



ABH March Committee Meetings

Tuesday, March 3
CSS/TSS, 10 a.m. (ABH)

Monday, March 9
Billing, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 10
ACCS, 2:30 p.m.
(Beechwood Hotel)

Friday, March 13
Children's Services,
10 a.m.
Corporate Compliance,
10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 17
OTP, 9:30 a.m. (ABH)

Wednesday, March 18
BH CP Exec., 10 a.m.
Quality & Outcomes,
10 a.m.

Thursday, March 19
Human Resources,
10 a.m.

Friday, March 20
DAE/SOA, 10 a.m. (ABH)

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

Governor's FY 2021 Budget

On January 22, Governor Baker released his Fiscal Year 2021 Budget proposal (referred to as House 2 or H2), totaling \$44.6 billion. The budget proposal continues Chapter 257 commitments at \$160 million for human service providers, and funds a new rate methodology benchmarking direct care and clinical staff wages to the Bureau of Labor Statistics median salary to support the workforce. This proposal constitutes a 2.3% increase over FY20 projected spending. The budget is modeled on a projected tax revenue forecast of \$31.15 billion, representing 2.8% growth over last year's tax revenues. ABH continues to gather further information on how the Administration's recommendations would impact existing services and will keep ABH members informed as additional details become available. Analysis of the FY21 House 2 proposed budget can be found [here](#), and includes the following highlights:

- ◇ The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is funded at \$910.5 million. The Adult Community Services line item (5046-0000) is funded at \$497.3 million, which is \$2.1 million less than projected final FY20 spending. The Governor proposes funding the DMH Children's Services line item (5042-5000) at \$92.04 million, which is approximately \$2.5 million less than projected final FY20 spending.
- ◇ The Governor proposes funding the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) at \$167,140,327. This is a decrease of \$15.2 million from projected final FY20 spending. This proposed decrease in funding is partially due to the exclusion of earmarks typically funded by the Legislature in line item 4512-0205.
- ◇ MassHealth is funded at \$16.77 billion. MassHealth covers 1.8 million Massachusetts residents, and the Administration assumes an overall caseload growth of 0.7% in FY21. MassHealth funding includes more than \$60 million for EOHHS behavioral health design initiatives, targeted I/CBAT rate increases, and annualized increases to support expanded access to mobile- and community-based treatment through the Emergency Services Programs (ESPs).
- ◇ The Chapter 257 rate reserve (1599-6903) is funded at \$160 million. This funding is for rates to be adjusted in the upcoming year.

The budget process now gets taken up by the House of Representatives.

The State of Behavioral Health with EOHHS Secretary Marylou Sudders

On Monday, February 3rd at the Crowne Plaza in Natick, ABH is hosting an Association Meeting to learn the latest news on the state of behavioral healthcare in Massachusetts. The program includes a brief overview of policy changes on the horizon by ABH staff including potential federal behavioral health expansion, state ambulatory behavioral health treatment system design work, development of Senate mental health legislation, and legislative consideration of Governor Baker's health care bill, an Act to improve health care by investing in VALUE.

We are excited to then be joined by EOHHS Secretary Marylou Sudders. Secretary Sudders will discuss the Governor's health care bill and the creation of an ambulatory behavioral health treatment system.

Stay Tuned for Association Meeting Photos

Substance Use Disorder QSO Agreement

MBHP, with the support of ABH, has announced a new initiative in population health management designed for MBHP providers who provide substance use disorder (SUD) services for MBHP Members and are subject to the confidentiality obligations set forth in 42 C.F.R. Part 2 ("Part 2 Providers"). Through this initiative, MBHP will provide you with information about your members to help you better manage their care. MBHP believes the data will help you to more easily identify health risk factors that affect your clients, inform efforts to coordinate patient care, and assist in general clinical decision-making.

As you know, the confidentiality obligations of 42 C.F.R. Part 2 ("Part 2") are much stricter than the other health care confidentiality laws, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). For example, while HIPAA allows providers to disclose patient health information without authorization if such disclosure is to be used for treatment, payment, or health care operations, Part 2 generally does not. However, Part 2 does permit Part 2 Providers to disclose protected alcohol or SUD information without patient authorization to a Qualified Service Organization (QSO) to assist in certain activities, such as population health management. Through this initiative, MBHP will serve as your QSO for population health management by collecting and analyzing SUD information from your practice and returning to you a set of analytics that will support the overall clinical management of your practice.

ABH collaborated with MBHP on the Provider Agreement Amendment which is available [here](#).

SNAP Updates

The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) recently reported that it has received approval to NOT count U.S. Census earnings as income for SNAP or cash benefits.

In addition, DTA has released a chart that examines how the minimum wage increase to \$12.75/hour affects SNAP. Massachusetts still has the federal option to use a 200% FPL gross income test.

