



## ABH August Committee Meetings

Friday, August 2  
**Children's CEO  
Leadership**, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, August 6  
**ATS**, 10 a.m.

Thursday, August 8  
**SOAP**, 10 a.m.

Friday, August 9  
**Corporate  
Compliance** 10 a.m.  
**CBHI**, 10 a.m.

Monday, August 12  
**Billing**, 10 a.m.

Monday, August 26  
**BH CP Exec**, 10 a.m.  
(Location TBD)

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

## Passing the Torch

On July 1, Lydia Conley officially took the reins as ABH's President & CEO.

For two decades, Conley has worked in the government and non-profit sectors, helping to shape public policy that has established Massachusetts as perhaps the nation's most progressive provider of behavioral health services and insurance coverage for mental health and addiction treatment.

In her previous role as ABH's Vice President for Mental Health, Lydia worked closely with state and federal officials to advocate for equitable reimbursement to support the ability of ABH member organizations to continue to deliver high quality services to individuals living with mental health and/or substance use disorders.

Lydia started off her tenure as President & CEO with a letter to members outlining ABH's accomplishments and her vision for the future:

*Too often, individuals, particularly children and families, cannot access the services they need in a reasonable time within reasonable timeframes and they are challenged in finding the right service. In virtually every discussion about existing services or new initiatives, the workforce crisis surfaces as a significant barrier. The behavioral health workforce is incredibly dedicated to delivering quality accessible care to the people we serve, but vacancies are high and the workforce pipeline into community-based behavioral health organizations is tenuous. One of our top priorities moving ahead will be working with our advocacy and governmental partners on the issues of workforce recruitment and retention.*

*While we work with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services as it embarks on an ambitious ambulatory behavioral health treatment system design, we will advocate for increased state investment and a more responsive regulatory framework to create an improved behavioral health treatment system that is responsive to the needs of individuals and families and will promote better integration of behavioral health and primary care.*

To read Lydia's letter to members in its entirety, [click here](#). Lydia will be visiting every ABH member over the coming year and can be reached at [LConley@abhmass.org](mailto:LConley@abhmass.org) or 508.647.8385.



# ABH Salute to Excellence Nominations

ABH's 2019 *Salute to Excellence* will be held **Friday, October 18th** from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Newton Marriot. We can't wait to see you all there!

## Now Accepting Nominations for ABH's 2019 Salute to Excellence Awards!

Do you know someone who should be recognized for their outstanding work in the behavioral healthcare field?

If your answer is YES, then you should nominate them for recognition at ABH's Salute to Excellence on Friday, October 18, 2019. Learn more about the awards [here](#).

It's easy! Just [click here](#) to access the online nomination form. The deadline for submitting nominations is Wednesday, September 11, 2019. To be considered, nominees must be employed by an ABH member organization.

### Award Categories

#### **Robert Dorwart, M.D., Award for Mental Health (Individuals Only)**

The recipient must be a member of ABH who has demonstrated a personal long-term commitment to the goals of ABH and who has provided leadership and support to the association, its members, and staff around mental health issues.

#### **Moe Armstrong Award for Peer Leadership (Individuals Only)**

This award was established to honor Moe Armstrong for his courage and conviction in advocating for the critical role that peer leaders play in helping people recover from mental health and addiction disorders. The recipient of this award must have made an exceptional contribution to the development and/or strengthening of the role of consumers in the mental health and/or addiction treatment systems.

#### **Elizabeth Funk Emerging Leader Award (Individuals Only)**

Nominees must be under the age of 40. The recipient must show evidence of commitment to behavioral health through his/her ability as an emerging leader within the field. The nominee should display the ability to motivate staff and communicate effectively in their role as a developing leader.

#### **Provider Recognition Awards (Individuals or Groups)**

Nominees show evidence of personal commitment to quality and innovation in their work performance and carry out that commitment in a manner deserving of special recognition in any of the following categories:

**Excellence in Outcomes:** Integration, utilization and management of client outcomes for quality improvement

**Excellence in Best Practices:** Planning, implementation and on-going integration of best practices

**Excellence in Program Leadership:** Program director/staff who exemplify outstanding leadership qualities

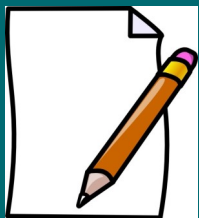
**Excellence in Administration and Finance:** Exceptional management of program/agency/corporate finances and/or operations

Questions? Contact Megan Thompson at [mthompson@abhmass.org](mailto:mthompson@abhmass.org) or 508-647-8385 x14.



