12B, a 3.5% growth over the revised FY21 projections. The budget utilizes \$1.55B from the Stabilization Fund (aka 'The Rainy Day Fund'). Please see ABH's full analysis of the [FY22 Senate Ways and Means budget](#) for more details. Feel free to contact [Abigail Kim](#) with any questions.

MA COVID-19 Vaccine Program

'Trusted Sources' PSA

Massachusetts has been recruiting a variety of spokespeople to publicly support COVID vaccination. In the state's latest video, Dr. Sharma Joseph, Tufts Medical Center, says, "No steps were skipped in the development of these vaccines. They're all highly effective at keeping you out of the hospital and keeping you alive." Please share this [link](#) on your social media with hashtag #TrustTheFacts.

Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake Among Members of Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities

This [CDC guide](#) includes strategies, interventions, and ready-made messages and materials, as well as information on how to connect with others to increase COVID-19 vaccination confidence and access in racial and ethnic minority communities.

Reminder Flyer: Preparing for Your Vaccine Appointment

This handout explains what you need to know before you head to your vaccine appointment, including the fact that the vaccine is free for everyone and you do not need insurance, a driver's license, or a Social Security number. Download and share this [flyer](#).

Interesting Reads

- [Doctors More Likely to Prescribe Opioids to Covid 'Long Haulers,' Raising Addiction Fears.](#) Kaiser Health News.
- *DPH Community Impact Survey: Seven out of 10 Massachusetts workers experienced disruptions to their employment due to the COVID pandemic, including 10 percent who lost their jobs:* <http://mass.gov/CovidSurvey>.
- [Combating COVID Vaccine Hesitancy May Be Next Battle For Mass.](#) WBUR CommonHealth.
- [Mental Health Services Wane as Insurers Appear to Skirt Parity Rules During Pandemic.](#) Kaiser Health News.