

## Inside

Elections.....	1
MPS Advocacy Intern.....	1
From the Executive Director.....	2
President's Letter.....	3
Candidate Statements.....	4
Legislative Update.....	6
APA President will visit MPS ...	7
Proposed Bylaws Amendments .....	8
Physician Suicide .....	9
Calendar .....	10

**Ideas of Reference**  
is the newsletter of the Minnesota Psychiatric Society, a District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association.



## MINNESOTA PSYCHIATRIC SOCIETY

Improving Minnesota's mental health care through education, advocacy and sound psychiatric practice and achieving health equity.

Our vision is physician leadership creating the nation's highest quality, most affordable, and accessible system of mental health care.

[www.mnpsychsoc.org](http://www.mnpsychsoc.org)

# MPS ballots chart our future

In 2023, MPS members will elect a President-Elect, a Secretary-Treasurer, an Early Career Psychiatrist Representative, 2 Assembly Representatives, and 2 Councilors. Candidate statements are included in this issue. We will also be voting on a number of proposed Bylaws amendments addressing leadership positions, terms, and elections. Vote online by March 15! ■

## Meet the candidates

### President Elect: Mark Frye, MD



I am honored to be nominated for President-Elect of the Minnesota Psychiatric Society. I am a Consultant in the Department of Psychiatry & Psychology at Mayo Clinic. I am the past Chair of the Department of Psychiatry & Psychology (2010-2020) and recognized with the Stephen & Shelley Jackson Family Professorship in Individualized Medicine.

Born and raised in Rochester and a graduate of the University of Minnesota Medical School, I completed my residency training at UCLA and subsequently completed a fellowship at the National Institute of Mental Health in

Bethesda, Maryland with a research focus on the neurobiology of treatment resistant depression and bipolar disorder.

Leaving a COVID pandemic, a mental health epidemic has emerged that provides both unique challenges and opportunities in each of our communities and for the State, writ large. Whether at the University of Minnesota, large multi-speciality group practices (Mayo Clinic, Allina Health, HealthPartners, Prairie Care, M Health, Essentia, Sanford), vibrant community mental health programs, state and federal forensic programs, or our rich network of individual practitioners, we have an incredible composition of outstanding Minnesotan clinicians, educators, and researchers that make an impact every day for the patients we serve.

If elected, I will energetically advocate to

*Continued on page 9*

## Meet MPS Advocacy Intern Adri Lobitz

Adri Lobitz (she/her) is in the second year of her Master of Public Health at the University of Minnesota studying Community Health Promotion. She graduates in May and hopes to work in policy, evaluation, or research. Adri currently works as a Graduate Assistant for the Center for Research in Family Home Visiting at the University of MN and as an Evaluation Intern for the Health Promotion Department at Boynton Health working on the University's Mental Health Advocate program. Outside of school she enjoys being active (walking, hiking, biking), finding new restaurants and coffee shops to try, playing board games, and loving on her two cats, Myles and Jack. Adri will be assisting Linda and the MPS team in conducting research and lobbying for relevant legislation. She is excited about this in depth experience working on advocacy and hopes to build policy skills during her internship with MPS this spring. ■





## 2 Ideas of Reference

The newsletter of the Minnesota Psychiatric Society is published bi-monthly: Jan-Feb, Mar-April, May-June, July-Aug, Sept-Oct and Nov-Dec for members of MPS and others on request. Signed articles express the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect policies of MPS. Articles submitted are subject to review by the editors.

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Display ad	1 Issue	2 Issues	4 Issues
Full Page	\$500	\$400	\$350
1/2 page	350	300	250
1/4 page	225	200	175
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### **Ideas of Reference**

