



## ABH August Committee Meetings

Tuesday, August 1  
**ATS**, 10 a.m. (ABH)

Wednesday, August 2  
**E-Health**, 10 a.m.

Friday, August 4  
**Children's Services  
CEO**, 10 a.m.

Thursday, August 10  
**SOAP**, 10:00 a.m.

Friday, August 11  
**Corporate  
Compliance**, 10 a.m.  
**CBHI**, 10 a.m.

Monday, August 14  
**Billing**, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, August 15  
**OTP**, 9:30 a.m. (ABH)

All meetings are held at the Hampton Inn, Natick unless otherwise noted. For more information, call 508-647-8385.

## Action Alert!

# Voice Your Opposition to the Senate ACA Repeal Legislation

**Call your Senators!**

**We need your help and your voice to defeat this bill.**

Republicans in the U.S. Senate have proposed their version of the American Health Care Act; your voice is ESSENTIAL in ensuring this bill does not pass.

### Action Requested

If you live in Massachusetts, call  
Senator Ed Markey [\(202\) 224-2742](tel:2022242742) &  
Senator Elizabeth Warren [\(202\) 224-4543](tel:2022244543)

If you live in another state,  
call [\(202\) 224-3121](tel:2022243121) and ask for your specific Senators.

Need to know who your Senators are? [Click Here](#)

### Talking Points:

- The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates 22 million Americans will lose their health insurance if the Senate bill passes.
- Cuts to Medicaid would reach \$772 billion by 2026.
- Medicaid covers more than 74 million Americans, including low-income people, families and kids, as well as pregnant women, people with disabilities, and the elderly.
- Medicaid accounted for 25% of all mental health spending in the U.S. and 21% of all substance use disorder expenditures in the nation in 2014.
- Approximately 29% of persons who received health insurance coverage through the Medicaid expansion have either a mental health or substance use disorder.

**Questions?** Call or email Mandy Gilman ([agilman@abhmass.org](mailto:agilman@abhmass.org) or 508-647-8385 x 16) and she can help!

# Partnering with Underserved Populations

ABH's newest committee, Partnering with Underserved Populations is looking for new members! The committee focuses on best practice service delivery of mental health and addiction treatment services for the people and communities of the Commonwealth who face systemic, cultural, ethnic, racial, linguistic, ability, gender, socioeconomic, age, religious, and LGBTQIA disparities. The committee meets once every other month on Mondays from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Hampton Inn in Natick. If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Megan Thompson at [mthompson@abhmass.org](mailto:mthompson@abhmass.org).

The committee is currently conducting a [brief survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CFKZ7K2) (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CFKZ7K2>) on diversity and inclusion. Through this [survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CFKZ7K2), the committee hopes to better understand the challenges, barriers, people, and goals we are working towards. The committee is eager to equalize behavioral health service delivery for all and we hope you will take the time to help us work toward this goal.

We are hopeful that a diverse cross-section of employees at a variety of different organizational levels of ABH member organizations are able to participate, so please share it widely with others in your organization.

Please note that this survey is *anonymous* and any organization responses will be *de-identified*. Data will only be shared in the aggregate form. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on the importance of inclusion and diversity within your organization and to benchmark your organization against others.

## Letter to the Editor

A letter to the editor from ABH CEO Vic DiGravio recently appeared in the *Boston Herald* urging the *Herald* to stop using the derogatory term “methadone mile” because it feeds stigma and denigrates a neighborhood. The letter is below:

### **Meds Aid in Recovery**

A Herald article highlights the important debate on harm-reduction initiatives for opioid use disorders (“Boston eyes safe sites for addicts” June 6). Unfortunately, the article also furthers the stigma around addiction by repeatedly using the term “Methadone Mile.”

The statewide Association for Behavioral Healthcare strongly objects to the use of that term to refer to an area of Boston that is home to a major teaching hospital and other health care organizations including two methadone clinics. All of these facilities provide much-needed services to our community.

Methadone is a lifesaving medication used to treat individuals who struggle with a chronic disease that is treatable. Medication assisted treatments, such as methadone, bridge the biological and behavioral components of addiction. Research shows that a combination of medication and behavioral therapies can help sustain recovery.

And these medications help reduce mortality while patients begin recovery.

We urge the Herald to stop using this derogatory term that denigrates a neighborhood and feeds a stigma associated with substance-use disorders.

— Vic DiGravio, President and CEO, Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Natick

Check out our website for public policy information!

Did you know that you can find ABH testimony before the Massachusetts legislature on our website?

Click [here](#) to read our testimony in support of legislation that would require health care coverage for emergency psychiatric services.

# ABH's Salute to Excellence

Recognizing leadership in community-based behavioral healthcare.

***DREAM...BELIEVE...ACHIEVE***

*Save the Date!*

**Friday, October 20**

**8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

*New Location: Boston Marriott Newton*

Keynote Speaker:

*Trenni Kusnierek*

Co-host of CSN New England's Arbella Early Edition and  
Dedicated Mental Health Advocate

Join the conversation on Twitter! @ABHMass #ABHSalute

## **MassHealth Selects 18 ACOs**

MassHealth has announced that it intends to partner with 18 Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) in the coming year and plans to roll out its new ACO program in January 2018. Currently, six ACOs are participating in a pilot program and provide coverage for 160,000 MassHealth members. The 18 ACOs selected will cover 900,000 MassHealth members. Under the new program, members will have the ability to opt out of enrollment of an ACO within the first 90 days. MassHealth will continue to operate its current Managed Care Organization (MCO) program. MCOs will partner with ACOs as well as "serve members not enrolled in an ACO".

## ABH STAFF

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# Marijuana Policy Legislation

In June, the House and Senate passed different versions of a marijuana policy bill. These bills would change the recreational marijuana law passed by voters in 2012. The legislature had hoped to pass a final bill before July 1 in order to give the state enough time to promulgate regulations and enable recreational sales to begin in July 2018. Despite this goal, the committee appointed to reconcile those differences had yet to reach a consensus before the July 4th holiday.

ABH has submitted a [letter](#) to the conference committee (the committee appointed to reconcile the differences between the bills). In the letter, ABH strongly urges the conferees to include language from the House bill that would dedicate \$50 million to addiction prevention and treatment services.

For details on the differences that need to be ironed out, click [here](#).

## DMH Respite Services

The Executive Office for Health and Human Services (EOHHS) released the final rate regulations governing DMH Respite Services, 101 CMR 431.00: Rates for Certain Respite Services. The final regulation is available [here](#).

In addition, the Department of Mental Health has extended the deadline for responses to the Adult Respite RFR, the Adult Respite Master Service Agreement and the Peer Respite RFR to Wednesday, July 26th at 4:00 p.m. For more information, please see COMMBUYS: [Respite RFR](#), [Master Agreement](#), [Peer Respite](#).

## FY 2018 Budget

The FY 2018 budget conference committee is still working to resolve the differences between the House and Senate FY 2018 spending bills. ABH has sent a letter to the conferees asking them to support ABH's priority as they work to produce a final FY 2018 budget that will be sent to Governor Baker.

To read ABH's letter to the conferees, click [here](#).

## Keeper's Korner

Keeper's down for the count with a bit of a summer illness, but she's recuperating with some summer reading:

- [Why We Should Say Someone Is A 'Person With An Addiction,' Not An Addict.](#) NPR.
- [Patients With Mental Disorders Get Half Of All Opioid Prescriptions.](#) Kaiser Health News.
- [Promises Made To Protect Preexisting Conditions Prove Hollow.](#) Kaiser Health News.
- [It's Time to Recognize Mental Health as Essential to Physical Health.](#) STAT