[Chart](#)

MassHealth Technical Refresh Initiative

MANDATORY Trading Partner Testing Phase II

January 27th - March 16th, 2020

MassHealth is implementing the final phase of its transition to the new HIPAA compliance and translator tool on March 30th, 2020. The tool is used to validate HIPAA compliance and translate the HIPAA compliant transactions to an XML format so that they can be processed within MassHealth's Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS).

All vendors and providers who submit the transactions above through EDI MUST test prior to the go live date of March 30 or risk significant delays in reimbursement. To that end, MassHealth is conducting **MANDATORY** Trading Partner Testing (TPT) with providers and Billing Intermediaries, Clearinghouses and Software Vendors (BI/CH/SWVs) that directly send or receive transactions to/from MassHealth. All trading partners MUST schedule and execute testing with MassHealth to validate compliance.

To schedule trading partner testing please email the MassHealth Customer Service Center at MassHealthProviderTraining@MAXIMUS.com, please include the following information: submitter ID; site name; and name, title, email and phone for both primary and secondary contact.

For more detailed information regarding MassHealth's Technical Refresh Initiative please refer to [All Provider Bulletin 284](#) or visit the dedicated [MassHealth Technical Refresh](#) page.

Proposed Amendments to DPH Mental Health Clinic & BSAS Regulations

At a recent meeting of the Public Health Council, the Department of Public Health (DPH) presented an informational overview of proposed amendments to both 105 CMR 164.000, Licensure of Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs and 105 CMR 140.000 Licensure of Clinics. They also included draft red-lined versions of the proposed regulations for feedback from stakeholders. These documents are available on the ABH website [here](#) for you to review.

DPH has committed to conducting additional public hearings and accepting public comment on these proposed regulatory changes. ABH plans to submit comments on both sets of regulations. The public hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 9th at 10:30 am at the Department of Public Health, Public Health Council Room, 250 Washington Street, Boston. The public hearing notice with additional details will be posted here in the immediate future: <http://mass.gov/dph/proposed-regulations>.

In the meantime, please feel free to send your initial thoughts on the proposals to either [Connie Peters](#) (105 CMR 164.00 Licensure of Substance Use Disorder Treatment Programs) or [Mandy Gilman](#) (105 CMR 140.000 Licensure of Clinics).

ABH STAFF

Lydia Conley
President/CEO
508.647.8385, x11
lconley@abhmass.org

Constance Peters
Vice President for
Addiction Services
508.647.8385, x13
cpeters@abhmass.org

Carmel Craig
Vice President for Youth and
Adult Mental Health Services
508.647.8385, x14
ccraig@abhmass.org

Mandy Gilman
Senior Director of Public
Policy & Strategic Initiatives
508.647.8385, x16
agilman@abhmass.org

Megan Thompson
Director of Payment & Care
Delivery Innovations
508.647.8385, x15
mthompson@abhmass.org

Stuart Figueroa
Public Policy & Research
Specialist
508.647.8385, x17
sfigueroa@abhmass.org

Megan Socha
Member Engagement and
Event Coordinator
508.647/8385, x.18
msocha@abhmass.org

Ellen Caliendo
Business Manager
508.380.9887
ecaliendo@abhmass.org

Staffing Update: Meet Megan Socha

We are pleased to inform you that Megan Socha has joined ABH as our new Member Engagement and Event Coordinator. Meg is a recent graduate of Providence College where she earned her bachelor's degree in Global Studies with concentrations in Spanish and Latin American Studies. Meg brings with her backgrounds in research, survey techniques, social media, and community engagement. In her role as Member Engagement and Event Coordinator, Meg will help coordinate all ABH-sponsored events and trainings, will utilize member feedback to inform ongoing outreach and training opportunities, manage ABH's online presence, help with ongoing member recruitment and much more.

Meg's contact information is as follows:

Megan Socha

Member Engagement and Event Coordinator

T 508-647-8385 x 18

F 508-667-8311

E msocha@abhmass.org

Please click [here](#) to find an updated ABH staff list which includes contact and portfolio information for all of the ABH team. We hope that you will find it useful!

ABH Salary Survey Available!

In October of 2019 ABH, in partnership with Gallagher Surveys, developed a salary and benefits survey that focused specifically on mental health and substance use disorder providers. The final product included extensive input and guidance from the ABH Human Resources Committee. This survey is a follow up to ABH's 2010, 2013, 2015 & 2017 surveys.

The results are now in and available for purchase. We anticipate that these results will be a great resource for behavioral health providers.

To purchase the Salary Survey results, please complete this [Salary Survey Purchasing Form](#). ABH can then complete the billing process and will share the results with you via email.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Socha at msocha@abhmass.org or 508-647-8385, ext. 18. Thank you!

Current Events Corner

- [Can Emergency Rooms Hold Psychiatric Patients Longer Than 3 Days? The Mass. High Court Will Decide.](#) *WBUR CommonHealth.*
- [Family Doctors In Rural America Tackle Crisis Of Addiction And Pain.](#) *Kaiser Health News.*
- [Behavioral Health Integration: Exploring Its Effect on Clinical Practice.](#) *ReachMD/AMA*