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### **Editors**

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George Dawson, MD, DLFAPA

### **Managing Editor**

Linda Vukelich

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#### *President Elect*

Mary Beth Ladizabal, DO, DFAPA

#### *Past President*

Chinmoy Gulrajani, MD, DFAPA

#### *Secretary/Treasurer*

Lonnie Widmer, MD

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Maria Lapid, MD, DFAPA

#### *Early Career Representative*

Josh Stein, MD

#### *MSCAP Representative*

George Realmuto, MD, DLFAPA

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Jim Curry, MD, MPH

Marie Olseth, MD, DFAPA

Monica Taylor-Desir, MD, DFAPA

#### *RFM Representatives*

Jim Curry, MD

Laura Sloan, MD; Rachel Kay, MD

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#### *Executive Director*

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Bill Amberg, JD

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Bill Clapp, MD, DLFAPA

#### *Ethics*

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#### *Membership/Fellowship*

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#### *Nominating*

Allison Holt, MD, FAPA

#### *Program*

Sheila Specker, MD, DFAPA

### **Standing Committees**

#### *Legislative*

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#### *Private Practice*

Helen Wood, MD, DFAPA

#### *Awards/Research*

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#### *Women Psychiatrists*

Karen Dickson, MD, DLFAPA

#### *Senior Psychiatrists*

Bill Clapp, MD, DLFAPA

#### *Health Equity & Racial Justice*

Jim Curry, MD, MPH

## Get the most out of membership



Linda Vukelich

MPS Executive Director

**Are you making the most of your APA/MPS membership?** As renewal notices go out, it's a great time to consider that question.

I have observed that the members who get the most from their membership are engaged at a level that often relates directly to how much value they get from being a member. For those members, it's the opportunity to participate in supporting a profession they value and building long-term connections that measures satisfaction. Obviously, we all need to balance our time and priorities along the way; at some points we are more fully involved while at others we need tend to other priorities as parents, business owners, family members, partners, etc. We're here for you when your career and life allow you to contribute and participate and we're here for you when you need organizational support as well. MPS is your professional home and that's a mission we all share.

### **Have you looked at volunteering lately?**

The 2023 Legislative Session offers us a clear opportunity to build awareness and hopefully resources and a system to serve Minnesotans experiencing mental illness and substance use disorders. Together with other like-minded organizations in the Mental Health Legislative Network, MPS through our dedicated Legislative Com-



MPS members attended the 2022 APA State Advocacy Conference

mittee, works to build Minnesota a better system of care that values patients and resources providers too. The APA brings much to bear here in Minnesota and as a national force for federal investments. There are many ways you can support this important work – starting with your vote and your voice. Do you know your local elected official? They're looking for input from friends, neighbors, constituents. Your local impact and perspective as an expert are powerful. Have you considered getting more involved? Opportunities range from serving on the Legislative Committee to attending the February 8 MMA Physicians Day at the Capitol or the March 9 Mental Health Legislative Network Day on the Hill. MPS is once again hosting an in-person advocacy training for members on March 9 at the Radisson Hotel across the street from the Capitol. I hope you will plan to join us!

Please keep in touch with me and your elected leaders. We are dedicated to serve MPS and our members. Thank you for your membership and your commitment! Have a great year! ■



## From the MPS President



Matt Kruse MD, FAPA  
MPS President

In recent years, cannabis has been a topic of increasing discussion among the medical community. Evolving research on the potential impact of this substance, especially on the developing brain, has bolstered the concerns of clinicians who have seen countless patients adversely impacted by its use. Meanwhile, cannabis laws continue to evolve in the United States, bringing this topic from the clinical setting to the policy setting.

MPS has relied on the invaluable expertise of its members to offer letters and testimony as Minnesota's medical cannabis program continues to expand. Recent initiatives have sought to authorize diagnoses including obsessive-compulsive disorder and opioid use disorder as indications for medical cannabis, despite the availability of effective, evidence-supported treatments for these conditions.

As much as I agree with MPS' opposition to the above initiatives (indeed, I provided my signature as MPS president to several of the letters submitted on the above topics), I simultaneously have developed more significant concerns about where we, as a psychiatric community, stand on legalization of cannabis.

As a physician-advocate, I reserve my commentary when speaking as a physician to those issues which fall within my expertise. Although I try to advocate for issues unrelated to medicine or mental health that I consider important, I do this merely as a constituent and voter. Upon significant consideration over the past few years, I believe it's time that the psychiatric community consider its stance on legalization of cannabis.

