APA Advocacy Efforts for Veterans and VA Psychologists

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Who is Sophie?
APA advocates for the discipline of psychology and the professions of psychologists in scientific, educational, public interest, health service practice and applied practice settings as well as many social justice and other issues where psychological science would benefit policymaking.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will be able to describe the importance of advocacy in influencing policy at the Federal level.

- Participants will understand the current work that APA is doing to advance psychological science and the work of psychologists.
What is Advocacy?

- Legislative Advocacy – state/federal legislative process
- Judicial Advocacy – amicus briefs
- Regulatory Advocacy – filing of public comments/legislative engagement
- Industry Advocacy – experts/recognized surrogates: CEOs, scientists, psychologists
- Citizen Advocacy – 1-1 partnership – long term relationships to champion priorities
- Media Advocacy – strategic use of all forms of communications/media
- Diplomatic Advocacy – building of networks of allies around issues (coalitions)
- Political Action Advocacy – supporting champions financially

Must combine Multiple Advocacy Strategies to Succeed!!
Psychologists and psychological science need a seat at the table because:
- Federal, State, and Local governments are always making new laws and policies
- Lawmakers and their staff are always taking meetings with constituents and other advocacy groups

Psychologists are uniquely positioned to make recommendations on behavioral change

Sharing research and personal experiences can inform policy and make real change
Where do I work?

APA Advocacy

- VSOs
- Other Orgs
- White House
- VA
- DoD
- Capitol Hill
- APA Divisions
Advocacy IMPACT

2021 AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

The American Psychological Association’s strategic priorities are rooted in equity, diversity, and inclusion. In keeping with these strategic priorities, the APA’s advocacy priorities encompass the guiding principles of non-discrimination, health equity for underserved and vulnerable populations, and health promotion across the lifespan and settings. Keeping the guiding principles at the forefront of advocacy for psychology ensures the greatest impact on the many challenges facing society.

PRIORITIES UNIQUE TO APA

Access to health services, including mental and behavioral health services
- Ensure access for evidence-based health and behavioral health services within public and private healthcare delivery systems. Expand the role of psychologists on interprofessional, integrated teams.

Funding for basic and applied psychological research
- Advocate for increased funding for basic, clinical and applied psychological research within key agencies, foundations, and funding sources (e.g., NIH, NSF, CDC, VA, DoD, DoE, EPA). Expand opportunities for application in public and private sectors.

General applied psychology promotion
- Educate APA membership and advocate across key private sector stakeholders regarding the various contributions of psychology and roles of psychologists in areas such as human performance, motivation, leadership and personnel assessment, conflict resolution, and civic engagement.

Psychology education and training financing
- Improve access to graduate study for psychology, including student financial aid programs, loan repayment, and loan forgiveness programs.

Psychology workforce development
- Improve training and leadership skills of next generation of culturally competent, diverse psychologists, engage students, and secure federal funding for psychology workforce training programs, including accredited internships, and post-doctoral fellowships that expand interprofessional training opportunities working with underserved populations. Increase opportunities for basic and applied psychology training.

Reimbursement and scope of practice
- Ensure equitable reimbursement for the full range of psychologists’ services, including psychotherapy, health and behavior, testing, and telehealth services. Promote psychologists in federal health programs, such as ensuring psychologists provide Medicare services to the full scope of their licensure and supporting VA recruitment and retention of psychologists. Leverage federal with state efforts promoting licensure and credentialing and fighting encroachment from other providers.
APA Veteran/VA Priorities

Access
- Improve Hiring of Psychologists
- Veteran Transition
- VA Research

Quality
- Cultural Competency
- Evidence-Based Care
- Non-VA Provider Quality Standards

Workforce Development
- Recruitment and Retention Incentives for Psychologists
- Prescribing Authority
- Provider Safety
Psychology Recognition Week

117TH CONGRESS  1ST SESSION

H. RES. 337

Congratulating the Department of Veterans Affairs on 75 years of psychology training and expansion of access to mental health care for veterans by expressing support for the designation of April 19 through April 23, 2021, as “VA Psychology Recognition Week”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
April 20, 2021

Mr. TAKANO submitted the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Reform

RESOLUTION

Congratulating the Department of Veterans Affairs on 75 years of psychology training and expansion of access to mental health care for veterans by expressing support for the designation of April 19 through April 23, 2021.
Get in touch!

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