GOOD PRACTICE
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CEO COLUMN

INCREASING THE VISIBILITY OF PRACTITIONERS

APA’s new strategic priorities can help us ensure policymakers
and the public recognize the breadth of practitioners’ expertise

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I’ve observed that almost all APA members, from graduate students to fully licensed psychologists, share a desire to use their skills and knowledge to make a positive impact on the field of psychology and in the communities where they live and practice. But in today’s era of health care—characterized by changes to reimbursement and licensure policies, as well as increased pressure to save money and prove our value—it’s easy to lose sight of the goals that brought us to psychology in the first place.

How will we navigate these challenges while identifying opportunities for the field that help us to maximize our impact?

APA’s new strategic plan provides a framework and a three- to five-year roadmap. Approved by APA’s Council of Representatives in February, the plan positions the association to move the dial significantly on the most pressing issues for psychology and for society.

The plan’s four strategic priorities are to:
» Utilize psychology to make a positive impact on critical societal issues.
» Elevate the public’s understanding of, regard for, and use of psychology.
» Prepare the discipline and profession of psychology for the future.
» Strengthen APA’s standing as an authoritative voice for psychology.

By advancing these priorities, we can raise the visibility of psychology...and help ensure psychologists are able to practice to the full extent of their training and are paid adequately for the services they provide.

As a former practitioner, I know that payment for psychological services is a major factor driving clinical practice. I have heard practitioners’ stories about the financial pressures they face. That is why, in line with APA’s new strategic priorities, the association is re-envisioning its Office of Health Care Finance to address issues related to reimbursement, as well as broader issues, such as increasing access to psychological services and promoting a model of integrated care that recognizes the full scope of psychologists’ training.

By using our strategic priorities as the lens through which we view the practice landscape, we can better articulate financially viable models of care with a strong evidence base, such as the integrated care model. Psychologists who practice as part of integrated care teams will be part of new reimbursement models that focus on quality of care and patient outcomes. Moving forward, APA will take an even more active role in shaping public policy around promoting new, evidence-based models of care that will make a positive difference in the lives of people and provide fair financial support to psychologists.

During the development of its strategic plan, APA invited its 118,000 members to identify the top issues that the association should address. A sincere thank you to the many of you who took the time to weigh in. Your thoughtful feedback and recommendations have helped to co-create a plan that will position psychological practice for the future, strengthen our entire field and maximize the positive impact that we can have on people’s lives.

Learn more about APA’s strategic priorities at apa.org/about/apa/strategic-plan