I could spend pages highlighting the data. According to the ACLU, black individuals are arrested at a rate over 3.7 times higher than white individuals for cannabis-related crimes, despite evidence of relatively equal use. Indeed, despite a mid-October declaration from President Biden that 6500 individuals will receive pardons for simple cannabis possession, the serious impact that the "War on Cannabis" has had on education, work, upward mobility, and mental health of minority populations is ongoing.

While advocating within our expertise as psychiatrists, we cannot ignore the impact of systemic bias on public health. In addition, broad decriminalization or legalization of cannabis will likely take away momentum behind medical cannabis programs, which are likely used as a "foot in the door" step towards legaliza-

tion. Indeed, I do not consider cannabis a benign substance, just as I don't consider alcohol benign either. Yet, despite the countless patients I've had whose lives have been derailed with alcohol use, I'm not advocating for a return to prohibition. Of note, medical organizations often serve alcohol at its functions. Meanwhile, establishment of medical cannabis programs, aside from not being driven by scientific rigor, provide a tacit message that cannabis is not only benign, but medicine.

In sum, I would like broad MPS membership to carefully consider its stance on cannabis legalization or decriminalization. Further, how should we act on that stance? Do we stand unopposed, or do we actively advocate with associated recommendations for public health measures, education, and funding of a potential increase in chemical and psychiatric treatment needs? I believe these questions to be timely. ■

### ONLINE VOTING

*Easier than ever!*

1. **Go** to MPS website, MnPsychSoc.org.
2. **Click** on MPS Elections graphic to begin.
3. **Certify** yourself using your APA member ID no. & your first & last initials as indicated.
4. **Vote** for each position.
5. **Vote** on proposed Bylaws amendments.
6. **Share your** suggestions.
7. **Volunteer** if you can!
7. **Submit** — *Thank you for voting!*

**VOTING ENDS MARCH 15!**



# Candidate Statements *Vote online by March 15!*

## *MPS Councilor Candidates (Vote for 2)*

### **Andrea Lundberg, MD**



I am grateful and honored to be nominated for the position of Councilor for MPS. For a bit of background, I was born and raised in Minnesota though ventured out of the state for over a decade. I returned home in 2019 after completing psychiatry residency at Northwestern University. I work for Hennepin Healthcare and split my time between the outpatient clinic and Acute Psychiatric Services. I enjoy working with residents and mentoring

the future of psychiatry.

While in residency, I was a member of the Illinois Psychiatric Society which gave me my first glimpse at the importance of psychiatrists as advocates for our patients. With a few years of clinical practice allowing me to better understand the mental health system in Minnesota, I look forward to taking a more active role in MPS. As a member of the Council, I will listen and work to protect the policies and services that benefit our patients while also addressing barriers to quality care and recovery. Additionally, I believe it is important that psychiatrists not only organize around issues but also to support one another. The past few years have been challenging and isolating. I look forward to collaborating with other psychiatrists across the state to address the needs within our profession.

Thank you for your consideration for this position. ■

### **KyleeAnn Stevens, MD, DFAPA**



I would be honored to serve in the role of Councilor for MPS. In the last several years, I've experienced the impact of MPS in Minnesota, how integral the organization is, not only to the practice of psychiatry, but also to patients and families. It is with this perspective that I would serve as Councilor.

I trained in adult and forensic psychiatry at Georgetown University in Washington DC. I then worked as a staff psychiatrist at St. Elizabeths

Hospital for justice informed patients and that experience truly shaped my life's work. I continued at St. Es as the Director of Forensic Services where I worked closely with communities and courts to support safe transitions of individuals out of a hospital setting. I greatly enjoyed teaching students, residents, and fellows at Georgetown, GW, and Walter Reed.

