



ABH December Committee Meetings

Wednesday, December 1
eHealth, 10 a.m.

Friday, December 3
**Children's Services
CEO**, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, December 7
ATS/CSS, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, December 8
Outpatient, 10 a.m.

Thursday, December 9
SOAP, 10 a.m.

Friday, December 10
Corporate Compliance,
10 a.m.

Monday, December 13
Billing, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, December 14
ACCS, 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 15
MAP Subcommittee,
10 a.m.

Thursday, December 16
BH CP Exec., 10 a.m.

Friday, December 17
PDT/PHP, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, December 21
OTP, 9:30 a.m.

December 28
DEI&J, 12:00 p.m.

ABH Salute to Excellence!!

Congratulations again to ABH's 2021 Virtual Salute to Excellence Award Winners!

Outstanding Leadership Award

Wiremu Kiwi'au Diaz

Vinfen

Tracy Desruisseaux

Spectrum Health Systems

Excellence in Service Transformation Award

Cape Cod Emergency Services Team

Bay Cove Human Services

Excellence in Best Practices Award

STaR Team

Clinical & Support Options (CSO)

Rising Leader Award

Courtney Furtado

Steppingstone, Inc.

Excellency in Advocacy and Engagement Award

Debra Flynn-Gonzalez

Gandara Center

Excellence in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice Award

BAMSI Racial and Social Justice Committee

BAMSI

Excellence in Human Resources and Employee Relations Award

Laurie Connors

Beth Israel Lahey Health Behavioral Services

Excellence in Care Integration Award

Joel Berger

Eliot Community Human Services

Excellence in Youth Engagement and Support Award

Therapeutic Mentoring Team

Child & Family Services

Federal Public Health Emergency Extension

On October 15, 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) extended the Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) for another 90 days, effective October 18, 2021 - January 16, 2022. With the continuation of the PHE, federal flexibilities and waivers related to Medicare telehealth coverage remain in effect. For more information on the current telehealth payment policy for Medicare services, please refer to this [memo](#).

SAMHSA Releases Publication on Concurrent Substance Use Disorders

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recently released a new publication titled [“Treating Concurrent Substance Use Among Adults.”](#) The guide is intended to educate clinicians and other stakeholders about the harms of using more than one substance and considerations for addressing concurrent substance use and substance use disorders. The guide includes an issue brief, current research, guidance for selecting and implementing evidence-based practices, examples of treatment programs, and resources for evaluation and quality improvement.

Congregate Care Shelter Providers COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Survey

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) informed Congregate Care and Shelter Providers today about a very brief, ongoing survey regarding COVID-19 vaccine boosters. EOHHS is seeking (1) to identify if any settings require additional booster support and (2) to provide a high-level view into booster progress across congregate care and shelter organizations. The survey link can be found here: mass.gov/CCBoosterSurvey.

As you are aware, COVID-19 vaccine booster shots are available for Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine recipients who completed their initial series at least 6 months ago and who are:

- 65 years of age and older
- Age 18+ and have [underlying medical conditions](#)
- Age 18+ and at increased risk for COVID-19 because of [occupation or because they live or work in a high-risk institutional setting](#). (This includes front line essential workers and health care workers and individuals who reside in a skilled nursing facility or other congregate setting)

To ensure all congregate care and shelter sites receive the vaccine booster support that they need, **EOHHS has asked each congregate care and shelter provider to complete a [brief, ongoing survey](#) once per week by Friday at 5:00 p.m.** This survey is similar to a survey that organizations completed in the spring.

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>.

Thank You Sponsors and Vendors!

We are extremely grateful for our **Salute to Excellence** sponsors and vendors for their partnership and support. Thank you for helping us to celebrate this year's awardees!

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If you missed our 2021 Virtual Salute to Excellence, you can still view it via the Association for Behavioral Healthcare Facebook page [here](#).

Update on ARPA Spending Bill

On Wednesday, November 10 the State Senate voted unanimously to approve a \$3.82B spending plan to allocate a portion of federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars and surplus tax revenue. While the final bill and line item totals have yet to be released, the Senate proposal builds upon the [Senate Ways and Means plan](#), which includes several provision that ABH supports, including:

- \$400M reserve for to enhance and expand access to mental and behavioral health supports and services, including:
 - \$110M for loan repayment programs,
 - \$500k on a public awareness campaign about the loan repayment program,
 - \$10M in grants for PACT services,
 - \$15M to expand co-response models with police departments and mental health clinicians,
 - \$5M for an online portal to facilitate the coordination of services for individuals who are boarding with behavioral health needs, and
 - \$240.4M in a Behavioral Health Trust Fund to be administered by the Department of Public Health, with recommendations from a behavioral health advisory commission to which ABH is named a commission member;
- \$150M reserve to support the production of permanent supportive housing;
- \$500M for COVID-19 Essential Employee Premium Pay Program, to disperse \$500-\$2,000 of premium pay for in-person workers with household incomes at or below 300% FPL; and
- \$300M reserve for Medicaid home- and community-based services (ABH understands this funds prior commitments).

The proposal will next be assigned to a Conference Committee, made up of Senate and House members, to negotiate the differences between the two bills.

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NatCon22

Registration for the National Council's annual conference, NatCon22, is now open! NatCon22 will take place from April 11-13, 2022 at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

By registering for NatCon22, you can also experience Hill Day 2022 and a Mental Health First Aid Summit (for instructors/trainers only). The NatCon 22 landing page is [here](#).

ABH Member Discount

Verified ABH members can access a \$50 discount registering for NatCon22 MAmember22. The code can be entered into the "discount code" box on the top of the page where the full conference registration type is selected.

Registering before November 29th offers the most affordable attendance option. The registration landing page is available [here](#).

Interesting Reads

- [Understaffed State Psychiatric Facilities Leave Mental Health Patients in Limbo. Kaiser Health News.](#) *Kaiser Health News.*
- [Addressing the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Students.](#) *Inside Higher Ed.*
- [Pediatricians say the mental health crisis among kids has become a national emergency.](#) *NPR.*
- [A prescription for... food. Debit card program enables doctors to help patients buy healthy groceries.](#) *The Boston Globe.*
- [Dopesick: The Opioid Crisis Beyond the Script.](#) *Kaiser Family Foundation.*
- [The AMA needs to declare a national mental health emergency.](#) *STAT News.*