

APA Task Force on Serious Mental Illness/Severe Emotional Disturbance

2014 - 2015 Report

2014 – 2015 Work and Accomplishments

1. TF members organized and sponsored a CE approved inter-divisional Convention symposium in 2015 in Toronto. This series of symposia has been presented by the TF every year since 2005. In this year's symposium we partnered with Divisions 18 and 56, and presented "Interventions for Trauma—Youth, Women, Those with SMI and Forensic Populations," which was well attended. Susie Lazaroff organized a symposium on suicide and violence. Additional sessions led by TF members included a symposium on supported employment, and one on mental health and veterans.
2. TF members have been active in the synarchy (along with Section 18, the Psychosocial Rehabilitation Association [PRA, formerly USPRA], and the SMI section of ABCT) workgroup to develop a proposal to establish SMI as a Specialty. TF members communicated with APA staff and other specialty applicants, met with ABPP leaders, and attended a session at APA Convention regarding the specialty application process. They submitted an APA conference grant proposal to convene a workgroup to meet prior to APA Convention in Denver.
3. The TF submitted a request for training on SMI to be offered as the diversity education topic at the APA Consolidated/Council Meeting. Although not selected, there was some interest in the topic.
4. The TF worked with the Public Relations and Special Projects office of the Practice Directorate to develop articles on SMI to be posted on APA.org in the Psychology Help Center for an audience of the general public. The article "Supporting a Family Member with Serious Mental Illness" was posted in October, 2014, and "How to Cope When a Loved One Has a Serious Mental Illness" was posted February, 2015. "Recognizing the Signs of Schizophrenia" and "Recognizing the Signs of Bipolar Disorder" were posed in February, 2015.
5. Task Force members responded to a call for papers for a special journal issue, and the following article was published.
Jansen, M. J., McCammon, S. L., & Carr, E. (2015). Serious mental health disorders intersect with other social problems: Issues and intervention models to build inclusive communities. *Revista di Psicologia Clinica*.2, 5-23. Doi: 10.14645/RPC.2014.2.478
6. TF representatives have worked to disseminate the Recovery to Practice Curriculum to relevant training councils. Proposals have been made to the Council on University Directors of Clinical Programs (CUDCP), the National Council of Schools of Professional Psychology (NCSPP), and Association of Psychology Training Clinics (APTC) to present on the Curriculum at upcoming annual meetings.
7. Dan Abrahamson assisted TF members in connecting with Greg Neimeyer, Associate Executive Director of the Office of Continuing Education in Psychology (CEP), the

- Education Directorate, to assist in developing a webinar and programming for CE offerings. Planning is in progress for creating a webinar.
8. The TF has communicated with staff in the APA Office of Congressional Affairs regarding legislation relevant to SMI (especially the Murphy bills). We hope to enhance partnership with that office and have identified a Task Force liaison who will serve as a regular point of contact.
 9. In the wake of the Hoffman Report, and call for APA to re-set its moral compass, a joint letter from the Task Force and Division 18 Section on SMI was sent to Drs. Kaslow and McDaniel calling for APA to pay more attention to people with SMI, and place greater emphasis on training psychologists to work with this population, as well as working in partnership with people with SMI. Specific recommendations included APA promotion of the Recovery to Practice curriculum, and support and assistance with the SMI specialty application.
 10. Administratively, the Task Force has moved from CAPP to BPA. Dr. Robert Kinscherff, our BPA Liaison, attended the TF meeting at the APA Convention in Toronto.

Future Directions and Initiatives

1. The TF plans to continue its tradition of presenting CE approved symposia and presentations at the APA Convention. The TF plans to develop a session for the 2016 Convention on integrated care and services for persons with SMI.
2. The TF will continue to have a representative on the Division 18 SMI section leadership group, which holds monthly conference calls.
3. The TF will continue to work with APA leadership on initiatives that intersect professional psychology and SMI, such as Medicare and other legislative priorities, state hospital and forensic institutions, and the issues relevant for psychology in these settings.
4. The TF will continue its effort to increase the visibility of serious mental illness by promoting the Resolution on Recovery, and by continuing to comment on relevant policy documents, working more closely with other Boards and Committees, and continuing to publish scholarly articles and information for public education.
5. The TF will continue its efforts to encourage increased attention to the need for and role of didactic and practicum training in serious mental illness/severe emotional disturbance in graduate training programs, internships, and post-doctoral fellowships.
6. Discussion was initiated this year regarding the organizational status of the Task Force. In the coming year consideration should be made regarding whether the best visibility for efforts related to SMI education and training can be made by maintaining our status as a Task Force, or better served by becoming a permanent Committee of APA.