I moved with my family to Minnesota in 2014 to be the Forensic Medical Director at the Department of Human Services and have since transitioned to my current role as Executive Medical Director of Behavioral Health for DHS. I also maintain a small patient panel and serve as an Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota. While I would serve MPS as an individual, I believe my perspective on serious behavioral illnesses in the continuum of care (or continuum as it should be) would be of benefit. I am a believer in the power of collaboration, difficult conversations, and looking to other states to work toward meaningful change. Thank you for your consideration. ■



### **Secretary-Treasurer Lonnie Widmer, MD**

I am honored to be nominated for a third term as Secretary-Treasurer of Minnesota Psychiatric Society (MPS). Prior to my first term as Secretary-Treasurer, I served two years as a Councilor. The past four years have been challenging and rewarding as the pandemic led to financial

uncertainty for MPS, but we managed to weather the storm. We

continue to advocate for issues facing psychiatrists and our patients in Minnesota, and I look forward to the ongoing work.

For those of you who don't know me, I have been working for Allina Health at United Hospital since finishing my training at Mayo Clinic in Rochester in 2008. At United, I am the lead for child and adolescent psychiatry and serve as the chair of the department. I have been fortunate to see a variety of patient populations. I currently do a combination of inpatient adolescent and outpatient perinatal psychiatry. ■

## MPS Assembly Representative Candidates (Vote for 2)

### Dionne Hart, MD, DFAPA



My name is Dionne Hart, DFAPA, FASAM. I am a community psychiatrist who is board certified in addiction medicine and general psychiatry. I am also an adjunct assistant professor in psychiatry at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science. My work sites include a detox center, state hospital, psychiatric ED, and a correctional facility.

My involvement with Minnesota Psychiatric Society (MPS) began when I was a resident. During my tenure, I have

held many positions within MPS, most recently as your representative to the American Psychiatric Association's (APA) Assembly. In that role, I have authored and co-authored several action papers (resolutions) that were adopted as APA and American Medical Association policies. My passion and dedication to our patients and profession has led to my selection as the chairperson of the APA Assembly Committee on Public and Community Psychiatry, an APA delegate to the American Medical Association's House of Delegates, and the Assembly Representative to the Council on Advocacy and Government Relations, as well as appointments to selective committees such as the Annual Meeting Scientific Program Committee.

It has been an honor to be your representative and I humbly request your support for an additional term in the APA Assembly. If re-elected, I will continue to author and support action papers that will improve access to mental health treatments and outcomes of our patients while supporting psychiatric physicians.

Thanks in advance for your consideration. ■

### Monica Taylor-Desir, MD, MPH, DFAPA



I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the Minnesota Psychiatric Society as an APA Assembly Representative. I would be honored to continue my service to Minnesota and Area 4 in this capacity. I am a consultant with the department of Psychiatry and Psychology at the Mayo Clinic where I serve as a community psychiatrist for the Olmsted County Assertive Community Treatment Team and as a psychiatrist with the Southeast Regional Crisis Center.

I am one of the co-chairs of our department's Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Committee and a current member of the Health Equity and Racial Justice Committee of the Minnesota Psychiatric Society. I have the pleasure of serving as a board member for the American Psychiatric Association Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the APA. Prior to joining Mayo Clinic, I worked as a community psychiatrist for tribal communities in Arizona for 12 years and as the CMO and psychiatrist for a tribal community in North Dakota for 3 years. My service to the APA began at the local level as the Arizona Psychiatric Society newsletter editor, treasurer, and secretary and progressed to serving as the North Dakota Psychiatric Society president-elect and at the national level as one of the ND APA assembly representatives. Area 4 has a special place in my heart and I would welcome the opportunity to return to the APA Assembly, this time serving Minnesota, to advocate for our patient population and our members. ■

### Early Career Psychiatrist Representative Laura Sloan, MD



I am honored to be nominated for a third term as Secretary-Treasurer of Minnesota Psychiatric Society (MPS). Prior to my first term as Secretary-Treasurer, I served two years as a Councilor. The past four years have been challenging and rewarding as the pandemic led to financial uncertainty for MPS, but

we managed to weather the storm. We continue to advocate for issues facing psychiatrists and our patients in Minnesota, and I

look forward to the ongoing work. For those of you who don't know me, I have been working for Allina Health at United Hospital since finishing my training at Mayo Clinic in Rochester in 2008. At United, I am the lead for child and adolescent psychiatry and serve as the chair of the department. I have been fortunate to see a variety of patient populations. I currently do a combination of inpatient adolescent and outpatient perinatal psychiatry. ■



# Legislative Update

William J. Amberg, MA, JD

In a surprise to many Capitol observers, Democrats retained majority control of the Minnesota House of Representatives and, in a bigger surprise Senate DFLers gained a one seat majority after being in the minority for several years. Governor Tim Walz cruised to re-election by nearly 8 points, and all other statewide constitutional officers were re-elected.

