Using Public Education to Advance Professional Psychology’s Advocacy Agenda

JOINT FAC & PEC WORKSHOP
CO-SPONSORED WITH THE COMMITTEE OF STATE LEADERS
Program

- Welcome
- Case Studies
  - California Distress Constituent Guide
  - Connecticut Legislative Breakfast
  - Georgia Legislative Health Fair
- Best Practices for Public Education and Advocacy Collaboration
- Interactive Workshop
- Concluding Remarks
California Distress Constituent Guide

MICHAEL RITZ, PH.D.
PUBLIC EDUCATION COORDINATOR, CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
APA PUBLIC EDUCATION REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR WESTERN UNITED STATES
Resources to Enhance Advocacy Relationships

➢ Providing information for decision makers

➢ Crafting mutually productive and rewarding relationships

ELEMENTS OF ADVOCACY
Mind/Body Health
From the American Psychological Association

Mind/Body Health
For a Healthy Mind and Body... Talk to a Psychologist

American Psychological Association Practice Organization
A Legislator’s Guide:

Communicating with Distressed Constituents
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Connecticut Legislative Breakfast

ELAINE DUCHARMER, PH.D.
PUBLIC EDUCATION COORDINATOR, CONNECTICUT PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
Connecticut Legislative Breakfast

➢ Our First Legislative Event
   • No Need to Recreate the Wheel...The PEC Team...Thank you Georgia!

➢ Challenges
   • Board Support
   • Timing
   • Finances

➢ The Positives
   • Board Support
   • Our Lobbyist
   • Executive Directors
Connecticut Legislative Breakfast

Event Details
- Date: April 6, 2016  8-9:30 AM
- Meet and Greet
- Continental Breakfast
- Notice in Legislative Bulletin daily several weeks ahead
- Electronic invitations to all Legislators 1 week prior to event
- Board Members reach out to their legislators

Handouts
- APA Handouts: Depression, Anxiety, Stress, Resilience
- A Legislators Guide: working with Distressed Constituents (Thank you California!) Send electronically with a few at the event

Event Program
- Individual Psychologists greet each legislator
- Key legislators say a few words
Connecticut Legislative Breakfast

Our Message

1. Psychology is primary care and there is a connection between mind/body health and chronic disease
2. Investing in mental health makes good financial sense
3. Integrating mental and physical health can help the economy
4. Psychologists are mental health experts that can be a resource to legislators
Georgia Legislative Health Fair

J. KIP MATTHEWS, PH.D.
PUBLIC EDUCATION COORDINATOR, GEORGIA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
Georgia Legislative Health Fair
What Need Existed?

- Important for legislators to be informed about psychologists
  - Who we are / What we do / Training / Difference from other professions

- To help them see psychologists as a resource when proposing legislation that could impact constituents

- Advance our own legislative agenda

- Educate the general public, including constituents, staffers, and lobbyists to empower them in making informed health care decisions
Georgia Legislative Health Fair
Background Preparation

- Secure date / space
- Prepare budget
- “Save the Date” cards to legislators
- Secure volunteers
- Gather materials, including APA handouts
- Collaborate with LLC / FAC to get talking points on legislative issues and agenda
- Purchase give-away items (promotional materials)
Georgia Legislative Health Fair
Before the Fair

- Send reminder to volunteers
- Provide info on parking / Where to meet
- Create a schedule for the volunteers to keep active
  - Table assignments
  - Legislator office visits
  - Schedule volunteers for 2-hour blocks
- Include talking points for volunteers in communications
- Request volunteers to dress in coordinated colors for visibility/branding
Georgia Legislative Health Fair
Day of the Fair

- Arrive early!
- Volunteer check-in to get assignments
- Brief orientation for volunteers
- Governor’s Proclamation
- House & Senate Resolutions
- Keep active
- Work the tables
- Visit legislators and their staff
- Take pictures!
Best Practices for Public Education and Advocacy Collaboration

LUANA BOSSOLO, ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PRACTICE COMMUNICATIONS, APA PRACTICE

CHAD APPEL, J.D., DIRECTOR, FIELD AND STATE OPERATIONS, APA PRACTICE
Best Practices

- Communicate Regularly
- Use Resources
- Find Opportunities to Collaborate
Communicate Regularly

Step 1: Find out who handles state/federal advocacy and public education in your SPTA (or Division)

Step 2: Share Resources and information

- New Bill in Congress/State Legislature?
- New Public Education Campaign?
- APAPO Information or Action Alert?
Communicate Regularly

Action Alert

Urgent  Action Required  For Your Information

Urge Your Members of Congress to Co-Sponsor
The Medicare Mental Health Access Act

APAPO is excited to announce that on December 16, 2015 Rep. Kristi Noem (R-SD), joined by Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), introduced H.R. 4277, the Medicare Mental Health Access Act, in the U.S. House of Representatives. This bipartisan legislation would allow psychologists to provide Medicare services to patients without unnecessary physician supervision in all treatment centers by amending the Medicare definition of physician to include psychologists.

The Medicare Mental Health Access Act is professional psychology’s priority legislation, and we need your help contacting Congress!

Click here to write to your Members of Congress today and urge them to co-sponsor the Medicare Mental Health Access Act

Direct Link: http://capwiz.com/apapractice/issues/alerts?alertid=69079631

If you use social media, tweet thank you to Reps. Noem and Schakowsky and then tweet your Member of Congress! Sample Tweets:

- Thank you @RepKristiNoem & @JanSchakowsky 4 sponsoring #HR4277 2 increase #MentalHealthAccess 4 Medicare patients
- @YourRepresentative's twitter handle links to cosponsor #HR4277 2 increase #MentalHealthAccess 4
PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES CAN HELP FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS AND BUILD CREDIBILITY

- Educate policy makers, their staff and constituents
- Position psychologists as a resource
- Demonstrate the value psychologists bring to communities
Use Resources

Public education materials
- Psychology Help Center
- Fact sheets
- Data from Stress in America
  [www.StressInAmerica.org](http://www.StressInAmerica.org)
- Videos on how psychotherapy helps

Disaster Resource Network

Social Media
Use Resources

Educational information
• How psychologists can help
• Informative to policy makers
• A resource for their constituents
Collaborate

- District Visit
- State Capitol Visit
- Letter to the Editor
- Joint Op-Ed
- Invite Legislator to Health Fair/Talk
- Press Outreach for Legislative/Education Initiative
- Social Media Outreach

Tweet by drnancy:
Thank you @janschakowsky 4 sponsoring #HR4277 2 increase #MentalHealthAccess 4 #Medicare patients
Interactive Workshop

Your U.S. Senator has been appointed to a Committee that has jurisdiction over health care issues, and she has recently indicated her interest in supporting Mental health issues. The APA Practice Organization needs your assistance in developing a relationships with the Senator and her staff, and educating her office about the psychology profession.

PECs and Advocates (state, SPTA and Division FACs) should work together to develop a plan to outreach with the Senator’s office. You have 10 minutes to put together a plan.

If you have a time left over, brainstorm on how you can continue to work together to target and federal and state legislators in your state.
THANK YOU!