

Health Service Provider Division Chair Updates

By Jennifer L. Morris, Ph.D.

Advocacy. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines advocacy as “the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal.” As we begin 2017, I am excited to be representing OPA as the Health Service Provider Division Chair, continuing the great work done by last year’s chair, Dr. Day. I view this position as an advocate for you, the psychologists of the state, who will work on staying informed of proposed legislative changes, working with the members of the OPA board, and providing methods for OPA members to communicate their needs and to obtain information relevant to their practice. Last year’s needs-assessment provided us with an outline of your concerns, so my focus this year will be to ensure that those needs are addressed. Three of the top needs identified are legislative/lobbying of issues relevant to psychologists; increasing continuing education opportunities, and improving the website. Once again, the OPA Legislative Committee is working to review House and Senate bills that affect the practice of psychologists in Oklahoma. We will continue to monitor any proposed laws or statute changes that may affect psychologists and their practices. We are working to develop continuing education opportunities and making those more easily-accessible to OPA. We are also reviewing the website and hope to make changes soon, to provide a location with relevant links as well as a location to promote the profession and help us better serve Oklahoma.

One of the great things about OPA, and the HSP committee specifically, is the involvement of health service provider psychologists at all stages of their careers. It is my hope this year to include more of my fellow early-career psychologists so that we may be more involved and aware of the changes happening in the state and how those may affect our careers in the years to come. I hope to continue Dr. Day’s work building communication, both in listening and receiving information from psychologists and in providing information about legislation and other issues relevant to our field. I plan to work this year to provide reports to the psychologists of the OPA through both the listserv as well as regularly updating the website. The position of the HSP chair serves to listen to the health service providers, to ensure that your needs are met. An email address has been set up – OPAHSPChair@gmail.com. This account will be reviewed weekly, and all OPA members are encouraged to use this email to voice concerns, to ask questions, or to suggest areas for future discussion.

In my short time of involvement with the OPA board, I have observed the ways in which the board is working to support the profession, and I am excited to serve the health service providers of Oklahoma. I hope to serve the needs of the health service providers, as an advocate to ensure that your needs and concerns are addressed, and I look forward to an exciting year.