The November Forecast showed a \$17.6 billion surplus, due to revenues coming in far over projections and government services being accessed at a far lower rate. This is the largest budget surplus in state history, however only \$5 billion is for ongoing spending, with about \$12 billion in one time money to spend. Spending priorities announced by the governor and House and Senate leaders include tax rebates, tax cuts, education funding, climate policy investments, and infrastructure via a capital investment bill. Legislative DFLers and Gov. Walz would like to make recreational cannabis legal, but with very thin majorities, it's unclear that it will pass this year. With very narrow legislative majorities for Democrats, we may see a less partisan atmosphere at the Capitol than we did in the election year session in 2022.

During the 2023 legislative session MPS will be promoting legislation to enhance data collection and enforcement of the parity laws, improve coordinated care management, and increase funding for the FastTracker resource. MPS will be partnering with other mental health care advocates to ensure that the audio only telehealth law that expires June 30, 2023, is extended, 988 is financially sustained with telecom fees, and Addiction Fellowship slots are funded. Finally, MPS will be lending our expertise and research findings with the Legislature and the Administration as they consider changes to cannabis law.

If you have not gotten engaged in the legislative process in the past, this is a great year to get involved! MPS is pushing our largest legislative agenda in many years and there is enough state budget surplus to accomplish many, if not all, of our goals. One way to get engaged is to plan to attend the MPS Advocacy Training Breakfast and Mental Health Day on the Hill on March 9th. ■

## MPS Members Connect at the Capitol

On Wednesday, February 8, MPS members joined together to learn, meet, and speak up for mental health as part of the Minnesota



Senator Kelly Morrison, MD

Medical Association's White Coat Day at the Capitol. Joined by MPS Lobbyist Bill Amberg, Advocacy Intern Adri Lobitz, and MPS Executive Director Linda Vukelich, our group made an impact. MPS members Drs. Berit Midelfort, Jim Curry, and Jonas Attitus, met with their legislators and left notes expressing key objectives on behalf of psychiatry and the patients served. It was an energizing experience for all.

The MMA program highlighted several initiatives of joint concern with MPS. The featured speaker was none other than 2022 MPS Paul Wellstone Award Winner, Senator Kelly Morrison, MD.

The next opportunity to join a large group event at the Capitol is coming up on Thursday, March 9. Join us at the Peddler's Pub at 8 am for MPS Advocacy Training and breakfast to learn more and to collect MPS informational materials to share in legislator meetings. You may also park there for the day as MPS guests. At 10:30am, we will join the Minnesota Mental Health Legislative Network (MHLN) for the MHLN Policy Briefing at Christ on Capitol Hill Church, then go to the Capi-

tol for a rally in the Rotunda. We'll meet with legislators in the afternoon. Use the QR code to have MHLN planners take care of scheduling. Registered attendees and MPS staff and committee members will be available to attend meetings as needed. We're all in this together! Go to [www.MnPsychSoc.org](http://www.MnPsychSoc.org) for registration and event information links or call or text Linda Vukelich at 651-278-4241. ■



3-9-23 MHLN Day on the Hill



# APA President Rebecca Brendel, MD, DFAPA to visit MPS Events planned on April 21 and April 22 for every member!



**Minnesota Psychiatric Society  
2023 Spring Meetings  
Saturday, April 22, 2023  
Minnesota Humanities Center  
987 Ivy Avenue East, St Paul, MN 55106  
8am-5:15pm – Educational Program  
5:15-7:45pm – Recognition Dinner**

## MIND THE GAP: LAW, ETHICS, & PRACTICE



How can ethics and policy keep up with innovation in psychiatry? What is psychiatry's role in policy development, and does ethical practice adapt to – or lead – that evolution in society??