Keep your eyes peeled for our ABH Salary Survey.

Coming this fall!



## **\*NEW\* FRDF for Entities**

MassHealth has updated the FRDF for provider entities, the Disclosure Form for Entities. The new form was effective on June 12, 2019 ([Click here to view and download](#)) and must be used when submitting new provider entity applications or entity updates. The old version of the FRDF will be accepted until September 10, 2019. Those submitted after September 10th will be rejected.

There are two significant process changes to note:

- 1) A separate form is now required for each service location/doing business as (DBA) address. If an entity has five locations, then five separate forms must be submitted.
- 2) Copies must be made of each section if there are more entries than the page allows. MassHealth will no longer accept other attachments going forward.

Please contact the MassHealth Customer Service Center at 1-800-841-2900 or e-mail [providersupport@mahealth.net](mailto:providersupport@mahealth.net) with any questions.

## **Parity Task Force**

Health Law Advocates recently asked ABH to help its Parity Task Force identify “mental health parity violations that we can raise with state regulators in order to help eliminate the many wasteful and burdensome barriers that deprive consumers of access to the behavioral health (BH) care they need.”

Health Law Advocates has provided a list of insurance practices that may violate parity laws. For a full list of these violations, [click here](#). Health Law Advocates is available to help you with free legal assistance in preparing and filing a parity complaint and can provide your clients with free legal consultation or representation.

Please contact HLA’s intake line if you or your clients have experienced any of these practices at (617) 338-5241, or toll free at (888) 211-6168. If you have specific questions about private insurance policies and practices, contact Wells Wilkinson at (617) 275-2983 or [wwilkinson@hla-inc.org](mailto:wwilkinson@hla-inc.org). If you have specific questions about MassHealth policies and practices, contact Deborah Steinberg at (617) 275-2833 or [dsteinberg@hla-inc.org](mailto:dsteinberg@hla-inc.org).

## **Paid Family and Medical Leave Update**

The Legislature recently passed legislation that was signed by Governor Baker to delay the start of employer and employee contributions to the Paid Family and Medical Leave program (PFML) until October 1, 2019. This three-month delay will provide employers more time to prepare for PFML.

To offset this delay, contribution rates will change from 0.63% to 0.75% of employee qualifying earnings.

For more information, click [here](#).

## ABH STAFF

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## Hill Day 2019

Mark Your Calendars for National Council Hill Day 2019, September 17-18 in Washington, DC. Make your voice heard at the largest behavioral health advocacy event of the year, plus get the latest policy insider analysis from experts in the field. Whether you're a seasoned pro or speaking to federal legislators for the first time, you'll learn how to take your advocacy skills to the next level. Register [here!](#)

## Farewells!

While ABH is thrilled to welcome Lydia to the helm of ABH, we will dearly miss both Vic DiGravio, ABH's former President/CEO and Rosemary Santini, ABH's former Administrative Assistant. For the past 12 years, Vic was a tremendous force for ABH and we wish him well in his future endeavors. After many years of welcoming visitors to ABH, keeping ABH running smoothly, and taking care of the staff, Rosemary has begun her well-earned retirement. We wish both of them nothing but the best.



## Behavioral Health for Children & Adolescents Implementation Updates

The new behavioral health for children and adolescents (BHCA) benefits for families on commercial plans, mandated through the joint [DMH/DOI Bulletin: 2018-07](#), became effective for plans issued or renewed as of July 1, 2019 and going forward.

For children and families accessing these services through MassHealth as a secondary insurance, it is recommended that agencies work with those families to identify their commercial plan renewal date as soon as possible. Until the plan renewal date or a new plan is issued, those families will continue to receive services through MassHealth Secondary. To ensure continuity of care and limit service disruption, MassHealth has issued [Guidance to Providers and Carriers Regarding Transition to Commercial Coverage of Intermediate Services for Youth](#). ABH has created a [landing page](#) where we are posting BHCA-related materials from the Commonwealth and insurance carriers as we receive them.

## Current Events Corner

- [What To Know About Section 35 Civil Commitments In Mass.](#) *WBUR CommonHealth.*
- [Meth In The Morning, Heroin At Night: Inside The Seesaw Struggle of Dual Addiction.](#) *Kaiser Health News.*
- [Legal Promise Of Equal Mental Health Treatment Often Falls Short.](#) *Kaiser Health News.*
- [Federal Prison Agrees to Provide Methadone to Inmate from Mass.](#) *The Boston Globe.*