**KEYNOTE PRESENTER**  
Rebecca W. Brendel, MD, JD, DFAPA  
APA President

**POSTER SESSION SUBMISSIONS:**  
Submissions due March 1, 2023 –  
<https://mhaof.com/submit>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
Contact Linda Vukelich – 651-278-4341 / [L.Vukelich@comcast.net](mailto:L.Vukelich@comcast.net) [www.MPSoctoc.org](http://www.MPSoctoc.org)



Minnesota Psychiatric Society  
Improving Minnesota's mental health care through education, advocacy and sound psychiatric practice and achieving health equity

**KEY TOPICS:**

- Gun Violence, School Shootings, & Red Flag Laws
- Ethics of Neurosurgery for Alcoholism
- Ethics and Mental Injury
- Physician Burnout & System Impacts
- How to Talk About Mistakes
- Disparities and Ethical Management of Resources
- Poster Session
- Flash Talks / Hot Topics



Minnesota Psychiatric Society

**Join us Friday, April 21, 2023  
5:30 – 7:30 pm**

### MPS Residents Caucus Emerging Leaders Forum Event



Join us for this special gathering featuring



**APA President Rebecca Brendel, MD, JD, DFAPA!**  
This informal event is hosted by the MPS Council – including a catered buffet dinner and beverages from Falling Knife Brewing Co.

**Falling Knife Brewing Company**  
783 Harding Street NE #100, Minneapolis, MN 55413  
(We have booked their back room for our private event.)  
[Website](#) [Get Directions](#)

Join fellow trainees and early career psychiatrists for this special event! The MPS Council invites you to attend as our guests for dinner, beverages and socializing. Dr. Brendel is visiting Minnesota to keynote our 2023 Spring Meetings. Dr. Brendel will be finishing up her APA Presidential year in May and has generously agreed to spend an extra evening in Minnesota specifically to connect with Minnesota trainees.

RSVP to Linda Vukelich: 651-278-4341 / [L.Vukelich@comcast.net](mailto:L.Vukelich@comcast.net)  
Call 651-278-4341 for information or to find the group.

## MPS members are invited to connect at the Capitol

**Breaking Down Barriers to Care.**  
**Building the System We Urgently Need.**

**Mental Health Day on the Hill 2023**  
Thursday, March 9, 2023


## Join Us For Mental Health Day on the Hill

Thursday, March 9, 2023




Make your voice heard! Join us for this year's in-person Mental Health Day on the Hill, sponsored by the Mental Health Legislative Network.

9:30 AM - Welcome/Policy Briefing  
issues and have an on-demand training available to learn more.

Sign up to attend by scanning the QR code or visit [www.namimn.org](http://www.namimn.org) or [www.mentalhealthmn.org](http://www.mentalhealthmn.org).



**Start Mental Health Day on the Hill with MPS!**

**Connect with other psychiatry participants for breakfast**  
**Peddler's Pub Restaurant**  
**Radisson Hotel St Paul Downtown**  
161 St Anthony Ave, St Paul, MN  
(Formerly the Kelly Inn. Across the street from the Capitol Complex)

**Thursday, March 9, 2023 8:00am - 9:30am**

MPS Advocacy Training Breakfast guests are welcome to park at the hotel for the rest of the day at no charge.

RSVP to Linda Vukelich - [LMVukelich@gmail.com](mailto:LMVukelich@gmail.com) / 651-278-4241



## Bylaws amendments proposed to open positions, engage leaders *Vote on these proposed changes affecting MPS elected offices and term limits.*

1. Enforce term limits for committee chairs to 3 year terms, extendable once per discretion of the President?
2. Increase number of councilors to 3 and enforce term limit of 3 years, with no extensions?
3. Create new position of Secretary?
4. Enforce term limit for Secretary to 3 year terms with no extensions?
5. Enforce term limit for Treasurer to 3 years, extendable once by nomination from the nomination committee?
6. Create position of Deputy Assembly Reps for each Assembly Rep Position
7. Enforce term limit of 2 years, with a maximum term of 8 years in office for Assembly reps, with hiatus of 2 years before applying for same office (Assembly Rep) again?
8. Enforce term limit of 2 years for Assembly Reps and Deputy Assembly Reps, with a maximum term of 8 years in office for combined appointment to either Deputy Assembly Rep or Assembly Rep, and a hiatus of 2 years before applying for the same office again?
9. Allow Office bearers to continue serving in same office even after expiration if no other suitable candidates are identified or available? ■

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4. **Vote** for each position.
5. **Share** your concerns & suggestions.
6. **Volunteer** if you can!
7. **Submit** — *Thank you for voting!*

## Advance mental health care. Grow your career.

Now hiring psychiatrists



Allina Health has a robust Mental Health and Addiction Clinical Service Line that offers the full continuum of care, across the lifespan, including primary care integration, specialty outpatient clinics, addiction and co-occurring services, partial hospitalization and day treatment, and inpatient care.



### As a psychiatrist, you can expect:

- **Whole person care.**  
Your vision for the program will help connect patients to the right treatments for all aspects of their health.
- **Work-life balance.**  
You'll have enough time for yourself, loved ones and what matters most.
- **Coordinated care.**  
Our care teams stay connected to ensure everyone is on the same page.
- **Recognition for exceptional care.**  
You'll make a meaningful difference in advancing mental health care. Allina Health receives local and national recognition for our exceptional care, innovation and community impact.

Contact [Christi.Thompson@Allina.com](mailto:Christi.Thompson@Allina.com) to learn about open Psychiatrist positions



# Current State of Physician Suicide in 2022

Rida Kahn, MD

Physicians have to work within a complex healthcare system in often challenging conditions, involving long and irregular shifts, intense physical and emotional labor, sleep deprivation, exposure to death and human suffering, and administrative burden. Research shows that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these stressors, aggravated by shortages in staffing and personal protective equipment. These stressors render physicians vulnerable to mental health conditions



that include depressive disorders and suicide. Prior research has shown that physicians, residents, and medical students experience suicidal thoughts at a higher rate than the general population. There is a lack of understanding of the scope of the problem of physician mental illness and suicide, and physicians are often reluctant to seek help due to stigma, discrimination, and fear of losing work privileges. In a step towards reform, the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice recently implemented a change in the licensing application for physicians by amending the question that asks the applicant to disclose a history of mental illness to “any condition that is not being appropriately treated and likely to adversely affect the applicant’s ability to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety...”

Suicide is a complex phenomenon that psychiatry uniquely concerns itself with. It is difficult to predict, although known risk factors include a previous attempt, underlying untreated mental health condition, and social disenfranchisement. Suicide is often an impulsive act in a moment of psychological crisis. Suicide prevention efforts are increasingly recognizing that suicide prevention is a problem to be addressed at multiple systemic levels, with suicidal crisis being the culmination of multiple social and psychological events and factors.

Reform in medicine would include creating a more equitable work environment. Healthcare system leaders could take steps towards protecting members of the team from burnout and mental illness due to moral injury and disenfranchisement, such as creating a supportive work environment, optimizing shift hours to allow for physician worker well-being and sleep hygiene, providing peer support services, and accommodating individual self-care needs. Reform would also address stigma and discrimination towards physicians experiencing mental health conditions with education and increasing awareness on the detrimental impact of stigma on the quality of life of people, including physicians, suffering from mental illness, minimizing

punitive measures taken towards mental health-related concerns affecting physicians’ work performance, and increasing access to safe and confidential mental healthcare for physicians.

Resilience-based wellness programs aimed at physicians and healthcare workers have recently increased in training programs and healthcare systems, and these should be periodically examined for effectiveness. More research needs to be done in the area to establish best models. The Lorna Breen Act of 2022

dedicates funding aimed at reforming the system including research and “wellness” programs across institutions nationwide. Lorna Breen was an emergency medicine physician who died by suicide in April 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, after struggling with a bout of depression. In her last days, she had expressed fear about losing her New York medical license due to her experience of mental illness as a practicing physician. It remains to be seen how the Lorna Breen Act will increase clarity on the scope of the problem of physician suicide and utilize the resources effectively to improve and advocate for physician wellness at multiple levels within the nation’s complex healthcare system. ■

*Rida Khan is an international medical graduate currently applying to psychiatry residency. She is actively involved in local and national volunteering with the APA including advocacy and student division activities. She is passionate about access to mental health, combating stigma, and physician wellness.*

## President Elect Candidate Mark Frye, MD

*Continued from page 1*

advance the practice – access, quality, innovation, parity, and inclusion. With Program Committee Chair Dr. Sheila Specker and committee members, I will actively mentor the next generation of mental health care providers in Minnesota. Finally, I will highlight Minnesota research focused on new care models, diagnostic and treatment precision that better individualizes care, education models that leverage technology for new learners, and neuroscience and public health that advances mental health initiatives. None of this would be in the realm of possibility without the tireless commitment and leadership of our MPS Executive Director Linda Vukelich. I look forward to working for and with you serving Minnesotans. ■



## CALENDAR

March 9, 2023, 8-9:30am

**MPS Advocacy Training Breakfast - Peddler's Pub Restaurant, Radisson Hotel St Paul Downtown**, 161 St Anthony Ave, St Paul, MN Email Linda (LMVukelich@gmail.com) or call/text 651-278-4241 to RSVP. Park at the hotel for the day.

March 9, 2023, 10:30am-5pm

**MHLN Day on the Hill - Briefing, Rally & Legislator visits**, St Paul, MN Register online using the QR code (on pgs 6 & 7) to be scheduled for legislator meetings. Contact Linda (651-278-4241) to connect with MPS groups and for help that day.

April 21, 2023, 5:30-7:30pm

**MPS Residents Caucus Emerging Leaders Forum Event hosted by APA President Rebecca Brendel, MD, Falling Knife Brewing Company, Minneapolis** Go to [www.MnPsychSoc.org](http://www.MnPsychSoc.org), or contact Linda Vukelich for more information, L.Vukelich@comcast.net, 651-278-4241

April 22, 2023, 5:30-7:30pm

**MPS Spring Meetings, Mind the Gap: Law, Ethics & Practice** Minnesota Humanities Center, St Paul, MN Go to [www.MnPsychSoc.org](http://www.MnPsychSoc.org), or contact Linda Vukelich for more information, L.Vukelich@comcast.net, 651-278-4241

May 20-24, 2023

**APA Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA** Registration open Watch for MPS Get-together at the APA event information coming soon

For more calendar updates, go to [mnpsychsoc.org](http://mnpsychsoc.org), Events tab [www.mnpsychsoc.org/events](http://www.mnpsychsoc.org/events)

## MPS Spring Meetings

*There's something for everyone!*

- *Poster Sessions*
- *National Experts*
- *Unparalleled networking*
- *Groundbreaking models*
- *Timely and compelling theme*
- *Mentorship opportunities*
- *Award Celebrations*
- *Special events for all trainees*
- *and by then, ... SPRING!*



# Choices Psychotherapy

## CONTRACT PSYCHIATRIST

Choices Psychotherapy is seeking a child/adolescent/adult psychiatrist for its Minnetonka location.

As a contract psychiatrist, you have the opportunity to earn between \$300,000 - \$450,000 per year, working 3-5 days a week.

Choices Psychotherapy has been established in the St. Louis Park/Minnetonka communities since 1993. In 2016 we opened a second location in Chanhassen and in 2021 we opened a clinic in Bloomington.

In this contract position, you will have the opportunity to work independently and collaboratively with a very talented group of multi-disciplinary therapists. The Psychiatric team at Choices Psychotherapy provides psychotherapy in addition to medication management and focuses on developing a collaborative relationship that is client-driven.

Our administrative and billing team work tirelessly on your behalf to ensure that all processes from the first appointment through billing are smooth.

Resumes/inquiries can be directed to:

Susan Davis

[sdavis@choicespsychotherapy.net](mailto:sdavis@choicespsychotherapy.net)

952.544.6806 | [choicespsychotherapy.net](http://choicespsychotherapy.net)